

# Balliemeanoch Pumped Storage Hydro

Environmental Impact Assessment  
Report

Volume 2: Main Report  
Chapter 16: Socio-Economic, Recreation  
and Tourism

ILI (Borders PSH) Ltd

July 2024



## Quality information

<b>Prepared by</b>	<b>Checked by</b>	<b>Verified by</b>	<b>Approved by</b>
Heather Boswell	John Daly	Siobhan Wolverson	David Lee
Graduate Planner	Associate Director	Principal Consultant	Technical Director – Renewable Energy

## Revision History

<b>Revision</b>	<b>Revision date</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Authorized</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
1	July 2024	Submission	DL	David Lee	Technical Director

## Table of Contents

16.	Socio-Economic, Recreation and Tourism .....	4
16.1	Introduction .....	4
16.2	Legislation, Policy and Guidance.....	4
16.3	Consultation .....	5
16.4	Methods.....	7
16.5	Baseline Environment.....	9
16.6	Assessment of Effects .....	18
16.7	Cumulative Effects.....	24
16.8	Mitigation and Monitoring.....	25
16.9	Residual Effects .....	27
16.10	References.....	30

## Tables

Table 16.1	Summary of Consultation .....	6
Table 16.2.	Populations.....	10
Table 16.3.	Employment Rates June 2023.....	11
Table 16.4	Employee Jobs by Sector .....	11
Table 16.5	Top Five Free and Paid Visitor Attractions in Argyll and Bute region .....	13
Table 16.6	% Net Rooms Occupancy by Area and Accommodation Type.....	15
Table 16.7	Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site.....	15
Table 16.8	Assessment of Recreation Routes During Construction .....	20
Table 16.9	Summary of Effects: Construction.....	28
Table 16.10	Summary of Effects: Operation .....	29

© 2024 AECOM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited ("AECOM") for sole use of our client (the "Client") in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. No third party may rely upon this document without the prior and express written agreement of AECOM.

# 16. Socio-Economic, Recreation and Tourism

## 16.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the potential socio-economic, recreation and tourism impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the Development, as it is described in *Chapter 2: Project and Site Description*. The assessment considers each receptor within the 5 km study area and, where appropriate, details the mitigation measures which should be implemented to minimise any adverse impacts arising as a result of the Development.

The chapter should be read in conjunction with *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual*, *Appendix 5.5 Forestry* (Volume 5 Appendices), *Chapter 7: Aquatic Ecology*, *Chapter 11: Water Environment*, *Chapter 13: Cultural Heritage*, *Chapter 14: Access, Traffic and Transport*, *Chapter 15: Noise and Vibration* and *Chapter 20: Commercial Fisheries*.

This chapter is supported by the following figures within Volume 3 Figures:

- Figure 16.1a: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism Receptors
- Figure 16.1b Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism (Table)
- Figure 16.2 Outline Access Management Plan Recreational Routes and Paths

This chapter is also supported by the following Appendices within Volume 5 Appendices:

- Appendix 16.1: Outline Access Management Plan;
- Appendix 16.2: Preliminary Draft Workers Housing Strategy.

## 16.2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

### 16.2.1 Legislation

This section identifies the legislation, policy and guidance of relevance to the assessment of the potential socio-economic, recreation and tourism impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed Development. Key documents relevant to the economy, housing and tourism at a national and local level have also been identified.

#### 16.2.1.1 Legislation

Legislation relevant to this chapter includes The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, which is hereafter referred to as the Land Reform Act.

### 16.2.2 National Policy

The following national policy is considered to be relevant:

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023).

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) identifies eighteen National Developments which are significant developments of national importance. Balliemanoach PSH falls under National Development 3 'Strategic Renewable Generation and Transmission infrastructure' and is considered to have in principle support under NPF4 as a national priority. Of particular relevance are NPF4 policies 11 and 25.

The intent of Policy 11 Energy is '*to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore*'. Part C is considered to be particularly relevant as it outlines that:

*'Development proposals will only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities'*.

The intent of Policy 25 is 'to encourage, promote and facilitate a new strategic approach to economic development that also provides a practical model for building a wellbeing economy at local, regional and national levels'. Part A of the policy outlines that proposals that contribute to local or regional community building strategies and consistent with local economic priorities will be supported.

### 16.2.3 Local Policy

The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2 (ABLDP) was formally adopted on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024 replacing the previous LDP published in 2015. The following ABLDP2 policies are considered to be most relevant to this chapter:

- Policy 4 – Sustainable Development;
- Policy 8 – Sustainable Siting;
- Policy 15 – Supporting the Protection, Conservation and Enhancement of Our Historic Built Environment;
- Policy 20 – Gardens and Designed Landscapes;
- Policy 22 – Economic Development;
- Policy 23 – Tourist Development, Accommodation, Infrastructure and Facilities;
- Policy 24 – Existing Tourism Uses;
- Policy 25 – Tourism Development Opportunities;
- Policy 26 – Informal Public Outdoor Recreation and Leisure Related Development;
- Policy 30 – The Sustainable Growth of Renewables;
- Policy 32 – Active Travel;
- Policy 49 – Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities; and
- Policy 67 – Provision of Housing to Meet Local Needs including Affordable Housing.

In addition to the LDP, the following publications by Argyll and Bute Council present the local policy position and strategies for development within the region.

- Argyll and Bute Council Local Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027;
- Argyll and Bute Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy (2021);
- Argyll and Bute Council's Economic Strategy Refresh: 2024 – 2034 (2024); and
- Declaring an Argyll and Bute Housing Emergency, Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee Paper (1 June 2023).

### 16.2.4 Other Documents

The following national publications are also considered relevant to this chapter:

- The Scottish Outdoor Access Code (NatureScot, 2020).
- Our Strategic Framework (VisitScotland, 2021).
- Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism For A Sustainable Future (Scottish Tourism Alliance, 2020).
- Tourism in Scotland: the economic contribution of the sector (Scottish Government, 2018).

The following local publications are also considered relevant to this chapter:

- Argyll & the Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership Visitor Economy Recovery and Growth Strategy 2022 – 2025.

## 16.3 Consultation

The following table provides detail on the consultation comments received relevant to this socio-economic, recreation and tourism chapter. The key issues and actions taken to address these points have been set out within *Table 16.1 Summary of Consultation*, below.

**Table 16.1 Summary of Consultation**

Consultee	Summary of Response	Key Issue	Action Taken
Argyll and Bute Council	Discussion over the water levels at Loch Awe, the Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape at Inveraray, the pier improvement project being pursued by ABC, the materials and material waste of the Headpond and connections points, and jobs and Temporary Workers Accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in water levels of Loch Awe</li> <li>Job creation associated with the Development</li> <li>Required Temporary Workers Accommodation.</li> <li>Potential for community benefits e.g. additional housing</li> </ul>	<p>Change in the water levels of Loch Awe will not be discernible by recreational users.</p> <p>A Workers Housing Strategy (Appendix 16.2 Volume 5 Appendices) has been prepared detailing accommodation expectations associated with the construction phase of the proposed Development.</p> <p>ILI has engaged with Argyll Estate on their masterplan and identified an opportunity to construct 12 permanent houses on Argyll Estate land. Refer to Appendix B: Preliminary Draft Workers Housing Strategy for further details.</p>
Historic Environment Scotland	HES identified a potential for significant adverse impacts on the Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape around Inveraray Castle. The proposed new access, improved access from the proposed pier and the proposed temporary Construction Compound would affect the Upper Avenue of Inveraray Castle.	Impact upon the Upper Avenue as a result of proposed new and improved access from the proposed pier and around Inveraray Castle.	<p>Chapter 13: Cultural Heritage, has assessed the likely cultural heritage impacts and are not repeated within this chapter, and Chapter 3: Evolution of Design and Alternatives, sets out the alternatives that have been assessed.</p> <p>Comments from HES focus on potential impacts related to construction works in the smaller development sites north and south of Inveraray. Use of the jetty and associated access routes is expected a maximum of ten times over the course of the seven year construction period. This will limit the extent of impact upon users of the Upper Avenue and visitors to the Garden and Designed Landscape around Inveraray Castle. The temporary Construction Compound will be sited to ensure access along the Upper Avenue is maintained throughout the construction period.</p>
Marine Scotland Science	There is an important recreational fishery for Atlantic salmon, brown trout and pike on Loch Awe, the River Orchy (flows into Loch Awe) and the River Awe (flows out of Loch Awe).	Presence of recreational fishery on Loch Awe, River Orchy and the River Awe.	Chapter 8: Marine Ecology has assessed the likely impacts of the proposed Development upon marine ecology with Chapter 11: Water Environment assessing impacts from silt and sedimentation in Loch Awe, concluding that impacts upon species of salmon, brown trout and pike in the loch are expected to be managed through good practice mitigation.
Royal Yachting Association Scotland (RYA)	<p>A new or upgraded pier could benefit recreational boaters and the local community. As it is unclear what the impact on recreational boating will be during the construction phase then the impact on recreational boating should be scoped in. However mitigation measures should ensure that there are no adverse effects. It will be important to consult Inspire Inveraray which wishes to buy the old pier.</p> <p>RYA conclude that the area of the loch is great enough to ensure that short-term water level changes associated with the scheme are likely to be trivial to small recreational boats.</p>	Potential impact upon recreational boaters and local community following construction of pier at Inveraray.	<p>Engagement with Inspire Inveraray concluded that a second permanent pier was not desired as funding has been secured to upgrade the old existing pier within the north of Inveraray. The Marine Facility associated with the Development is temporary.</p> <p>RYA agree that any changes to the water level of Loch Awe, as a result of the proposed Development, would be trivial to small recreational boats on account of the loch's size.</p> <p>RYA Scotland is a non-statutory consultee of Marine Scotland so will be consulted when the marine licence is applied for.</p>
Scotways	<p>The public right of way SA128 is recorded in the National Catalogue of Rights of Way (CROW) as crossing close to the application site.</p> <p>Outline the information relating to other forms of public access to land and recreational amenity should be considered. The Applicant should take</p>	Proposed access route's interference with Public Right of Way SA128 within the Development Site boundary.	Engagement with Argyll and Bute Council's Access Manager concluded that an Outline Access Management Plan should be prepared detailing the measures proposed to minimise any impacts on access to local paths. The Outline Access Management Plan is set out in Appendix 16.1 within Volume 5 Appendices.

Consultee	Summary of Response	Key Issue	Action Taken
	into account both recreational amenity and landscape impacts. Comments on the legal duties to uphold access rights deriving from the Land Reform Act (Section 3 and Section 14). Scotways suggests approaching the relevant authority's access team for their input when drawing up their Access Management Plan.		
MoD	Concerns over piling activities and additional noise or vessel traffic within Loch Fyne impacting upon high speed runs and development activities.	Confliction of trial days with works in Loch Fyne generating noise in the water	It has been agreed with the MoD that piling activities within Loch Fyne will cease on trial days for circa 12 days per year with dates to be agreed with the appointed Construction contractor who will maintain in contact with the MoD throughout construction as required, and therefore their availability for the range of uses will continue largely as normal.

In addition, public consultation was undertaken as part of the Development design process. The consultation received feedback which can be categorised by the following themes:

- Changes to Loch Awe water levels;
- Increased traffic flows for residential receptors; and
- The potential for negative wellbeing impacts as a result of the proposed Development, including the potential for the Development to have both short and long term negative commercial impacts for specific residential receptors located near the loch side

A questionnaire was available at the consultation events which was intended to gain further insight into recreational uses in the area. Responses indicated that the local area is used regularly for walking and highlighted a general concern amongst local residents of the potential impact of the proposed Development upon local Walking Routes and access along the A85 and B840. This consultation response proved beneficial in understanding local concerns and helped inform the Development design and mitigation. Further detail on the consultation events and outcomes has been included within the accompanying Pre-Application Consultation report.

## 16.4 Methods

### 16.4.1 Guidance and Standards

The following national level guidelines apply to this chapter:

- Institute Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA): *Environmental Impact Assessment Guide to: Delivering Quality Development* (IEMA, 2016).

#### 16.4.1.1 Socio-economics

The method for the socio-economic assessment has been broadly derived from the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Volume 11 Environmental Assessment methodology for the Assessment of Pedestrians, Cyclists and Community Effects (Volume 11, Section 3 Part 8, Ref 2, LA112 Population and Human Health (Standards for Highways, 2020)). This guidance has since been replaced by DMRB Sustainability and Environment Appraisal: LA 112 'Population and Human Health' (Highways England, et al., 2020). The updated LA 112 however does not include consideration of certain socio-economic elements which were contained within Part 8 guidance; those elements of the Part 8 guidance therefore have continued to influence this assessment.

Together, this guidance promotes:

- a consideration of job creation, local expenditure, and potential effects on community facilities.

#### 16.4.1.2 Tourism and Recreation

The guidance concerning effects on tourism and recreation broadly follows the guidance contained within DMRB, Volume 11 Environmental Assessment methodology for the Assessment of Pedestrians, Cyclists and Community Effects (Volume 11, Section 3 Part 8, Ref 2). The DMRB guidance recommends consideration of the following:



- Changes to amenity by users of core paths, footpaths, cycleways and other less formal routes including local paths which may not be designated; and
- Severance or disturbance of core paths, footpaths, cycleways and local paths during both construction and operation; and
- Changes to the amenity value experienced by visitors.

## 16.4.2 Approach to Assessment

The methodology adopted involves undertaking desktop research to determine the existing conditions and receptors within the study area. This desktop exercise draws on a range of publicly available statistics and information alongside feedback from consultation events.

Sources used to determine the baseline include:

- For socio-economic elements:
  - Scottish Government statistics publications;
  - Databases and reports from the Office for National Statistics (ONS); and
  - National Records for Scotland.
- For tourism and recreation elements:
  - VisitScotland research and statistics reports;
  - Consultation with Scotways and Argyll and Bute Council's Access Manager;
  - Core Paths Plan Review; and
  - Historic Environment Scotland databases.

### 16.4.2.1 Study Area

The Development Site is shown on *Figure 1.1 Location Plan*, and *Figure 2.3 Above Ground Infrastructure (Sheets 1 & 2)* within *Volume 3: Figures* and comprises the core Development Site, lying to the east of Balliemanoach, and subsidiary development site areas including access track locations to the north and south of Inveraray. The Development Site in its entirety falls within the red line boundary and comprises an area of 3115 ha.

The study area for the socio-economic, recreation and tourism assessment is shown in *Figure 16.1a: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism Receptors (Volume 3: Figures)*. The study area extends to 5 km, as agreed in the scoping report, from the red line boundary in order to ensure consideration of receptors in the wider area around the Development Site.

## 16.4.3 Assessment Scope

The assessment considers the effects during the three phases of the Development lifespan as identified in *Section 2.15: Construction Programme of Chapter 2: Project and Site Description*. The phases include: pre-construction, construction and operation. Decommissioning has been scoped out as per *Section 2.19 Decommissioning* within *Chapter 2 Project and Site Description*. The assessment considers:

- Socio-economics – the local communities and associated economies in the vicinity of the Development; and
- Tourism and Recreation – tourist / visitor attractions as well as recreational land uses or resources such as visitor centres and walking or cycling routes.

The assessment will consider the effects of the construction and operation of the Development on the local communities and associated economies in the vicinity of the proposed Development. Additionally, tourist and visitor attractions and recreational land uses such as walking or cycling routes will also be assessed. The study area will extend to 5 km from the proposed Development Site in order to ensure consideration of the local area not just the immediate Development location.

The assessment process follows the following approach:

- Scoping, comments received from the scoping opinion and through individual consultation helped to develop the scope of the assessment;

- Description of the baseline conditions, against which the effects of the Development will be assessed;
- Determination of the receptors likely to be affected and their sensitivity or importance;
- Prediction of the degree of change from the baseline as a result of an effect and the likelihood that it may occur (i.e. the magnitude of change); and
- An assessment of whether a likely significant effect will occur on a receptor by considering the predicted magnitude of change with the sensitivity of the receptor and also taking into account any mitigation measures.

## 16.4.4 Assessment Methodology

The assessment methodology employed throughout this chapter to determine the impact of the proposed Development upon local socio-economic, recreation and tourism receptors reflects that of the magnitude of change and significance criteria set out in *Chapter 4: Approach to EIA*.

### 16.4.4.1 Sensitivity of Receptors

The sensitivity of the receptor takes into account the receptor's value or quality in terms of the socio-economic or tourism activities it supports and the ability to absorb an effect without perceptible change. The sensitivity criteria have been derived taking into account relevant legislation, statutory designations or classifications.

### 16.4.4.2 Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change criteria consider the scale of the predicted changes to existing conditions, taking into account its duration, the reversibility of the effect and whether the effect is direct or indirect.

### 16.4.4.3 Significance of Effects

The approach to the assessment of effects and determination of significance is as per *Table 4.7: Approach to the Assessment of Significance* in *Chapter 4: Approach to EIA*. The approach is also informed by professional judgement. The significance of effect is based on a combination of the sensitivity or importance of the receptor and the magnitude of change from a potential effect. As in Chapter 4, this general approach has been treated as a framework during the assessment and had not been used as a matrix.

## 16.4.5 Limitations and Assumptions

It should be noted that the following features have been assessed separately within the relevant EIA chapters and therefore do not fall within the scope of this assessment:

- Effects on visual amenity of tourism and recreation receptors are considered in *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment*.
- Impacts on the operation of hydropower schemes within the area, such as Beochlich, will be addressed within *Chapter 12: Flood Risk and Water Resources*.
- Impacts on the heritage values of heritage assets will be addressed within *Chapter 13: Cultural Heritage*.
- Effects on increases in traffic volumes on the local road network and severance for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians will be assessed within *Chapter 14: Access, Traffic and Transport*.
- Effects on fish, including commercial fisheries are included within *Chapter 7: Aquatic Ecology*, *Chapter 11: Water Environment* and *Chapter 20: Commercial Fisheries*.

## 16.5 Baseline Environment

In order to assess the potential impacts of the Development, it is necessary to determine the environmental conditions, resources and receptors that currently exist within the Development Site and in the surrounding area.

Baseline information has been collated from a variety of publicly available sources as well as through consultation with Argyll and Bute Council. Some information has also been obtained through the collection of survey data as set out in *Section 16.4.2: Approach to Assessment*, above.

## 16.5.1 Existing Land Use

The core Development Site is located within mid Argyll, between Loch Awe and Loch Fyne, and lies approximately 9.5 km to the north-west of Inveraray and approximately 4.5 km to the south of Portsonachan (*Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan*)(Volume 3: *Figures*). The land within the Headpond area of the Development Site comprises an upland plateau moorland with craggy outcrops, used mainly for sheep grazing.

The highest point on the site is approximately 400 m above sea level. With the exception of Public Right of Way SA128, there are no public rights of way, cycle routes or formal recreation receptors within the core Development Site. The Development's Tailpond will be Loch Awe, an area used for recreational activities such as boating, water sports and angling. The development components located around Inveraray include the Marine Facility, pier and upgraded access tracks. These tracks intersect with existing tracks at Inveraray Castle Garden and Designed Landscape (the visual amenity of which is assessed in *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment*) and certain core paths.

The Headpond location at Lochan Airigh sits at approximately 360 m above ordnance datum and 3 km to the east of the village of Balliemanoch. The Marine Facility is located south of Inveraray off the A83.

There is no woodland within the main area of the Development Site, with woodland pockets restricted to those located along the proposed access tracks. These woodlands include plantation woodland along the existing access track off the A819; along the proposed new and upgraded existing tracks proposed to the west of Inveraray; and along the upgraded access to the north of Inveraray Castle.

The Development is predominantly located within the catchment of the Allt Beochlich watercourse. The catchment consists of a number of small streams which ultimately flow into Loch Awe, these originate from smaller Lochs (Airigh, Dubh and Romach). A recreational fishery for Atlantic salmon, brown trout and pike on Loch Awe, the River Orchy and the River Awe is present within the study area. Additionally, a fish farm is located on Loch Awe outside of the study area.

## 16.5.2 Socio-Economics

### 16.5.2.1 Population

The core Development Site is located in a rural area. Isolated static caravans are situated at the west of the site on the banks of Loch Awe in proximity to the proposed Tailpond inlet / outlet. There are also two houses in this area close to the proposed western access track linking the Headpond and Tailpond; a single detached bungalow and Balliemanoch farm itself.

In June 2021 Scotland's population was estimated at 5,479,900. At the same point, the total population of the Argyll and Bute local authority area was estimated to be 86,220 which equates to approximately 1.57% of the total population of Scotland.

The Development Site lies within Argyll and Bute Council where it is noted that 47.2% of the area's population live in areas classified by the Scottish Government as 'rural' (Argyll and Bute Council (2020). Surrounding the Development Site lie the settlements of Ardchonnell, Balliemanoch, Drimfern, Ladyfield, Portsonachan and Taynafead. Inveraray is the largest nearby settlement to the Development Site with an estimated population of 560 (Argyll and Bute Council, 2020). In 2022, the total population of the study area was determined to be 1066 (Office for National Statistics, 2023).

**Table 16.2. Populations**

Age Group	Total Populations of Argyll and Bute	% of Total Population of Argyll and Bute	% of population Scotland
0 – 15	12,441	14.4	16.6
16 – 24	8,232	9.5	10.2
25 – 44	17,085	19.8	26.4
45 – 64	25,685	29.8	27.2
65 – 74	12,521	14.5	10.9
75 +	10,256	11.9	8.7
All Ages	86,220	100.0	100.0

Age Group	Total Populations of Argyll and Bute	% of Total Population of Argyll and Bute	% of population of Scotland
-----------	--------------------------------------	--	-----------------------------

Source: National Records of Scotland, 2022

### 16.5.2.2 Housing

Argyll and Bute Council declared a Housing Emergency in June 2023 due to a stressed local housing system giving rise to increased homelessness and a lack of housing choice for key workers (Argyll and Bute Council, 2023).

The Argyll and Bute Local Housing Strategy Annual Report for 2023<sup>1</sup> outlines that there was a total of 48,971 dwellings in April 2023 of all tenures in Argyll and Bute. Within the housing areas closest to Balliemanoach there are 8,899 houses within the Lorn area (including Oban) and 5,714 in mid-Argyll (including Inveraray).

The housing stock is predominantly owner-occupied with 29,133 dwellings, 8,799 dwellings are social rented housing and 5,697 dwellings are privately rented. There are a further 5,225 dwellings that are defined as ineffective stock, i.e., not utilised as a households main dwelling. These include second/holiday homes, empty homes and job-related homes. The ineffective stock rate for Lorn is 8% and Mid-Argyll 13% which is over three times the national average (4%)<sup>2</sup>.

### 16.5.2.3 Employment

Employment rates within Argyll and Bute are identified in *Table 16.3. Employment Rates June 2023*, below. The percentage of people in employment in the Argyll and Bute region is 0.5% higher than across Scotland. By comparison, the employment rate of the region is 0.4% lower than the average for Great Britain, as shown in the table below.

**Table 16.3. Employment Rates June 2023**

Argyll and Bute (%)	Scotland (%)	Great Britain (%)
75.3	74.8	75.7

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2023

*Table 16.4 Employee Jobs by Sector*, provides a breakdown of employment by industry. The four largest employment sectors in Argyll and Bute are *Human Health and Social Work Activities* (12.5%), *Accommodation and Food Service Activities* (13.9%), *Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Vehicles* (11.1%) and *Public Administration and Defence* (11.1%). Data on the *Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing* sector and *Activities of Households as Employers* is not available at the local authority level; however, it is noted that the ABC Economy Key Facts<sup>3</sup> states that agriculture and fishing has relatively high levels of employment in Argyll and Bute.

In 2022, 3.5% of jobs in the Argyll and Bute Council area were in the *Arts, Entertainment and Recreation* sector with a further 13.9% in the *Accommodation and Food Service Activities* sector, as shown in *Table 16.4 Employee Jobs by Sector*, below.

VisitScotland (2023) notes that within the region, employment in sustainable tourism accounts for 5,700 jobs, with the tourism sector providing approximately 15% of employment in Argyll and Bute. By comparison, in 2022, the tourism sector accounted for 8.5% of total employment in Scotland, providing approximately 229,000 jobs throughout the country (VisitScotland, 2023).

**Table 16.4 Employee Jobs by Sector**

Sector	Argyll and Bute		Scotland
	Employee Jobs	%	%
Mining and Quarrying	200	0.6	1.0
Manufacturing	1,750	4.9	6.9
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning	400	1.1	0.8
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management	150	0.4	0.7

<sup>1</sup> [The Argyll and Bute Local Housing Strategy Annual Report for 2023](#)

<sup>2</sup> [INTRODUCTION \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/my-community/economy>  
Chapter 16 Socioeconomics, Recreation and Tourism

		Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Construction	2,000	5.6	5.7
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Vehicles	4,000	11.1	12.9
Transportation and Storage	1,500	4.2	4.1
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	5,000	13.9	8.4
Information and Communication	600	1.7	3.2
Financial and Insurance Activities	175	0.5	3.3
Real Estate Activities	500	1.4	1.3
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	1,750	4.9	7.4
Administrative and Support Service Activities	3,000	8.3	8.1
Public Administration and Defence	4,000	11.1	6.5
Education	3,000	8.3	8.8
Human Health and Social Work Activities	4,500	12.5	15.7
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1,250	3.5	3.0
Other Service Activities	450	1.2	1.6

Source: Nomis, 2023

The businesses which exist in the vicinity of the Development and within the 5 km study area have been identified through a desk-top exercise which also identified various categories of businesses. These include farming/agriculture, leisure and tourism, including hotels and self-catering accommodation sites on the banks of Loch Awe. Numerous guest houses, hotels and self-catering accommodation businesses are located within Inveraray and the wider study area.

### 16.5.3 Tourism and Recreation

A review of national and regional tourism strategies (VisitScotland, 2023; Wild About Argyll, 2022), together with publicly available information, including statistics for the area has been undertaken. This review identifies key tourism receptors within 5 km of the Development Site. Features were considered tourism receptors if they promoted tourist visits, and include:

- Visitor Attractions – features that attract visitors out of interest or pleasure (such as boat tours, gift shops, local lochs, Scenic Areas and Nature Reserves)
- Tourist Services – features that cater to tourists e.g. restaurants and pubs; and
- Recreation – features that support outdoor recreational activities (such as core paths, long distance routes and lochs).

A variety of online sources were visited to gather publicly available information on tourist attractions, resources, services and other tourist features. This includes but is not limited to:

- VisitScotland;
- Scottish Government;
- Scotways; and
- Wild About Argyll.

Tourism receptors identified as part of the review have been set out in *Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site* below. A complete list of the tourism receptors within the study area has been included as part of this assessment in *Figure 16.2: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism Receptors* (Volume 3 Figures).

A review of Scotland's Environment Map (2024) and NatureScot's Sites of Scientific Interest (2024) database identified that there are no statutory environmental designations within the core area of the Development Site. Inveraray Castle Garden and Designed Landscape falls within the red line boundaries to the north and south of Inveraray. The proposed Marine Facility would be situated within the Upper Loch Fyne and Loch Goil Marine Protected Area (MPA), located to the west of Inveraray.

### 16.5.3.1 Tourism Industry

Tourism is an important contributor to the local economy. VisitScotland compiles annual tourism statistics for Scotland. The statistics provide a range of details including an estimate of the contribution of the tourism sector to the economy, numbers of visits to the region, and popular attractions.

Key points to note from the data on 2019 (VisitScotland, 2023) include:

- UK residents took approximately 846,000 trips to Argyll & the Isles, staying on average 4.0 nights and spending £199 million;
- Visitors from overseas made 147,000 trips to Argyll & the Isles, staying on average 3.7 nights and spending approximately £62 million;
- Argyll Forest Park, the most visited attraction in Argyll and Bute, is outside the study area, over 5 km from the Development Site boundary; and
- Occupancy rates in the area vary according to the type of accommodation but are typically highest between May and August.

### 16.5.3.2 Tourism Receptors

The tourist attractions identified in the study area can be loosely split into the following two categories:

- Scenic areas and nature reserves which includes lochs, forestry and mountains; and
- Visitor and historic attractions, which includes museums, galleries, outdoor activities and archaeological features that are promoted for tourists.

#### Scenic Areas and Nature Reserves

Areas designated for their landscape and nature value are not necessarily marketed for tourism but could contribute to tourists' preference for an area. This is especially true in Scotland as VisitScotland's surveys confirm that landscape is the most important factor that attracts visitors to Scotland (VisitScotland, 2021). Scenic areas and nature reserves often provide educational and / or recreational infrastructure and facilities. Those designated areas identified within the study area are listed in *Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site*, below.

Several lochs fall within the study area and contribute to the area's appeal for tourist. These lochs also offer the potential for various recreational uses including bathing water, water sports, fishing and loch cruises. Whilst Loch Awe falls closest to the core Development Site, the delivery of large abnormal loads to the Site will occur via the Marine Facility and pier constructed on Loch Fyne. Pressure on the local road network is therefore expected to be reduced.

To the north of Inveraray Castle, non-statutory long established woodland, of plantation origin, is located along the northern and southern stretches of the proposed access route. This woodland contributes to the area's local setting.

*Table 16.5 Top Five Free and Paid Visitor Attractions* presents the most visited tourist attractions within the Argyll and Bute region in 2019. The results demonstrate the importance of scenic areas and nature reserves with Argyll Forest Park representing the top tourist destination in terms of visitor numbers (VisitScotland, 2023).

**Table 16.5 Top Five Free and Paid Visitor Attractions in Argyll and Bute region**

	Visitor Attraction	Visitor Numbers 2019
Free Attractions	Argyll Forest Park	151,538
	Staffa National Nature Reserve	107,725
	Oban War and Peace Museum	33,310
	Iona	29,808
	Aros Park	19,710
Paid Attractions	Inveraray Castle	125,462
	Iona Abbey & St Columba Centre (Mull)	63,884
	Oban Distillery Visitor Centre	57,031
	Benmore Botanic Garden	53,318

Visitor Attraction	Visitor Numbers 2019
Mount Stuart	42,809

Source: VisitScotland (2023)

## Visitor Attractions

The Argyll and Bute region has a high density of well-preserved archaeological features. Some of these features are promoted as historic attractions for tourists, including scheduled monuments, conservation areas and listed buildings. The review of tourism receptors identified several historic tourist attractions falling within the study area. These features are set out in *Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site*, below.

One scheduled monument is present within the core Development Site: Balliemanoach Chapel and Burial Ground, which is located approximately 500 m north of the proposed tailrace tunnel. Further information on the historic attractions as archaeological features is contained within *Chapter 13: Cultural Heritage* of this EIA.

The visitor attractions identified within the study area are set out in *Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site*, below and shown in *Figure 16.1: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism Receptors*, included within Volume 3 Figures.

## Recreation Routes

Access to the outdoors is important for recreation and tourism in Argyll and Bute. The Land Reform Act established access rights to most land and inland water for everyone in Scotland. The rights only exist if they are exercised responsibly by respecting people's privacy, safety and livelihoods, and the environment.

Recreation routes support outdoor pursuits and activities. Recreation routes within the study area are core paths, long distance routes and local paths. A review of Scotways' Catalogue of Rights of Way indicated Public Right of Way SA128 to be located within the Development Site (Scotways, 2024). Although this route does not appear within Historic Environment Records or the Canmore database, consultee feedback provided by Scotways indicated that the route has been informally promoted and remains important for public access to the countryside.

The core paths closest to the proposed Development are the C173 (Ford – Annat), located approximately 0.8 km to the west of the Development Site, and the C200 (Coille Bhraghad – Queens Drive), located to the northwest of Inveraray. Moreover, numerous tracks are present within the commercial forest to the north of the Development Site. Although these routes are not formally promoted trails or cycle routes, they provide local amenity access to the outdoors. Opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding also exists in the wider study area through various waymarked core paths and recreation routes including:

- The Loch Lomond and Cowal Way; a long-distance footpath linking Portavadie in the south of Cowal with Inveruglas at Loch Lomond, approximately 16.5 km to the southeast of the Headpond;
- Argyll and Bute Core Path network; the proposed access routes at Inveraray cross the following Core Paths:
  - C200: Coille Bhraghad-Queens Drive;
  - C201: Dun Na Cuaiche; and
  - C203: Bealach an Fhuarain.
- National Cycle Network Route 78 to the west of Loch Awe; and
- A number of core paths located on the west side of Loch Awe including C173 (a, b, c, d, e), C490, C305; and
- Long-distance walks including the summit of Ben Cruachan.
- The wider area is also used for hill walking in the various nearby Munro, Corbett and Graham hills.

An Outline Access Management Plan has been prepared (*Appendix 16.1 Outline Access Management Plan (Volume 5: Appendices)*) which sets out the access arrangements for walkers, cyclists and horse riders during construction and operation of the Development. The plan also details the mitigation measures which should be implemented to maintain access during these phases.

## Tourist Services

In addition to visitor attractions and resources there are a range of services which cater to tourists and visitors such as hotels, B&Bs and self-catering accommodation. Table 16.6 % Net Rooms Occupancy by Area and Accommodation Type, provides information on accommodation services. The table compares occupancy within the Argyll and Bute region to Scotland as a whole, considering a range of accommodation types.

The results indicate that maximum occupancy occurs in summer months with the highest percentages recorded as 87% for hotels in June and August, 86% for guest houses and B&Bs in August and 71% for self-catering units in August. Occupancy within Argyll and Bute generally surpasses that of Scotland. Whilst every effort has been made to capture the most recent accommodation data for the region, it should be noted that the following statistics have been gathered during the Covid-19 pandemic and therefore the overall results of Table 16.6 may not be representative of previous or current years.

**Table 16.6 % Net Rooms Occupancy by Area and Accommodation Type**

	Hotels (%)		Guest Houses and B&Bs (%)		Self-catering (%)	
	Argyll and Bute Region, 2019	Scotland, 2021/2022	Argyll and Bute Region, 2019	Scotland, 2021/2022	Argyll and Bute Region, 2019	Scotland, 2021/2022
January	62	40	37	19	43	20
February	64	55	48	33	50	30
March	67	44	34	36	54	30
April	76	67	45	60	55	42
May	83	65	72	66	63	41
June	87	72	70	73	63	51
July	83	84	74	75	67	60
August	87	84	86	71	71	55
September	82	47	69	60	59	54
October	77	63	46	36	53	45
November	62	50	38	28	35	28
December	61	45	17	37	40	32
<b>Annual average</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>49.6</b>	<b>54.4</b>	<b>40.6</b>

Source: VisitScotland, 2023

Tourist services other than accommodation are also found within the study area, including shops, restaurants and pubs. Tourist services prove more relevant to this socio-economic assessment than tourist accommodation and it is therefore the former which have been included *Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site* Additional detail on the specific tourist and recreation receptors within the study area can be found in *Figure 16.1b: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism Receptors Table (Volume 3: Figures)*.

**Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site**

Attraction / Amenity	Description	Distance to Development	Sensitivity
<b>Scenic Areas and Nature Reserves</b>			
Knapdale National Scenic Area	National Scenic Area characterised by Knapdale Forest and partially surrounded by the Crinan Canal, Sound of Jura and Loch Sween.	Approximately 27km southwest of Development Site.	Medium
<b>Trails and Cycle Routes</b>			
The Loch Lomond and Cowal Way	Long-distance footpath linking Portavadie in the south of Cowal with Inveruglas at Loch Lomond.	Approximately 16.5 km to the southeast of the Headpond.	Medium



Attraction / Amenity	Description	Distance to Development	Sensitivity
National Cycle Network Route 78	National Cycle Network Route running to the west of Loch Awe.	NCN route 78 lies approximately 0.8 km to the west, on the opposite side of Loch Awe from the Development Site.	High
Summit of Ben Cruachan	Walking route to the summit of Ben Cruachan.	Ben Cruachan lies approximately 12 km to the north of the core Development Site.	Medium
C200: Coille Bhraghad-Queens Drive	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	The proposed access route at Inveraray crosses this Core Path.	Medium
C201: Dun Na Cuaiche	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	The proposed access route at Inveraray crosses this Core Path.	Medium
C203: Bealach an Fhuarain	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	The proposed access route at Inveraray crosses this Core Path.	Medium
C171: Kilmore – Loch Nan-Kilchrenan	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path lies approximately 5 km to the north of the core Development Site, on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Medium
C173 (a, b, c, d, e)	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path lies approximately 0.8 km to the west of the core Development Site, on the opposite side of Loch Awe from the Development Site.	Medium
C175: Kilmelford to Loch Avich	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path lies approximately 5.5 km southwest of the core Development Site on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Medium
C176: Loch Avich South (Two Lochs Trail)	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path lies approximately 5.5 km southwest of the core Development Site on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Medium
C199: Furnace to Inveraray via Kenmore	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path follows the western bank of Loch Fyne, south of Inveraray and approximately 1km from the Development Site boundary south of Inveraray.	Medium
C300: Kilchrenan to Taynuit	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path is located approximately 5 km north of the core Development Site on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Medium
C305: Dalavich to Barnaline Lodge	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path lies approximately 4 km to the southwest of the core Development Site, on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Medium
C323: Drissaig to Inverinan via Gleann Meisean	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path is located approximately 4.6 km from the core Development Site, on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Medium
C324: Inverinan circular, Loch Aweside	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe.	This Core Path lies approximately 1 km to the west of the core Development Site, on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Medium
C490: Dalavich, Loch Awe	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path lies approximately 4.3 km southwest of the core Development Site on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Medium
C523: Loch Nant, Loch Aweside	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network.	This Core Path lies approximately 1.5 km to the west of the core Development Site, on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Medium
Old Road to Inverinan	1.1km rural path, designated Heritage Path located west of Loch Awe.	This path lies approximately 1 km to the west of the core Development Site, on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Low
Public Right of Way SA128	Recorded National Catalogue Rights of Way which crosses the Development Site, intersecting the proposed access route to the north of the Site.	The proposed access route to the north of the Development Site crosses this Public Right of Way.	Low

### Historic & Visitor Attractions

Attraction / Amenity	Description	Distance to Development	Sensitivity
Kilchurn Castle	15 <sup>th</sup> century castle located on a rocky peninsula at the northeastern end of Loch Awe.	Approximately 14.5 km to the northeast of the Headpond.	Low
Inveraray	Town in Argyll and Bute located on the western shore of Loch Fyne.	The proposed works at Inveraray are located directly north and south of the town.	Low
Inveraray Castle	Country house near Inveraray on the shore of Loch Fyne.	Approximately 0.5 km south of the proposed Development Site at Inveraray.	Medium
Inveraray Old Jail	Former prison and court house on Church Square, Inveraray.	Approximately 0.7 km east of the proposed Development Site at Inveraray.	Low
Innes Channel Castle	Ruined 13 <sup>th</sup> century castle on Innis Channel, an island on Loch Awe.	Approximately 4.3 km southwest of the proposed Development Site.	Low
Dunderave Castle	16 <sup>th</sup> century castle on the shore of Loch Fyne.	Approximately 4.3 km west of the proposed Development Site around Inveraray.	Low
The Inveraray Bell Tower	38 m bell tower on the shore of Loch Fyne.	Approximately 0.5 km west of the proposed Development Site at Inveraray.	Low
Inveraray Maritime Museum	Maritime Museum located at the Pier, Inveraray.	Approximately 0.75 km from the Development Site at Inveraray.	Low
Dunderave Castle	16 <sup>th</sup> century castle on the shore of Loch Fyne,	Approximately 5km northeast of the proposed Development Site at Inveraray.	Low
Fraoch Eilean Castle	13 <sup>th</sup> century castle located on Fraoch Eilean island in Loch Awe.	Approximately 7 km northeast of the core Development Site.	Low
Innis Channel Castle	13 <sup>th</sup> century located on Innis Channel island in Loch Awe	Approximately 6.3 km southwest of the core Development Site.	Low
Nant Power Station, Dam	Hydroelectric power plant, first commissioned in 1963 at Coillaig.	Approximately 1.8 km northwest of the core Development Site, on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Low
Hayfield House	Walled garden and gardener's house at Hayfield in Argyll.	Approximately 5.5 km northeast of the core Development Site on the opposite side of Loch Awe.	Low
<b>Visitor Services</b>			
Various restaurants	Various restaurants including Loch View Restaurant; Restaurant; Inveraray.	Located within study area.	Low
Various gift shops	Various gift shops including The Courtyard; The Pier Shop; Bonnie Argyll.	Located in Inveraray.	Low
Various retail	Various supermarkets including The Furnace Village Store; Co-op Food; Costcutter.	Located in Inveraray.	Low
Various clothing stores	Various clothing stores including Inveraray Woollen Mill; MacIntyres; Dewar Store.	Located in Inveraray.	Low

Source: VisitScotland (2023)

## 16.6 Assessment of Effects

The Development has the potential to result in both adverse and beneficial impacts on a wide range of recreational infrastructure, tourism assets and socio-economic activities. In order to assess the overall significance of an effect it is necessary to establish the magnitude of the effect occurring i.e. the change to the existing baseline conditions as a result of the development and the sensitivity or importance of the receiving environment or receptor. The following sections assess the potential impacts upon different receptors during the construction and operational phases.

### 16.6.1 Receptors Scoped out of Assessment

The inclusion of impacts to housing supply and the supply of visitor accommodation in proximity to the Development Site have been scoped out of this assessment as a Workers Housing Strategy sets out potential options for housing workers during construction (*Appendix 16.2 Housing Strategy (Volume 5: Appendices)*). The Development is therefore not expected to have an adverse impact upon the availability of tourist accommodation for visitors or the local housing market.

In addition, the proposed Development is not expected to have an effect upon population demographics, or local businesses within the Development Site. These features have therefore been scoped out of the assessment.

Moreover, the decommissioning of large-scale pumped storage hydro projects is extremely rare due to the long operational lifespan of these facilities. The impact of decommissioning has therefore been scoped out of this assessment.

### 16.6.2 Pre-construction

Whilst economic impacts upon local businesses pre-construction are unlikely, the local community may experience feelings of uncertainty during this phase on account of the unknown potential impacts associated with the construction of such a Development. To address this, the Applicant has published a project website and held consultation events on the project. A Community Liaison Group (CLG) will also be established prior to the commencement of works. This group will consist of representatives from the local community, including businesses, tourist and recreational operators. The CLG will provide an opportunity for local residents and stakeholders to share their views and feelings about the Development directly with the Applicant. As such, it is expected that any potential negative social impacts during the pre-construction phase will be negligible.

### 16.6.3 Construction

#### 16.6.3.1 Socio-economics Access

During the construction phase, access will be limited in all areas with construction works for health and safety reasons. This includes the Headpond, Tailpond inlet / outlet structure, the compounds, and the access tracks (temporary and ancillary). Site clearance will be phased and will not include the whole area at one time.

The construction works are not expected to require diversions to any existing recreational routes on site. However, where this requirement changes and diversions are deemed necessary, these diversions will be determined post consent once the contractor has been appointed. Access is considered to have a significance of Medium as it is regionally important to the Argyll and Bute region for recreation and tourism. The magnitude of change is considered Medium given the length of the construction period. The Significance is therefore considered to be **Minor Adverse** which is considered to be **Not Significant**.

During construction, there will likely be localised disruption to public access along the B840, A819 and A83 as a result of the increased vehicle movements. Impacts to road users has been assessed within *Chapter 14: Access, Traffic and Transport*. A temporary realignment of the B840 will be necessary during construction works with potential effects assessed to be **Minor Adverse** and **Not Significant** upon the local community on account of the traffic disruption.

#### Potential Effects on the Local Economy and Tourism

The Development is likely to have a beneficial effect on the local economy during the seven year construction phase, as a result of job creation and local expenditure by the developer and contractors, alongside supply chain

benefits. During the construction phase, workers involved in the project would use local services and spend in local restaurants and shops which would be especially beneficial outside of the high tourist season. Local businesses are predicted to have Medium sensitivity and will be impacted for up to seven years which would be a Medium magnitude of change. The significance of effect on the local economy is assessed to be **Moderate Beneficial** and is therefore considered to be **Significant**.

### **Potential Effects on the Local Job Market**

The job market is considered to have a medium sensitivity to change, being regionally important, but robust due to existing employment numbers. The applicant anticipates that up to 1000 personnel will be employed on site during the seven year construction phase at its peak. The average number of personnel working on the Development Site will be an average of 600 to 800 workers on-site, although reduced numbers will be required during the mobilisation period and as the project nears completion.

The relatively small local population will result in a need to attract workers from outside of the study area and local job market; however, it is considered that the construction of the Development will create local jobs, which will have a beneficial effect on the local job market. Additional benefits will arise as the Applicant is committed to establishing a training programme which will be available for all individuals employed on site and will help to upskill the local workforce.

As the number of local jobs available during construction is unknown at this stage, the limited local population and the duration will be temporary, therefore the magnitude of change of job creation is considered to be Low. The significance of effect on the local job market is therefore likely to be **Minor Beneficial**, which is **Not Significant**.

### **Potential Effects on the Local Community**

Although certain individual properties and farmsteads exist within the study area, there are no community receptors within the Development Site. The communities of Inveraray, Portsonachan and Ardchonnell are all located outside of the Development Site Boundary but within the study area.

The proposed access route on site does not pass through any of the communities identified within the study area. *Chapter 14: Access, Traffic and Transportation* provides detail on the access route from the proposed pier to the core Development Site and assesses the potential effects of construction traffic upon the local area. Abnormal loads utilising this route are not expected to pass any sensitive community receptors such as schools, churches or community halls in order to arrive at the Development Site. New and upgraded routes that will be constructed as part of the proposal have been designed to ensure construction traffic avoids the town of Inveraray. An outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been prepared for the Development, setting out the measures to be implemented which will reduce traffic disruption in the local area (*Appendix 14.1 Transport Assessment Report*)(*Volume 5: Appendices*). The CTMP will be refined and detailed by the appointed construction contractor.

Construction works will require a workforce of up to 1000 people at peak construction periods. A Workers Housing Strategy has been developed to guide the location of worker housing (*Appendix 16.2 Housing Strategy*)(*Volume 5: Appendices*). A key objective is to sensitively locate the housing, which will avoid workers and the associated housing changing the character of the small settlements found within the study area.

Communities and the community receptors are considered to have a Low sensitivity given they are locally important. The magnitude of change is considered to be Low as there will not be any direct impacts. Although some construction activities may be visible from community receptors and there may be some nuisance as a result of certain construction activities, they will not prohibit the daily operations of the various receptors. As a result, the significance of effects to community receptors is considered to be **Negligible**, which is therefore **Not Significant**. Visual impacts of the Development upon the local community are assessed in *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment*.

## **16.6.3.2 Tourism**

### **Potential Effects on Tourism**

There will be some land use change from current grazing land to developed ground for the compounds, access tracks and Headpond, although this is not expected to detract from tourists' enjoyment of the area.

In general, visitor attractions are not predicted to be directly impacted as a result of construction activities. Visitor attractions located within the study area are outside of the Development Site boundary and while there may be views of construction activity from Inveraray and the opposite side of Loch Awe towards the Development,

construction effects will be temporary. There are many hotels, B&Bs and self-catering units located within the study area and while views of construction could impact amenity and deter visitors, the views on construction works would be dependent on the location of these receptors. *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment* considers the expected impact of the Development's construction from various viewpoints within the study area. The viewpoints and assessment of impact can be found in *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment*. Although the Development may be visible from certain tourist receptors, the quality of the visitor experience in the local area is expected to be maintained throughout the construction phase. Tourist receptors are considered to be of Medium sensitivity given their importance for supporting the regional tourism economy. The magnitude of change is considered Low given the change will be temporary. The potential effects are predicted to be **Minor Adverse** which is **Not Significant**.

The potential exists for the Development's construction to impact upon the setting of certain nearby historic visitor attractions as noted in *Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site*, above. Visitors may be deterred by construction activities where these impact upon the setting, the surrounding landscape or cause traffic nuisance on the local road network required to access the features. Visitor attractions are considered to be of Medium sensitivity given that the attractions are regionally important. The magnitude of change is considered Low given the change will be temporary. The potential effects are predicted to be **Minor Adverse** which is **Not Significant**.

An outline Housing Strategy has been drafted as part of the s36 application (*Appendix 16.2 Housing Strategy (Volume 5: Appendices)*), setting out how workers will be accommodated without having an adverse impact on visitor accommodation capacity, and in turn the wider tourism sector. Local properties and accommodation will therefore remain available for tourists. As such, both the magnitude of change and sensitivity of tourist services in the area are considered to be Low. The potential effects are predicted to be **Negligible**, which is considered **Not Significant**.

### Potential Effects on Recreational Routes

The majority of recreation routes identified in *Table 16.8 Assessment of Recreation Routes During Construction*, will be open as normal during the construction phase. However, to ensure the safety of recreation route users during construction, diversions may be necessary for specific routes to facilitate construction activities. The impacted routes fall predominantly within the Development Site boundary within the commercial forest to the north of the Site and are detailed in *Table 16.8 Assessment of Recreation Routes During Construction*. Localised disruption may be experienced by users navigating diversions, however it is expected that diversions will be in place for a limited period of time, thus minimising the impact of construction activities upon recreational route users. The specific detail of each necessary diversion will be determined post consent and will be set out within a finalised Access Management Plan once the contractor has been appointed.

The potential sensitivity, magnitude of change and significance of individual recreation routes during construction has been assessed and set out *Table 16.8 Assessment of Recreation Routes During Construction*, below.

**Table 16.8 Assessment of Recreation Routes During Construction**

Recreation Route	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance	Impact
The Loch Lomond and Cowal Way	Long-distance footpath linking Portavadie in the south of Cowal with Inveruglas at Loch Lomond. Located approximately 16.5km to the southeast of the Headpond, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
National Cycle Network Route 78 (The Caledonia Way)	Cycle route running 235 miles from Campbeltown to Inverness, falls within study area. Located to the west of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	High	Low	Not Significant	Minor Adverse
C200: Bhraghad-Queens Drive	Coille Inveraray. 4.7km walk to the northwest of Inveraray. Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. The access route at Inveraray crosses this Core Path.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Minor Adverse

Recreation Route	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance	Impact
C201: Dun Na Cuaiche	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. The access route at Inveraray crosses this Core Path.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Minor Adverse
C203: Bealach an Fhuarain	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. The access route at Inveraray crosses this Core Path.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Minor Adverse
C171: Kilmore Loch – Nan-Kilchrenan	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C173 (a, b, c, d, e)	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C175: Kilmelford to Loch Avich	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C176: Loch Avich South (Two Lochs Trail)	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C199: Furnace to Inveraray via Kenmore	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the banks of Loch Fyne, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C300: Kilchrenan to Taynuilt	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C305: Dalavich to Barnaline Lodge	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C323: Drissaig to Inverinan	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C324: Inverinan circular, Loch Aweside	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C490: Dalavich, Loch Awe	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe, outwith the proposed Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
C523: Loch Nant, Loch Aweside	Part of the Argyll and Bute Core Path network. Located on the west side of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Medium	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
Old Road to Inverinan	1.1km rural path, designated Heritage Path located west of Loch Awe, outwith the Development Site boundary.	Low	Low	Not Significant	Negligible
Public Right of Way SA128	Recorded National Catalogue Rights of Way which crosses the Development Site, intersecting the access route to the north of the site.	Low	Medium	Not Significant	Minor Adverse

Given that there are several core paths, long distance routes and regional cycle ways within the study area, several of the recreation routes have been allocated a sensitivity of 'Medium'. The National Cycle Network Route 78 has

been allocated a 'High' sensitivity as it is nationally important. The local paths and unmarked cycle ways are considered to have a 'Low' sensitivity. The majority of paths within the study area are located to the west of Loch Awe and therefore fall outwith the Development Site boundary. Impacts of the Development's construction upon these routes have been assessed as Negligible on account of their distance from the Development Site and physical separation from construction traffic routes.

Where disruption for recreation route users is likely on Core Paths around Inveraray, this is expected to be temporary, occurring only during construction works. The magnitude of change for the construction works is expected to be Low as the works will be short term and any disruption to recreational routes will be temporary. Given the recreational routes listed in *Table 16.8 Assessment of Recreation Routes During Construction* above, all have a Medium or Low sensitivity, any potential effects are predicted to be **Minor Adverse** and **Not Significant**.

### Potential Effects on Lochs

Several lochs are located within the study area, as listed in *Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site*. These lochs are used for various recreational activities including swimming, fishing and boating and commercial uses such as fishing. It is understood that the MoD also carry out trials and testing on Loch Fyne. During the construction phase, it has been agreed through consultation with the MoD that piling activities will cease on trial days for circa 12 days per year with dates to be agreed with the appointed Construction contractor who will maintain in contact with the MoD throughout construction as required, and therefore their availability for the range of uses will continue largely as normal.

The only exception will be around the Tailpond works at Loch Awe where limited restricted access for water pursuits will be necessary in the interest of public safety within the immediate area of the cofferdam whilst the inlet / outlet structure is constructed. There will also be amenity effects on recreational loch users in proximity to the works. Visual amenity effects are assessed in *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment*. The installation of a cofferdam in Loch Awe will be required when building the inlet / outlet, however this is expected to have a minimal impact upon recreational users given the loch size and area required for construction activities. Moreover, a difference in flow rates and water levels as a result of the Development will not be noticeable to recreational users on account of the size of the loch. Those using the loch for water sports and swimming are not expected to be disrupted. In addition, fish farming activities present on Loch Awe are not expected to be impacted by changes in flow rates and water levels as a result of the Development, on account of the scale of the loch.

The Development will involve the construction of a Marine Facility jetty in Loch Fyne. This construction will occur within the Argyll and Bute Council's LDP designated Upper Loch Fyne Marine Consultation Area. The Marine Facility will be temporary and small scale, consisting of a temporary pier constructed into the loch. Approximately 10 boats are expected to use the pier throughout the seven year construction period in order to service the pumped storage hydro scheme. As such, any disturbance to recreational loch users will be infrequent and impacts on recreational fishing in Loch Fyne are expected to be minimal.

The sensitivity of lochs within the study area is considered to be Medium as these are regionally important features contributing to the area's landscape character. However, as only a small area of Loch Awe and Loch Fyne will be unavailable during construction of the Tailpond and Marine Facility, the magnitude of change is considered to be Low. The potential effects on lochs within the study area are therefore predicted to be **Minor Adverse** which is **Not Significant**.

## 16.6.4 Operation

## 16.6.5 Socio-economics

### Potential Effects on the Local Job Market

The operational phase of a PSH scheme is typically considered to be around 100 years, although it can be longer. General maintenance will be ongoing for the duration of operation including regular inspection of the Headpond. The electrical plant will require refurbishment or overhaul approximately every 25 years. During operation it is expected that there will be 10 permanent full time jobs created on site. There is also likely to be additional jobs created in a remote control centre, and local procurement will support jobs in local businesses. The magnitude of change on the local job market is considered to be Low. The job market has been given a Medium sensitivity, meaning the significance of effect on operational job creation is considered to be **Minor Beneficial** and **Not Significant**.

## 16.6.6 Tourism

### Potential Effects on Tourism, Access and Recreation Routes

During the operational phase, much of the land used during the construction period will be reinstated and will be available to the public again. Access will be limited only in the area of the Headpond, the immediate vicinity of the Tailpond inlet / outlet and the permanent compounds. Access to the Headpond waterbody and the Tailpond inlet / outlet structure will be prohibited to the public for health and safety reasons. The permanent compounds will house facilities for the operation and maintenance of the Development including access to the tunnels. Although access to the Headpond will be prohibited, access to all lochs in the study area will be available as normal during operation. Access is considered to have a Medium sensitivity as it is regionally important to the Argyll and Bute region for recreation and tourism. The magnitude of change is considered Low as most access within the Development Site will be reinstated for the operational phase. The significance is therefore considered to be **Minor Adverse** and **Not Significant**.

It is not expected that diversions to recreation routes within the study area will be required during operation. The finalised Access Management Plan will set out measures proposed to ensure the safety of walkers, cyclists and horse riders within the Development Site during operation and if diversions are deemed necessary at a later stage in the development process. The potential effects to the individual recreation routes during operation have been assessed. Given that these recreational routes are regionally important, the sensitivity is assessed to be Medium. The magnitude of change on tourism and recreation routes is considered to be Low on account of the limited extent of impacts upon these routes. The impact of the Development during operation is therefore expected to be **Minor Adverse** and **Not Significant**.

Following construction, areas of land around the Headpond will be repurposed, facilitating the installation of benches and information boards. This infrastructure aims to cater to visitors, enhancing the visitor experience at Balliemanoach Pumped Storage Hydro and leading to a **Minor Beneficial** impact of the Development during operation.

The potential exists for visitors to be deterred from visiting the Inveraray Castle Gardens and Designed Landscape, or the quality of the visitors' experience to these features to be reduced as a result of the construction of the Marine Facility and access tracks. The landscape and visual amenity and heritage impacts of the Development upon this, and other tourism receptors, is addressed in *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment*, and *Chapter 13: Cultural Heritage*, respectively. In addition, *Chapter 15: Noise and Vibration* assesses the noise of the Development upon local receptors including tourism during the operational phase. Noise and vibration impacts associated with the Development are not expected to disrupt the local community's sense of wellbeing nor visitors' enjoyment of recreational activities within the local area with operational noise limited to the area of above ground plant at the Headpond. Moreover, no detrimental impact upon the operation of businesses within the local area is expected as a result of operational noise and vibration. No operational noise is anticipated at Loch Awe. The visitor attractions noted in *Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site*, above, are considered to be of Medium sensitivity given the sites' regional importance. The operation of the Development is not expected to have any impact upon local attractions nor deter visitor from the area. The magnitude of change is therefore considered to be Low with the impact of the Development's operation assessed as **Negligible** and **Not Significant**.

There are many hotels, B&Bs and self-catering units located within the study area and while views of the Development could impact amenity and deter visitors, *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment* sets out the proposed Development's zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) and assesses the receptors where significant visual impacts are likely. It is expected that the majority of tourist accommodation receptors included within this socio-economic assessment fall outwith the ZTV. As outlined above, noise from the Development is not anticipated to disrupt the use of visitor accommodation. Tourist accommodation receptors are considered to be of Medium sensitivity given their importance for supporting the regional tourism economy. The magnitude of change is considered Low given the distance of the accommodation receptors from the Development Site. The potential effects are predicted to be **Negligible** which is **Not Significant**.

### Potential Effects on Lochs

Impacts on nearby lochs and on loch users during operation of the Development are expected to be minimal. During this phase, only the piles will remain of the temporary pier constructed in Loch Fyne as part of the proposal will likely be minimal. The operation of the Development is therefore not expected to cause any disturbance upon Loch Fyne.



During operation, impacts upon recreational fishing may occur as a result of the piles left in-situ from the Marine Facility installed as part of this proposal. This facility's installation would lead to the overall loss of 20.4 m<sup>2</sup> of benthic habitat and the potential displacement of fishing activities on account of obstructed access to approximately 1,800 m<sup>2</sup> fishing grounds. However, considering the relatively small area of impact, overall the magnitude of the impact is deemed to be Negligible and the sensitivity of the receptor is considered to be Medium. The effect will therefore be **Minor Adverse** and **Not Significant**. Greater detail on the impacts of the Development upon benthic habitat loss and commercial fishing on Loch Fyne has been included in *Chapter 8: Marine Ecology* and *Chapter 20: Commercial Fisheries*, respectively.

## 16.7 Cumulative Effects

### 16.7.1 Inter-Cumulative Effects

The assessment of likely cumulative effects is based on the cumulative schemes identified in *Chapter 4: Approach to EIA*. Best practice guidance states that a socio-economic, recreation and tourism assessment should focus on the most significant cumulative effects and conclude with a clear assessment of those which are likely to influence decision making. Therefore, only the relevant cumulative schemes have been considered within this assessment.

The following cumulative schemes, as set out in *Chapter 4: Approach to EIA*, have been identified within the Argyll and Bute region.

- Inverawe Hydro Scheme;
- Lochan Shira Reservoir;
- Clachan Flats Wind Farm;
- Coille Bhraghaid Mineral Exploitation Drilling;
- Corr Chnoc Wind Farm;
- Cruach Mhor Wind Farm;
- Cruachan Power Station;
- Crarae Substation; and
- Crarae Substation OHL Connection

Inter-project effects were considered for the cumulative developments listed in *Table 4.8 of Chapter 4: Approach to EIA*. The potential emerges for the range of cumulative developments proposed within the region to collectively support the diversification of the economy and upskill the local workforce.

Potential indirect combined effects were identified from material management on the transport network, and on human receptors from nuisance such as reduced amenity, dust and noise. If excavated material were transported off-site, this would increase the required number of vehicle journeys to and from the Development Site and create a combined adverse effect of greater significance with the likelihood of traffic congestion on the local road network. *The Outline Construction Environment Management Plan (Appendix 3.1, Volume 5: Appendices)* provides mitigation in relation to the generation of dust, noise and other emissions. The project's CTMP sets out the measures which will be implemented to reduce traffic congestion and minimise delays on the local road network. Following the implementation of these measures, no direct combined detrimental effects on the socio-economic, recreation and tourism receptors are expected as a result of the Development and the cumulative developments.

### 16.7.2 Intra-Cumulative Effects

The potential emerges for combined effects to be experienced by recreational users of the designated routes and core paths and visitors to the tourism and recreational features present within the study area. The potential for intra-relationship effects emerges through the following chapters:

**Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment** – combined effects would be experienced by recreational users of the designated routes and core paths within the study area, where there would be intervisibility of the Development and where diversions are proposed.

**Chapter 13: Cultural Heritage** – there would be combined effects on the visual amenity experienced at various cultural heritage sites within the study area which may impact upon the visitors' enjoyment of these features and the local area.

**Chapter 14: Access, Traffic and Transport** – combined effects would be experienced by visitors to the area and users of the road network during the construction phase with increased construction traffic upon the local road network.

**Chapter 15: Noise and Vibration** – combined effects would be experienced by visitors to the local area, particularly in close proximity to the construction area where the sense of activity would increase during the construction phase.

## 16.8 Mitigation and Monitoring

This section details the proposed mitigation measures for socio-economic effects which could be implemented to reduce the potential adverse impacts of the Development upon the local socio-economic, recreation and tourism receptors identified above. Mitigation outlined in this section is additional to the embedded mitigation outlined in *Section 3.6 Embedded Mitigation* in Chapter 3: Evolution of Design and Alternatives and mitigation identified in other EIA chapters.

### 16.8.1 Construction

#### 16.8.1.1 The Local Community, Access and Traffic

The Community Liaison Group, established during the pre-construction phase, will remain throughout construction facilitating direct, two-way discussion between the Applicant and the local community including businesses, tourist / recreational operators. This channel of communication will enable the Applicant to consult with operators of nearby restaurants, hotels and B&Bs, ensuring that nearby businesses do not experience any interruption to their daily operations as a result of the Development. The Applicant will seek to proactively address any issues communicated through this channel to prevent any adverse impacts of the Development's construction upon the amenity of local tourist services. As such, it is anticipated that there will be no significant effects to any socio-economic resources.

A Minor Adverse impact upon local access is expected as a result of the Development's construction. In the interest of public health and safety, access may be restricted around the Development Site, however this is expected to be short-term and temporary. Any diversions deemed necessary will be in place to maintain access through the Site, providing alternative routes for active travel users. Such alternatives minimise the impact of the Development's construction resulting in no adverse impact.

The construction of the Development is anticipated to take up to seven years. The associated traffic flows will vary over the course of the construction period as various elements of the Development are constructed. In order to mitigate against delays and amenity loss associated with peak or abnormal construction traffic, a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be implemented for the construction period. A framework CTMP is contained within *Appendix 14.1 Transport Assessment Report of Chapter 14: Access, Traffic and Transport*. The CTMP will aim to minimise traffic congestion on the local road network during construction of the Development. The CTMP will be employed to ensure that deliveries and plant movement occur at set times, avoiding peak periods. This will maintain road safety and ensure the users of local amenities are minimally impacted during construction. The final CTMP will be finalised following consultation with Police Scotland, ABC and Transport Scotland.

An outline Housing Strategy has been drafted (*Appendix 16.2 Workers Housing Strategy*) (*Volume 5: Appendices*) which sets out options to accommodate the majority of construction workers throughout the construction period. This will allow for local hotels / holiday lodges and other accommodation to be readily available for tourists, with use of some low season hotel capacity a potential option for some workers without impacting upon tourism. No impact upon the availability of tourist accommodation is therefore expected as a result of the Development's construction and further mitigation is therefore not required.

#### Tourism and Recreational Routes

The potential for minor adverse impacts on the Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape around Inveraray Castle emerges as a result of the Development's construction. *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment*, and *Chapter 13: Cultural Heritage* sets out mitigation measures which will be implemented to reduce and avoid any significant impacts upon the local area's setting and character, where possible. These mitigation measures aim to avoid and minimise alterations to important features of the landscape which attribute meaning and value to the Inveraray Castle Gardens and Designed Landscape. Where appropriate, similar mitigation measures have also

been proposed to screen the construction activities from those tourist attractions set out in *Table 16.7 Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of Development Site*, above. Offsite planting will screen the construction activities, helping to minimise the impact of visual, noise and dust disturbance upon nearby residents, businesses and attractions thus reducing any negative impacts which may deter visitors. Together, these measures are expected to protect the character and setting of the area, ensuring that visitors' enjoyment of local tourism and recreational features is not minimised on account of the Development.

The majority of recreational routes will remain accessible throughout the construction phase. In the interest of public safety, it is expected that signage will be erected on certain forestry paths falling within the Development Site warning users where construction vehicles are likely to cross the given path. The accompanying Outline Access Management Plan (*Appendix 16.1: Outline Access Management Plan* (Volume 5 Appendices)) provides detail on the measures which will be implemented to maintain public access throughout construction and operation of the Development. A finalised Access Management Plan will be prepared post consent once the contractor has been appointed.

## Lochs

The impact upon recreational boating is expected to be Minor Adverse, however through early engagement with recreational loch users this is expected to be minimised. Consultation with local stakeholders, such as Inspire Inveraray who represent the local community, will be undertaken prior to construction. Moreover, engagement with Clydeport at least two months prior to construction will ensure that information is shared widely amongst recreational loch users, informing them of works commencing within Loch Awe. Clyde Cruising Club and other local boat clubs will also be informed of the intended construction start date by the appointed contractor two months prior to construction commencing. A notice will be issued in the local Notices to Mariners which ensures that details of the upcoming works are communicated to all local clubs. In addition, it has been agreed with the MoD that piling activities within Loch Fyne will cease on trial days for circa 12 days per year with dates to be agreed with the appointed Construction contractor who will maintain in contact with the MoD throughout construction as required, and therefore their availability for the range of uses will continue largely as normal.

A small area of Loch Awe, around the Tailpond inlet / outlet, will have restricted access for water pursuits during construction. Although there will be amenity effects on recreational loch users, these will be short-term and temporary in nature. In addition, the area expected to be impacted represents only a small portion of the entire loch and therefore impacts are expected to be minimal. Through early engagement and communication with recreational users, no adverse effects are anticipated from the Development's construction.

## 16.8.2 Operation

### 16.8.2.1 Access, Tourism and Recreational Routes

Although there are many shops, hotels and restaurants located within the study area, a minimal impact upon these local tourist services is expected. As detailed in *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment*, the Development may be visible from certain receptors, however this is not expected to have an adverse impact upon visitors' experience of such amenities. Local services and tourist accommodation receptors are considered to be of Medium sensitivity given their importance for supporting the regional tourism economy. The magnitude of change is considered Low given distance of the accommodation from the Development Site. The potential effects are predicted to be **Minor Adverse** which is **Not Significant**.

During operation of the Development, a Minor Adverse impact upon certain local recreation routes is expected. The majority of the affected routes are understood to be forestry paths with only one Public Right of Way (SA128) directly impacted by the Development. Where routes are impacted, diversions are not anticipated to be necessary, due to the short timeframe and limited extent of the impact. Any diversions will have due regard to use by walkers. The recommendations from British Standard 5709:2006 "Gaps, Gates and Stiles" will be considered in consultation with the Argyll and Bute Council Access Officer and other parties.

Certain forestry paths falling within the Development Site may be impacted during operation, however through the upgrade and addition of new walking paths through the Development Site area, overall access in area is expected to be maintained. Details of the proposed upgrades will be provided when a construction contractor has been appointed. Consultation on the type and requirement for upgrades will be undertaken. It is expected that such improvements to Walking Routes and local accessibility post-construction will minimise any adverse impacts of the Development.

The Site's proposed access track is expected to cross Public Right of Way (ProW) SA128, within the commercial forest to the north of the core Development Site. Although noted on Scotways' Catalogue of Rights of Way, it is understood that this path is no longer an extant feature on the ground and is not in frequent use. Any physical change to the path would occur over an area of less than 5 m, thus minimising the impact. Moreover, access to route SA128 will be maintained throughout operation of the Development. Appropriate signage warning walkers of construction traffic will also be introduced where the PRoW intersects the Development's internal access track. As such, it is understood that any adverse impacts will be negated.

## 16.9 Residual Effects

Embedded mitigation and the proposed diversions described above account for much of the mitigation proposed in this chapter. As a result, the significance of residual effects is largely the same as the potential effects identified. *Table 16.9 Summary of Effects: Construction* and *Table 16.10 Summary of Effects: Operation*, below, provide a summary of all effects before and after mitigation. In summary, there are no adverse residual significant effects on socio-economics, recreation and tourism, with one significant beneficial effect on the local economy resulting from job creation and local expenditure by the developer and contractors within the study area throughout construction period.

### 16.9.1 Pre-construction and Construction

Engagement with the Community Liaison Group prior to the commencement of works will reduce any negative impacts arising during the pre-construction phase on the local community and therefore are **Not Significant**.

**Significant beneficial** effect on the local economy resulting from job creation and local expenditure by the developer and contractors within the study area throughout construction period.

Creation of jobs within study area during construction phase will result in a **Not Significant** impact on the local job market.

Construction activities causing changes to setting of certain visitor attractions and local amenity impacts will result in a **Not Significant** impact on tourism and tourist services.

Tourist accommodation will not be significantly adversely impacted during construction through implementation of the Housing Strategy and therefore is **Not Significant**.

Impacts to drivers on the local road network within the study area are reduced from Minor Adverse to Negligible through the preparation and implementation of a CTMP and therefore **Not Significant**.

Recreational users of Loch Awe and Loch Fyne will not be significantly affected by construction due to the limited land take required and engagement of the CLG with Inspire Inveraray, Clydeport and local community, and therefore impacts are **Not Significant**.

National Cycle Route 78 has been given a sensitivity of high as it is national important. The magnitude of change is the same as the other long distance routes and core paths within the area and is rated as Low. Following the assessment framework set out in *Chapter 4: Approach to EIA*, this would be a significant effect. However, using professional judgment it is not considered that the effects during construction will be significant on account of the limited extent of the impacted area on Route 78. As a result, it is predicted that the impact will be reduced to Minor and therefore **Not Significant**.

Core paths and forestry paths within the study area will largely remain open and accessible to all users during construction. To maintain public health and safety, diversions to certain forestry paths, such as the SA128, may be necessary. Through the implementation of signage, active travel users will be informed of any diversions currently in place and, where necessary, alternative routes will be suggested. The residual impact upon recreational route users is therefore **Not Significant**.

### 16.9.2 Operation

An Outline Access Management Plan has been included in *Appendix 16.1 (Volume 5: Appendices)* and sets out where access will be restricted and general mitigation measures, such as diversions, which will be in place during operation of the Development. The implementation of this plan is expected to reduce any adverse impacts associated with the operation of the Development. A finalised Access Management Plan will be prepared post

consent, providing greater detail on the specific diversions which will be in place. The residual effect is therefore understood to be **Not Significant**

Core paths and forestry paths within the study area are expected to remain open and accessible to all users during operation. Through the implementation of signage, active travel users will be informed of any diversions currently in place and where necessary, alternative routes will be suggested. The residual impact upon recreational route users is therefore **Not Significant**.

Without mitigation, there would be a minor adverse impact upon tourist services within the study area during operation. However as set out in *Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Assessment*, embedded mitigation measures have been considered and will effectively reduce the impact of any adverse visual amenity impacts over time. In addition, measures such as offsite planting will be implemented, screening the development from view from nearby receptors. As such, the quality of the visitor experience in the local area is expected to be maintained throughout the operational phase. Any residual effects are thus considered to be **Not Significant**.

Access to Loch Fyne and Loch Awe will be maintained during operation. The Marine Facility will be removed with only the piles remaining in-situ. However, for health and safety reasons, access to the Tailpond inlet / outlet will be restricted during operation. Although this accounts for only a small area of the loch, an Outline Access Management Plan has been prepared (*Appendix 16.1 Outline Access Management Plan (Volume 5: Appendices)*). This plan sets out where restrictions may be necessary, the mitigation measures which will be implemented to reduce any impacts and the preferred approach for informing loch users of such access restrictions. A finalised Access Management Plan will be prepared post consent providing greater detail on the access arrangements in Loch Awe. As a result, a **Not Significant** residual effect is expected on loch users during operation of the Development.

**Table 16.9 Summary of Effects: Construction**

Receptor	Description of Effect	Effect	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Significance
Local Community	Limited access around and within construction works areas for health and safety reasons. The core Development Site is situated away from the local transport network, limiting the potential for effects.	Minor Adverse Not Significant	An Outline Access Management Plan has been prepared which sets out the measures which will be implemented to minimise the impact of the proposed Development's construction upon local access and ensure public health and safety during construction works. A finalised Access Management Plan will be prepared post consent.	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>
Local Economy	Job creation and local expenditure by the developer and contractors within the study area throughout construction period.	Moderate Beneficial Significant	No additional mitigation required.	Moderate Beneficial	<b>Significant</b>
Local Market	Job Creation of jobs within study area during construction phase.	Minor Beneficial Not Significant	No additional mitigation required.	Minor Beneficial	<b>Not Significant</b>
Local Community	Potential for construction activities to cause nuisance to certain community receptors.	Negligible Not Significant	The community will be able to provide feedback on construction works via the CLG, allowing the construction team to respond where practicable.	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>
Local Community	Localised disruption to public access along B840, A819 and A83 as a result of the increased vehicle movements.	Minor Adverse Not Significant	A CTMP to be prepared and implemented to mitigate against delays and amenity loss associated with peak or abnormal construction traffic.  A TMP will also be prepared to minimise traffic congestion on the local road network and maintain road safety.	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>
Tourism	Construction activities causing changes to setting	Minor Adverse	LVIA sets out mitigation measures, such as offsite screen planting,	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>

Receptor	Description of Effect	Effect	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Significance
	of certain visitor attractions.	Not Significant	which should be implemented to avoid and minimise any impacts on the setting and character of nearby visitor attractions which could deter visitors.		
Tourist Accommodation	An outline Strategy has been prepared (Appendix 16.2. Volume 5 Appendices) setting out how workers could be accommodated and through the use of park and ride services. Local properties and accommodation will therefore remain available for tourists.	Housing Negligible Not Significant	No additional mitigation required.	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>
Recreational Routes	Diversions to certain recreational routes and forestry paths falling within the Development Site boundary.	Minor Adverse Not Significant	Diversions to certain forestry paths may be necessary to maintain public health and safety during construction works. Diversions will be determined post consent once the contractor has been appointed and detailed within the finalised Access Management Plan.	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>
Tourist Services	Local amenity impacts e.g. views from nearby tourist accommodation, shops and restaurants.	Negligible Not Significant	Community Liaison Group to be established enabling Applicant to consult operators of nearby restaurants, hotels and B&Bs throughout construction phase and address any issues which emerge.	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>
Lochs	Marine facility and Tailpond inlet / outlet construction at Loch Fyne and Loch Awe respectively, restricting access to and recreational use of these areas of the lochs.	Minor Adverse Not Significant	Consultation with local stakeholders (e.g. Inspire Inveraray, Clydeport, MoD) and CLG at least two months prior to construction start date to inform community of upcoming works on the loch.	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>

**Table 16.10 Summary of Effects: Operation**

Receptor	Description of Effect	Effect	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Significance
Access	Access to areas around Headpond and Tailpond will be restricted to general public.	Minor Adverse Not Significant	Signage to be implemented within vicinity of Headpond and Tailpond inlet / outlet warning visitors that access to the waterbody is unsafe and therefore forbidden.  Lochs within the wider study area will remain accessible to the public during operation and therefore additional mitigation is not considered to be required.	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>
Visitor Services	Potential for setting of historic attractions to be altered by proposed Development.	Minor Adverse Not Significant	Where necessary, mitigation measures have been set out within the LVIA which, upon implementation, would avoid and minimise impacts on the setting and character of nearby visitor attractions.  Benches and information boards to be installed informing visitors of the pumped storage hydro scheme purpose and benefits.	Minor Beneficial	<b>Not Significant</b>

Receptor	Description of Effect	Effect	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Significance
Recreational Routes	Diversions may be required for certain informal recreational routes and forestry paths within Development Site during operation.	Minor Adverse Not Significant	A finalised Access Management Plan will be prepared post consent and will set out where temporary and permanent diversions of certain forestry paths are necessary to maintain health and safety of users. Additional forestry paths to be provided as part of Development, improving accessibility of the area for active travel users.	Minor Beneficial	<b>Not Significant</b>
Lochs	Marine facility may displace fishing activities by obstructing access to fishing grounds.	Minor Adverse Not Significant	Mitigation measures set out within the accompanying <i>Chapter 8: Marine Ecology</i> aim to minimise any detrimental impact upon fishing activities as a result of the Marine Facility's construction in Loch Fyne.	Negligible	<b>Not Significant</b>

## 16.10 References

Argyll and Bute Council (2015). Local Development Plan [Online]. Available at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

Argyll and Bute Council (2019). Local Development Plan 2: Written Statement and Proposals Map [Online]. Available at: <https://argyll-bute.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=36b54584028245019f8edca605511213> [accessed: 03/01/24]

Argyll and Bute Council (2020). Population: Where we live [Online]. Available at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/my-community/population-where-we-live> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

Argyll and Bute Council (2021). Argyll and Bute Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy [Online]. Available at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s166821/Draft%20FULL%20Indicative%20RSS%20v7.pdf> [Accessed: 08/02/24]

Argyll and Bute Council (2022). Argyll and Bute Local Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027 [Online]. Available at: [https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migrated\\_files/argyll\\_bute\\_local\\_housing\\_strategy\\_2022-2027.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migrated_files/argyll_bute_local_housing_strategy_2022-2027.pdf) [Accessed: 08/02/24]

Argyll and Bute Council (2023). Declaring an Argyll and Bute Housing Emergency [Online]. Available at: [DECLARING AN ARGYLL AND BUTE HOUSING EMERGENCY.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/DECLARING-AN-ARGYLL-AND-BUTE-HOUSING-EMERGENCY.pdf) (argyll-bute.gov.uk) [Accessed: 06/02/24]

Argyll and Bute Council (2024). Economic Strategy Refresh: 2024 – 2034 [Online]. Available at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s205254/ARGYLL%20AND%20BUTE%20COUNCILS%20ECONOMIC%20STRATEGY%20REFRESH%202024-2034.pdf> [Accessed: 06/05/24]

Highways England et al. (2020). LA112 Population and Human Health [Online]. Available at: <https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/tses/attachments/1e13d6ac-755e-4d60-9735-f976bf64580a?inline=true> [Accessed: 15/01/24]

Historic Environment Scotland (2023). Designations Map Search [Online]. Available at: <https://hesportal.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=18d2608ac1284066ba3927312710d16d> [Accessed: 04/01/24]

Institute Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2016). *Environmental Impact Assessment*, Guide to: Delivering Quality Development [Online]. Available at: <https://www.iema.net/watch-again/iema-impact-assessment-guidance> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

National Records of Scotland (2022). Argyll and Bute Council Area Profile, Total Population, Argyll and Bute, 2001 – 2021 [Online]. Available at: [https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/argyll-and-bute-council-profile.html#table\\_pop\\_est](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/argyll-and-bute-council-profile.html#table_pop_est) [Accessed: 03/01/24]

NatureScot (2020). Scottish Outdoor Access Code [Online]. Available at: <https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

NatureScot (2024). Sites of Special Scientific Interest [Online]. Available at: [Sites of Special Scientific Interest | Sites of Special Scientific Interest | NatureScot Spatial Data Hub](#) [Accessed: 06/02/24]

Nomis (2023). Labour Market Profile – Argyll and Bute [Online]. Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157408/report.aspx#tabempunemp> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

Office for National Statistics (2023). Employment, unemployment and economic inactivity in Scotland [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/labourmarketlocal/S12000026/> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

Office for National Statistics (2023). Esri Location Data: United Kingdom [Online]. Available at: [United Kingdom— Esri Demographics Regional Data | Documentation \(arcgis.com\)](#) [Accessed: 06/02/24]

Scotland's Environment Map (2024). Scotland's Environment [Online]. Available at: [Map | Scotland's environment web](#) [Accessed: 06/02/24]

Scottish Government (2018). Tourism in Scotland: the economic contribution of the sector [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tourism-scotland-economic-contribution-sector/documents/> [Accessed: 08/02/24]

Scottish Tourism Alliance (2020). Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism For A Sustainable Future [Online]. Available at: <https://scottishtourismalliance.co.uk/scotland-outlook-2030-overview/?iebrowser=1> [Accessed: 08/02/24]

Scotways (2024). Scottish Rights of Way & Access Society [Online]. Available at: <https://scotways.com/crow/> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

Standards for Highways (2020). LA112 Population and Human Health [Online]. Available at: <https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/search/1e13d6ac-755e-4d60-9735-f976bf64580a> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

Standards for Highways (2023). Volume 11, Section 3 Part 8 of the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (DMRB): *Pedestrians, Cyclists, Equestrians and Community Effects* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/dmrb> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

VisitScotland (2021). Tourism as an emotional benefit [Online]. Available at: <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/about-our-visitors/why-people-choose-scotland> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

VisitScotland (2023). Employment in Scotland [Online]. Available at: <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/about-our-industry/tourism-employment#statistics> [Accessed: 06/02/24]

VisitScotland (2021). Our Strategic Framework [Online]. Available at: <https://www.visitscotland.org/about-us/what-we-do/our-plans/strategic-framework> [Accessed: 08/02/24]

VisitScotland (2023). Accommodation search [Online]. Available at: <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/accommodation/search-results?prodtype=acco&loc=Scotland&locplace=&locprox=0&stay=&endDate=&r1a=2&r1children=0&r1infants=0&r1c=0&avail=off> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

VisitScotland (2023). Argyll & the Isles Industry Update [Online]. Available at: <https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2023/argyll-update-jan#keystats> [Accessed: 07/02/24]

VisitScotland (2023). Argyll & the Isles, Insight Department: Argyll and the Isle Factsheet 2019 [Online]. Available at: <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/regions/argyll-isles> [Accessed: 03/01/24]

Wild About Argyll (2022). Argyll & the Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership Visitor Economy Recovery and Growth Strategy 2022- 2025 [Online]. Available at: <https://www.wildaboutargyll.co.uk/media/5ubj5ezj/visitor-economy-recovery-and-growth-strategy-2022-2025.pdf> [Accessed: 07/02/24]





