

ARDERSIER PORT ENERGY TRANSITION FACILITY PORT EXTENSION



December 2025



Non-Technical Summary

Ardersier Port Extension

Revision Number	Final
Date	DECEMBER 2025
Version:	2
Author	BECKY MCLEAN
Technical Reviewer	Campbell Fleming

CONTENTS

Chapter 1.	Introduction	4
Chapter 2.	Methodology	6
Chapter 3.	Project Description	8
Chapter 4.	Consultation	18
Chapter 5.	Supporting Information & Assessments	20
Chapter 6.	Airborne Noise and Vibration	24
Chapter 7.	Landscape, Seascape, Visual Impact Assessment	26
Chapter 8.	Historic Environment	28
Chapter 9.	Hydrology and Hydrogeology	29
Chapter 10.	Coastal Processes and Geomorphology	31
Chapter 11.	Marine Mammals	32
Chapter 12.	Terrestrial Ecology	34
Chapter 13.	Ornithology	36
Chapter 14.	Cumulative Effects	37
Chapter 15.	Mitigation & Enhancements	38
Chapter 16.	What Happens Next?	40

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Site Location	4
Figure 1.2: Site Layout	5
Figure 2.1: EIA Process	6
Figure 2.2: Overview of Relevant Documentation	7
Figure 3.1: Proposed Extension Area	9
Figure 3.2: Environmental Constraints.....	10
Figure 3.3 – Image of the site during previous use	11
Figure 3.4 & Figure 3.5: Images of recent construction	11
Figure 3.6: Consented Site Layout.....	12
Figure 3.7: Proposed Development	13
Figure 3.8: Areas of Commercial Scots Pine Plantation Clearance	14
Figure 3.9: Indicative Layout of the Proposed Development	15
Figure 3.10: Marine Works Layout	16
Figure 4.1: You Said, We Did Graphic.....	19
Figure 6.1: Site Layout	24
Figure 7.1: Viewpoint 05 of the Existing Ardersier Port	26
Figure 7.2: Viewpoint 07 of the Existing Ardersier Port	27
Figure 8.1: Former Farmstead	28
Figure 8.2: Image of Fort George.....	28
Figure 9.1: Site Layout	29
Figure 10.1: Whiteness Split	31
Figure 11.1: Bottlenose Dolphin	32
Figure 12.1: Red Squirrel	34
Figure 13.1: Common Buzzard	36
Figure 14.1: Other Proposed Schemes Within 15 km of the Proposed Development.....	37
Figure 16.1: Planning Application Viewing Locations	40

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the proposed extension of Ardersier Port Energy Transition Facility (ETF). The EIAR comprises part of an application by Ardersier Port Ltd, hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant', for planning permission to extend the land associated with the function of the port.

The proposed development (extension area) extends in total to some 197 acres and is located to the south and east of the existing port area. The site adjoins with the existing port land which extends to some 350 acres. Together the site will comprise some 547 acres of industrial land which in turn will support the economic growth and net zero ambitions of both the Scottish and UK Governments.

The logistical, manufacturing and assembly needs of the offshore wind industry require very large land areas, not least due to project scale and size of components. The proposed extension to the existing port will fulfil this requirement.

The Proposed Site is located to the south of the existing port as shown in orange on Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.1: Site Location



Figure 1.2: Site Layout

CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

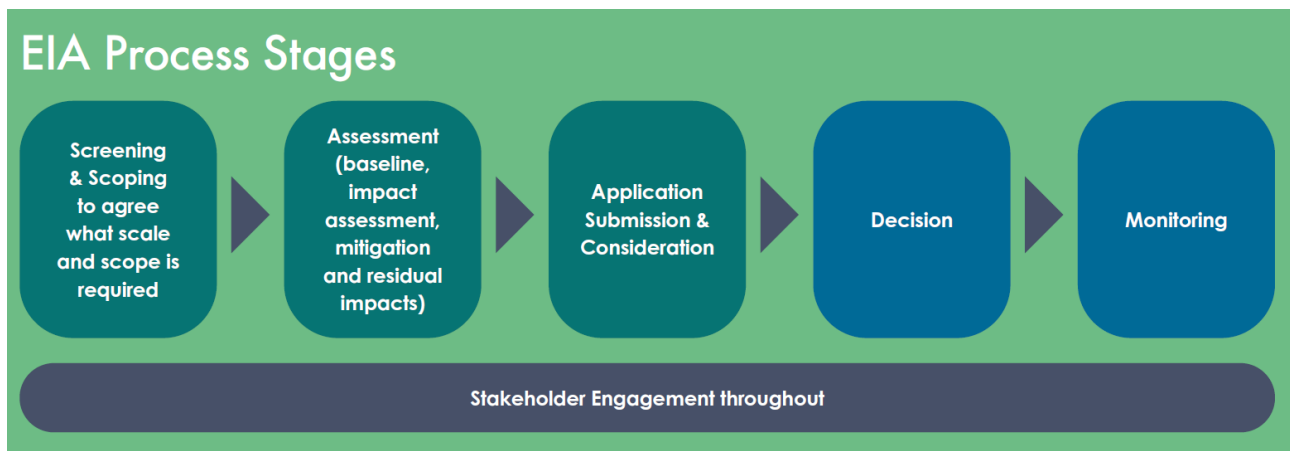
Under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (hereafter referred to as the EIA Regulations), together with the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment)(Scotland) Regulations 2017, the proposed development is considered a Schedule 2 Development as defined within Section 13 of the EIA Regulations as it is an extension of the consented Ardersier Port development and the previous planning application required an EIA. It falls within the following description:

‘Any change to or extension of development of a description mentioned in paragraphs 1 to 12 of Column 1 of this table where that development is already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed’.

The EIAR has been prepared in accordance with the relevant regulations, and the scope of the assessment has been directed by the Scoping Opinion provided by The Highland Council and the Marine Directorate.

The EIAR provides a comprehensive assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment resulting from the proposed development and identifies the predicted effects and the scope for reducing any adverse effects through suitable mitigation or design. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that the decision makers consider the environmental impacts as part of the determination process for the planning application and the marine licences. The EIA Process Stages are shown below on Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: EIA Process



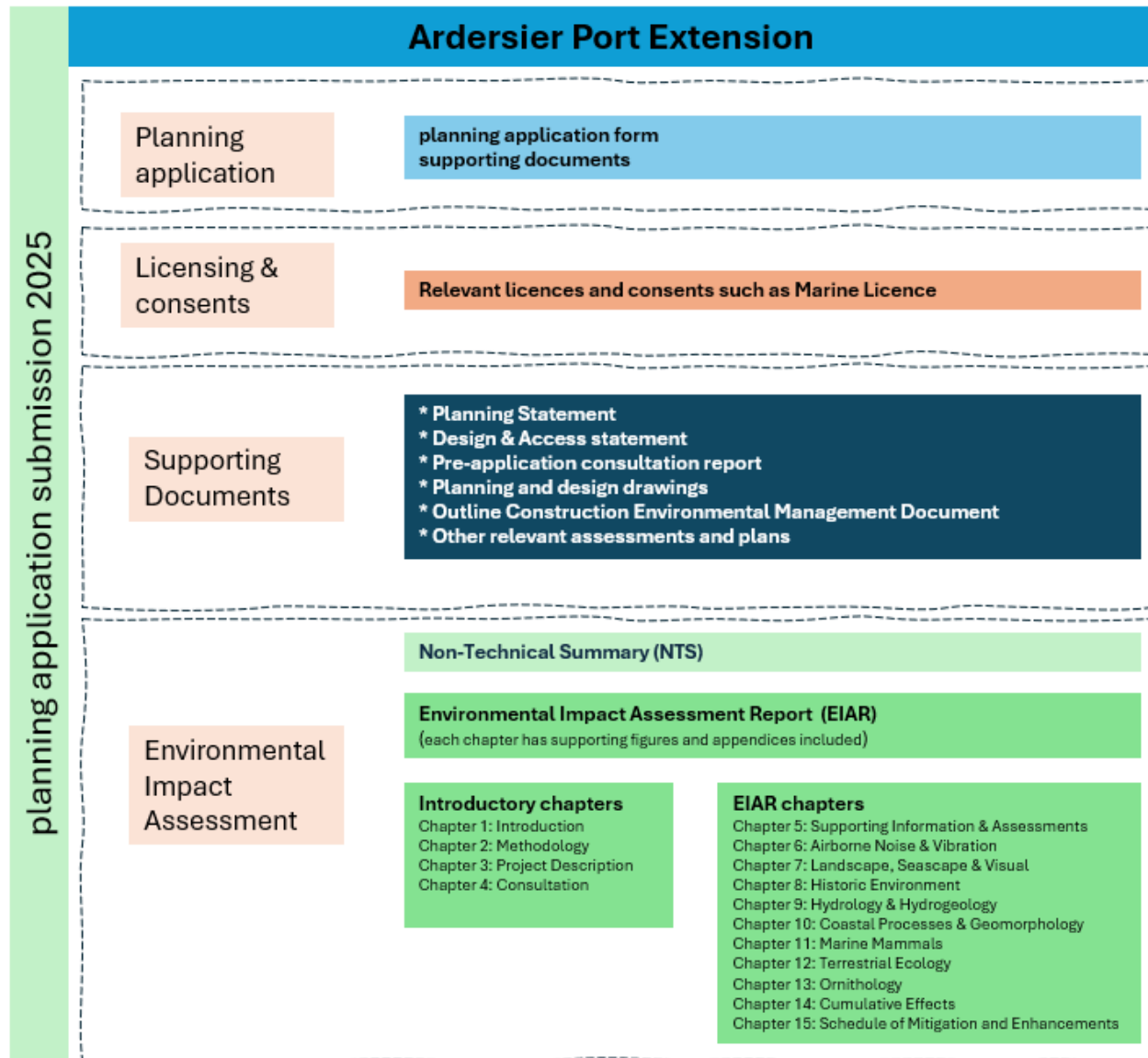
2.1 STRUCTURE OF THE EIAR

In summary, the EIAR provides the following information

- Summary of the relevant legislation, policy and guidance documents used to inform the assessment.
- Discussion of the results of consultation for each technical chapter.
- Identification of the chapter specific assessment methodology.
- Identification of the existing baseline conditions at the Site and the defined study area.
- Assessment of the likely environmental impacts (both adverse and beneficial) associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development.
- Identification of mitigation to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if practicable, offset adverse effects.
- Summary of Predicted Impacts and Effects

This information is provided in a series of technical chapters that are supported by figures and technical appendices. This NTS is a summary of all that information. Figure 2.2 below shows how all the different documents fit together for the proposed application.

Figure 2.2: Overview of Relevant Documentation



CHAPTER 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development seeks planning permission in principle for an extension to the existing port at Ardersier. It involves an area of some 197 hectares on land located to the south and east of the existing port boundary (as shown in Figure 1.2).

The application proposal is described as:

'Continued port development and expansion of port related services for energy related uses, including marine dredging within the inner harbour, sea disposal of dredged sands, possible temporary stockpiling of dredged material, quay construction, erection of offices, industrial and storage buildings and associated infrastructure including manufacturing, assembly, storage, delivery and export of port related cargo, parking, infrastructure, services, upfilling and re-grading/surfacing of new landward areas and landscaping.'

To make sure the current and future uses are all covered by the same planning permission, the whole 540-hectare area (both the existing and proposed parts) is included within the application boundary.

The extended area is required because extensive land areas are needed to meet the demands of offshore wind projects and the supply chain businesses which in turn play a part in assembly of the component parts required for the manufacture of offshore wind turbines. This is due primarily to the size of the components. The existing port and the proposed extension area would be developed and operated by Haventus with parts of the site leased to tenants who will develop energy related facilities. The level of potential tenant interest in acreage at the site, both from offshore wind developers and the manufacturing and assembly supply chain, exceeds the existing acreage, therefore indicating that a larger area is required.

The availability of useable land at UK ports is recognised as a constraint to the future rollout of offshore wind, and the proposed development would extend an extant consented port to further support offshore wind activity and in turn play a part in supporting energy security, the journey to net zero and create the opportunity for new, high quality jobs at the site.

3.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is comprised of two distinct areas: the larger section to the south of the existing port area and the second, smaller site, located to the east of the existing port 'dog leg' area as shown on Figure 3.1: Proposed Extension Area.

Figure 3.1: Proposed Extension Area

The site comprises generally level ground that is in part agricultural with an extensive area of commercial Scots Pine plantation. The agricultural land is predominantly used as pasture and includes two residential properties. These two properties are vacant and will be demolished as part of the development proposal.

The land to the east of the main extension area is of lower importance for biodiversity and is overgrown with scrub and gorse. This area is identified within the Masterplan as suitable for an extension to the existing stockpile of dredged material. In addition, it will provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancements including creation of a new wetland area.

The land to the south of the existing port area will be cleared of the woodland plantation and the land raised using dredged sand to bring it up to the level of the existing port area.

The extension area is bounded in part by the existing public road that extends west towards the village of Ardersier while the larger area is bounded by the existing fields. A buffer of some 20 metres of the existing trees will be retained and enhanced with additional planting.

Vehicular access to the extended port area will utilise the existing main access which extends from the B9092 and recently upgraded port entrance junction.

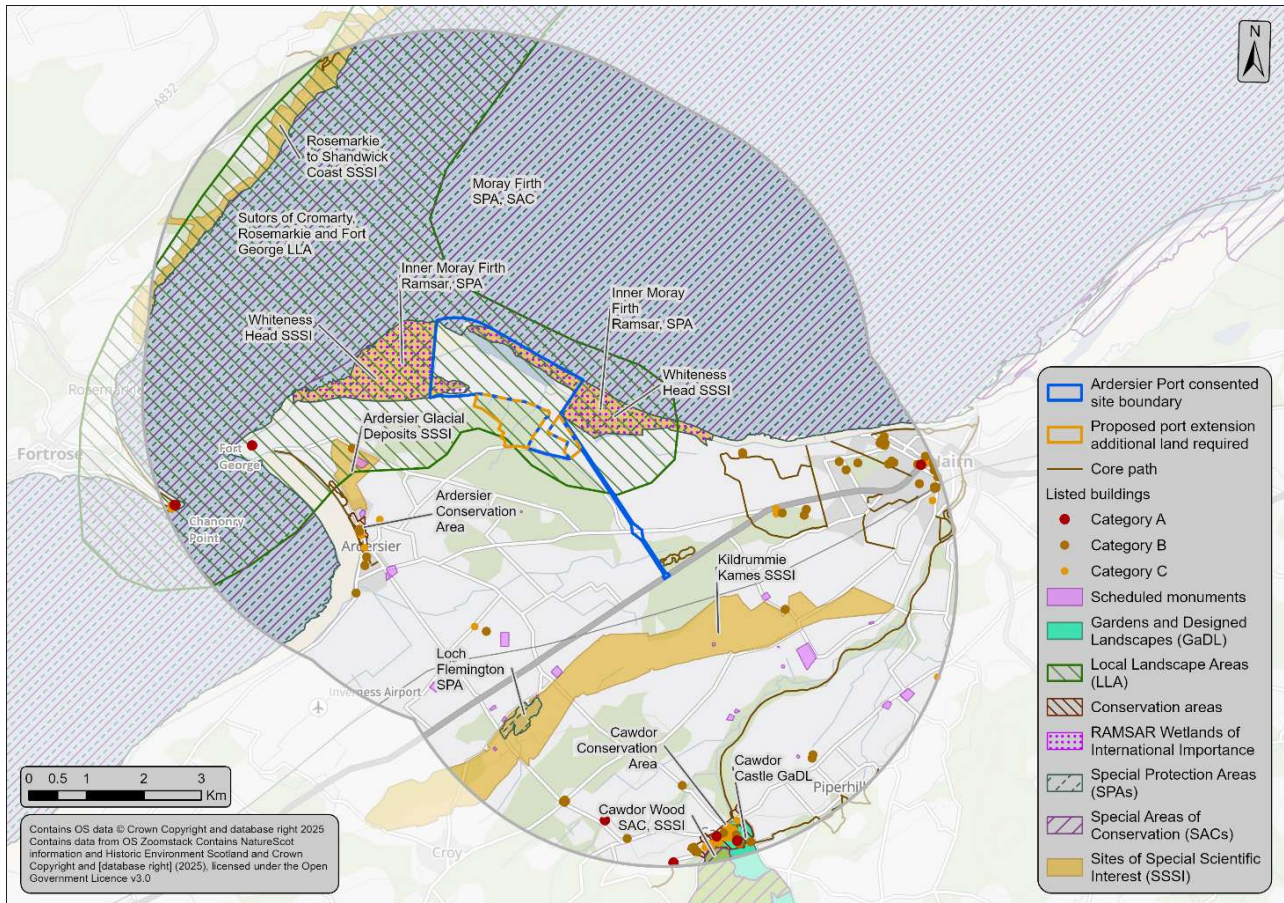
The site is dissected by a series of drainage channels, understood to have been formed when the original port development was established. The existing lagoon to the west of the site and within the existing port area is unaffected by the proposed extension land.

The extension area is not within any land use or environmental designations (Figure 3.2). The wider port area is adjacent to the following special designations:

- Moray Firth and Inner Moray Firth Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Moray Firth SPA

- Moray Firth Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Whiteness Head Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Sutors of Cromarty, Rosemarkie and Fort George Special Landscape Areas (SLA)

Figure 3.2: Environmental Constraints

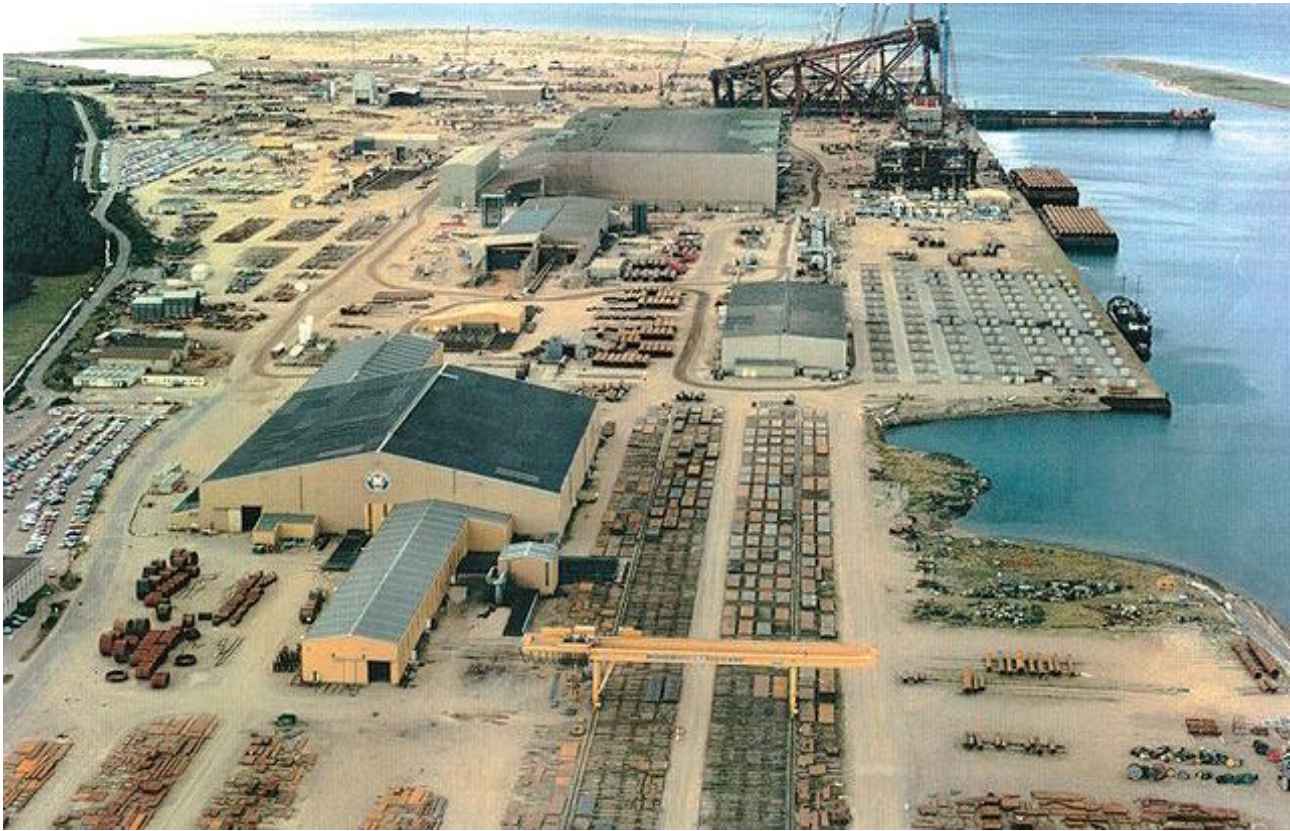


The site is located at Whiteness, to the east of Inverness and has a long-established history as a port related to the energy industry, originally concerned with the manufacture of rigs for oil and gas production.

3.2 APPLICATION CONTEXT

The existing port area has a long industrial heritage. In the 1970's, the site operated as McDermotts yard in the fabrication and construction of offshore platforms associated with the oil and gas industry (Figure 3.3). This use ceased in early 2000 and the site lay vacant for some 18 years. It was one of the largest brownfield sites in the UK and during this time, the land has been the subject of significant decontamination.

The site lay vacant for some 20 years but has recently been developed by Haventus to establish an energy related facility. A new harbour wall has been completed, the channel deepened through extensive dredging to establish an operational level and a working platform has recently been constructed for much of the area. In addition, the site accommodates stockpiles of dredged sand.

Figure 3.3 – Image of the site during previous use

The site lay vacant for some 20 years but has recently been developed by Haventus to establish an energy related facility. A new harbour wall has been completed, the channel deepened through extensive dredging to establish an operational level and a working platform has recently been constructed for much of the area. In addition, the site accommodates stockpiles of dredged sand.

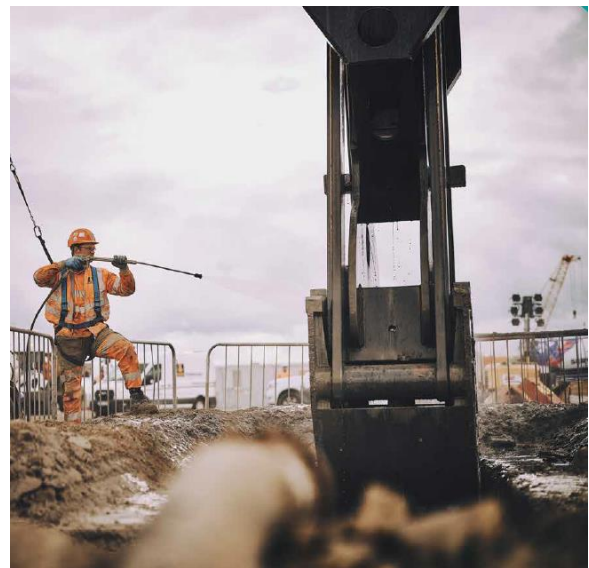
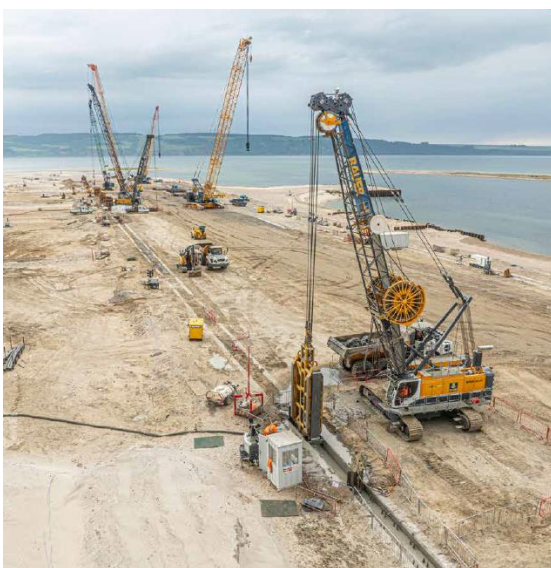
Figure 3.4 & Figure 3.5: Images of recent construction

Figure 3.6: Consented Site Layout

It is important to note too that in the context of the assessments comprised within the EIAR, the existing port development is acknowledged as an existing development within which, because of the extant permissions, development can proceed without the requirement for further specific permissions.

3.3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

As stated, the proposal involves the development of the land to the south of the existing port to create a single planning unit. The extension area (Figure 3.7) will accommodate uses that are compatible with and complement the extant port permission. The principal purpose is to deliver additional land that will provide an extended area to accommodate energy related activities, particularly those relating to the manufacture, storage and assembly of wind energy components (floating jackets, blades, nacelles, towers etc). Further information on the works required for the proposed development on land (terrestrial) and in the marine environment) are provided below.

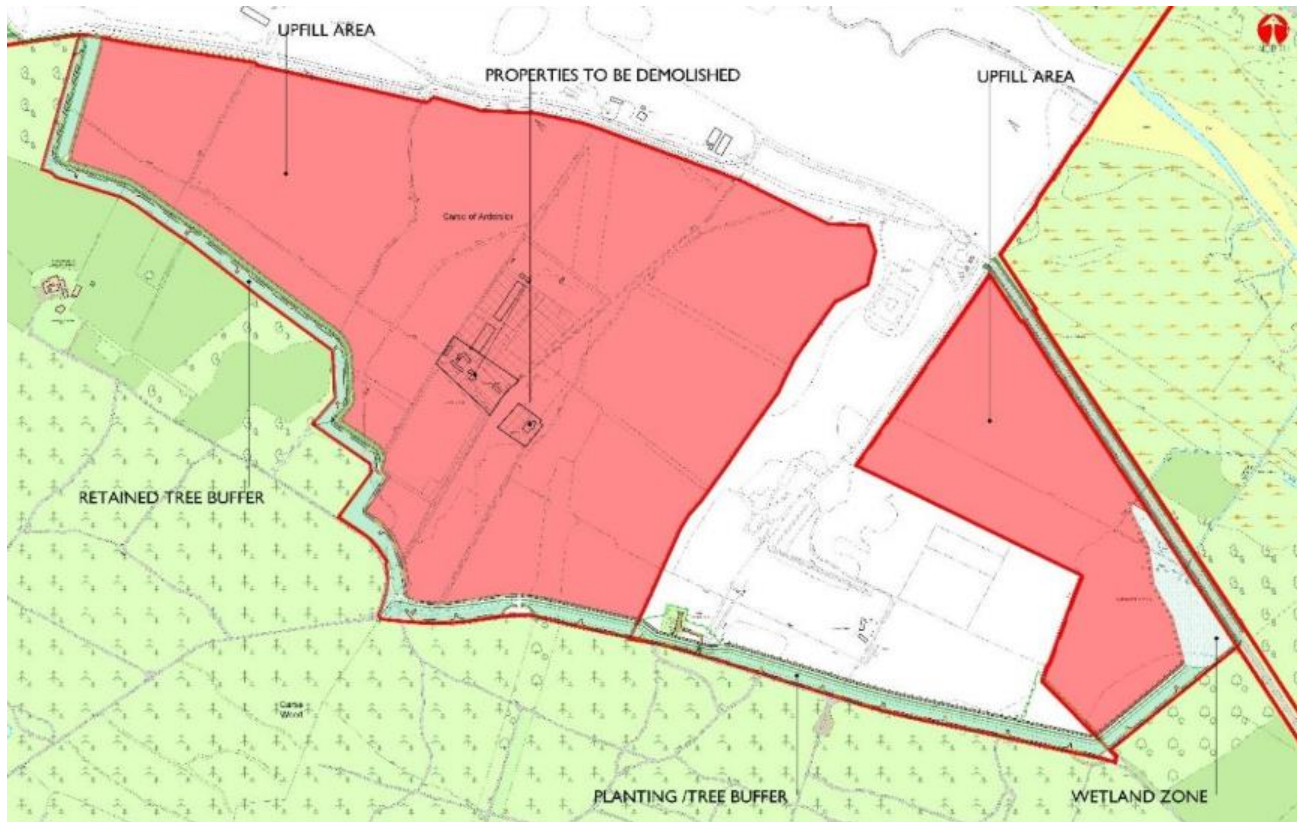
Figure 3.7: Proposed Development

3.3.1 Terrestrial Works

The proposed development comprises the following key activities on land for the extension of the consented port activities (Figure 3.8):

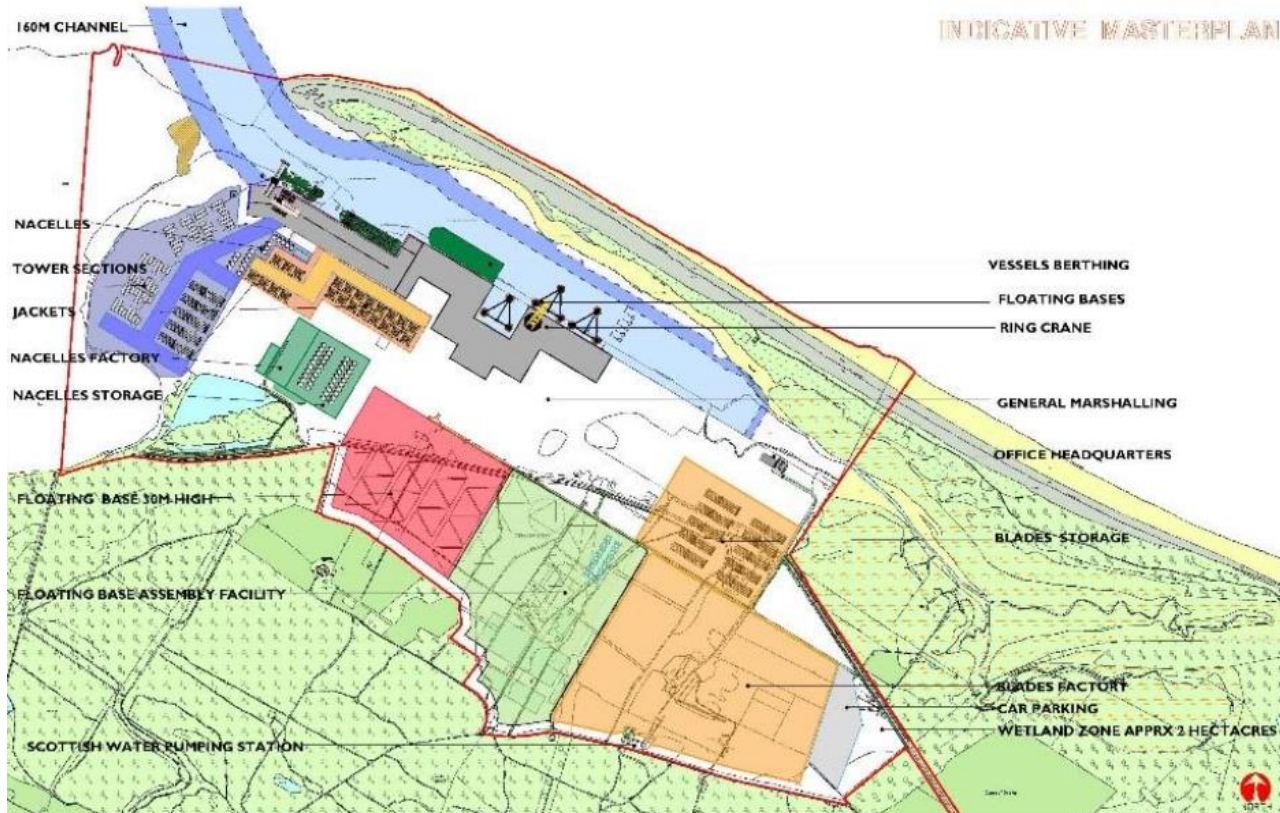
- Site clearance involving the felling of the existing stand of commercial Scots Pine woodland
- Demolition of existing buildings (Pinetrees and Juniper Cottage)
- Land raising of the site area with dredged sand to the levels of the existing port area
- Formation of a working platform capped with a crushed rock/stone placement
- Erection of security fence to the outer edge of the extended site
- Biodiversity enhancements
- Surface water and new perimeter drainage upgrades
- Landscaped buffer (minimum 20m wide) to the outer boundary of the site including retention of the boundary trees
- Noise attenuation bund at the south outer boundary

Figure 3.8: Site Clearance Areas (West - Scots Pine plantation, East - Scrub and Birch) - Terrestrial Works



As an application seeking planning in principle only, there are no details of possible buildings, but it is anticipated that warehousing, storage and office facilities will be required to support the development and an illustration of what this could look like is provided in Figure 3.9. These would be dealt with as future applications, where necessary.

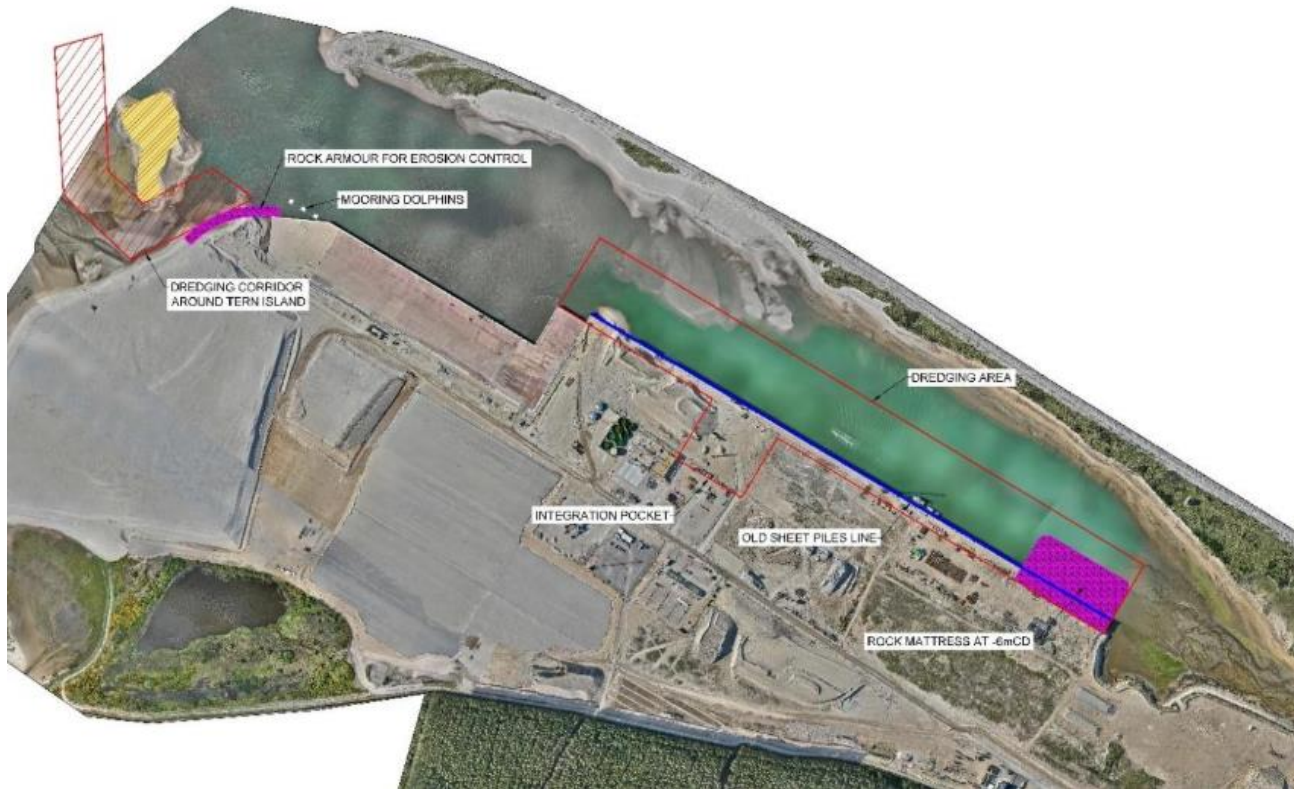
Figure 3.9: Indicative Layout of the Proposed Development



3.3.2 Marine Works

The proposed development will require the following marine infrastructure, and construction works as shown in Figure 3.10:

- Additional quay construction through the existing platform (mainly on land and already consented under the Harbour Revision Order (HRO)) by a combination of diaphragm wall (same method as the already constructed quay walls) and vibropiling and conventional sheet piling.
- Removal of old sheet piles to the north of the new quay wall which may involve temporary sand bunds.
- A small area of infilling behind the new quay wall.
- Selected deepening of the inner harbour by dredging (approximately 2,000,000m³).
- Sea disposal, Whiteness Sands nourishment and possible beneficial re-use on land or at remote site.
- Maintenance dredge to west of Tern Island.
- Rock armour for erosion control and rock mattress on seabed in -6mCD area
- Localised crushed rock mattress for east of harbour.
- Mooring dolphins for erosion control.

Figure 3.10: Marine Works Layout

3.3.3 Decommissioning Phase

The port is anticipated to operate for at least 40 years. Decommissioning will take place at the end of its operational life and will be undertaken in accordance with good practice guidance in force at the time. While the details of the decommissioning stage are expected that decommissioning will involve the removal of all above ground infrastructure assuming there is no alternative appropriate reuse of the infrastructure on site. A Decommissioning Plan will be provided as part of the detailed Construction Environmental Management Document (CEMD).

3.4 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The applicant has considered alternative sites as part of the EIA process. The location of the existing port is a determining factor. Alternative sites considered development design, location and scale. The purpose of the extension is to secure an additional area of land, next to the existing port and meet the energy related industry led requirements. The site proposed meet these objectives. The proposed use of the extended area will require access to the deep-water quay and any separation from the existing port would not be practical or efficient use of land potentially resulting in environmental impacts and additional vehicular activity on the surrounding roads.

Within the immediate area, the land to the north, west and east is included within environmental designations while the land to the south is within the designated MoD training areas with the Starlight Centre also located to the south.

The selected area therefore provides the only practicable option for the extension of the existing port on land that is next to the existing port and with direct access to the deep-water quay and existing facilities including main port access arrangements.

CHAPTER 4. CONSULTATION

Consultation is an important part of the EIA process and is a requirement of any planning application that is defined as a Major development.

This section details the consultation undertaken both during the design and EIA preparation process.

4.1 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

The principle of the proposed development was presented to The Highland Council (THC) and key stakeholders including SEPA, NatureScot and Transport Scotland at Pre-application meetings.

The project team presented the key principles of the proposed development, outlining the development proposal with reference to the existing port facilities, development completed to date and the scope of the extant planning permission. The need for additional land to support the consented port activities was identified and referenced the significant land requirements of the components of the offshore wind energy industry.

Following the meeting, The Highland Council provided a detailed written response outlining the matters to be addressed in any subsequent planning application.

4.2 SCOPING

A request for a Scoping Opinion was submitted to THC on 17 January 2025. The response from THC dated 24 March 2025 identified the matters to be included within the EIAR and these are addressed within the EIAR.

4.3 PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT

Two public consultation events were held in Ardersier Memorial Hall (11th June 2025 and 27th August 2025). The event presented the proposed scope of development on a series of display boards and attendees were invited to make comment.

The full assessment of the events is set out in the accompanying Pre-Application Consultation Report, but a summary of the feedback received and how it was considered is provided below in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: You Said, We Did Graphic

You said/We did

YOUR FEEDBACK	OUR RESPONSE
Digital Interactive Map would be useful to understand the site location.	We have brought an interactive map to this event.
Concerned about lighting impacts from the site particularly during winter.	We have commissioned a lighting specialist to advise on lighting design and suitable mitigation.
Worried about noise impacts from the proposed extension.	We have undertaken a full noise assessment and the results will be included in the EIA.
Worried about the loss of woodland and the screening it provides.	We have designed a buffer strip of woodland along the southern boundary of the site where the woodland will be retained.
Worried about the junction interventions and traffic impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have confirmed that traffic levels will not exceed that already consented in 2018. • We are also preparing a Travel Framework to manage traffic from the site that will consider all modes of transport and also consider sustainable options. • The roundabouts that are associated with the 2018 consent are designed and approved to meet current standards and are not a part of the proposed extension.
You wanted further information about the potential layout of the site.	We are developing an indicative layout for assessment purposes for the EIA. Important to note that this is indicative and future detailed proposals will undertake a full design process as required and further applications will come forward with the details on what is proposed.
You wanted confirmation of the proposed manufacturing that could take place on the site.	We confirmed that the extension site will provide additional space for laydown areas or renewables related manufacturing. This could potentially include turbine blade manufacturing, nacelle manufacturing, amongst other things.

CHAPTER 5. SUPPORTING INFORMATION & ASSESSMENTS

This chapter presents a collection of supporting information and assessments for topics that didn't require a full environmental impact assessment to be undertaken but where further information or details had been requested either through the EIA scoping process, specific consultation with regulatory bodies or through the public consultation process.

5.1 CONSTRUCTION DUST

The project involves major earthworks to extend the former fabrication yard, including digging, moving, and storing sand and aggregate materials. Work is planned from March 2026 to July 2028 and could create dust if not properly managed.

An updated Construction Dust Management Plan (DMP) will guide how dust is controlled on site. The plan follows national guidance and includes measures such as using water sprays, covering stockpiles, and monitoring air quality in real time. If dust levels exceed limits, work will stop until the issue is resolved.

The plan will be reviewed regularly (every three months or sooner if there are repeated dust issues) and any breaches will be reported to the Health, Safety, Environment and Quality Manager. Environmental Health has no objections to the approach.

5.2 LIGHTING STRATEGY

During consultation, local residents asked for more details about how lighting will be managed, especially in winter when it gets dark as early as 3:30 pm.

The proposed lighting strategy aims to create a safe, efficient, and environmentally friendly system. It uses modern LED lights with shields and smart controls to reduce light pollution, protect wildlife, and ensure the Port remains safe and functional.

While future tenants will design their own specific lighting systems, this strategy provides clear guidance to limit light impacts on nearby residents and biodiversity. Major construction work, such as turbine installation, is not expected to take place in winter, further reducing potential light effects.

5.3 WASTE MANAGEMENT

Highland Council asked for clear information on how site clearance and waste materials will be managed. They supported the proposal to reuse timber and forest waste as biomass fuel and requested confirmation of how any remaining materials will be handled.

The project is expected to produce three main types of waste:

- Forestry waste from tree and stump removal
- Demolition waste from existing buildings
- General construction waste

Trees will be felled and processed on site. Timber and stumps will be chipped and taken off site for use as biomass. Demolished building materials will be crushed and reused in the construction of the new working platform and construction waste will be dealt with in line with best practice to minimise.

A Waste Management Plan (WMP) has been updated from the existing port project to ensure all waste is handled safely, sustainably, and in line with national regulations. It covers inert, non-hazardous, and hazardous waste, and works alongside the outline Construction Environmental Management Document (CEMD).

5.4 FORESTRY

The extension proposals will involve the loss of 120 acres of commercial Scots Pine forestry land. Through consultation with THC it was advised that this should be compensated like-for-like at an off-site location. A compensatory site is being identified which will plant 120 acres of commercial Scots Pine plantation, and an additional 12 acres of broadleaf woodland.

5.5 CONTAMINATED LAND

Highland Council noted that part of the extension area includes former farm buildings near Juniper Cottage and Lower Carse, where past activities such as fuel storage, vehicle maintenance, or use of chemicals may have caused land contamination.

The Council requested further investigation to confirm the land is suitable for development. This includes a detailed site history, walkover survey, and possibly soil testing, with early consultation recommended before any intrusive work.

Although contaminated land was scoped out of the EIA (as potential issues are expected to be minor and easily managed), these surveys have been completed. A geo-environmental desk study was submitted and agreed with the Council, followed by a ground investigation to check for contamination.

5.6 CARBON MANAGEMENT

The Marine Directorate advised that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions should be assessed in detail, as any increase or reduction may be significant under Scotland's climate targets. They requested a full Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) covering all stages of the project — from pre-construction through to decommissioning — including supply chain impacts and long-term benefits.

An Estimated GHG Emissions and Carbon Management Report has been prepared to meet this requirement. It follows recognised standards (PAS 2080, GHG Protocol, and IEMA guidance) and assesses emissions from each stage of the project. The report identifies the main sources of emissions and outlines measures to reduce and manage carbon during design and construction.

The estimated GHG emissions are 18,735 tCO₂e. The largest contributor is Marine Gas Oil (MGO) used by the dredging vessel (5,810 tCO₂e), followed by emissions from quarried stone production (4,186 tCO₂e). Together, these account for approximately 55.8% of the project's total carbon footprint.

Land Use Change (LUC) also contributes to emissions. LUC adds approximately 394 tCO₂e, while replanting off site (stage D) offsets 240 tCO₂e. Transport of stone to site was the third largest source of emissions (approximately 3,336 tCO₂e) — despite quarries being within 30 km — due to the large material volumes required. This highlights the importance of selecting local suppliers where possible.

5.7 TRAVEL PLAN

Highland Council requested an updated Travel Plan for the project, including previously suggested measures and an Operational Traffic Management Plan. The Travel Plan has been revised to reflect the port's proposed extension. Although the site will be larger, the number of workers during construction and operation is expected to be similar to what was previously approved.

Because there are currently only a few employees on site, no specific travel measures are needed at this stage. The updated plan instead provides a Framework for future phases, when more companies will operate from the site. Each company will be encouraged to join the overall site Travel Plan, which will include shared initiatives (such as a bus service) and company-specific actions (like cycle facilities). The plan will be reviewed each year and before every major development phase.

5.8 MARINE & COASTAL ECOLOGY

For marine and coastal habitats, the assessment considered potential impacts of the proposed development on Marine and Coastal Ecology (including marine and coastal habitats, and diadromous fish). It concluded that all potential impacts during construction (including loss of habitat from capital dredging, temporary habitat loss/disturbance, temporary increases in suspended sediment concentration (how much sediment there is in the water) and sediment deposition, seabed disturbance leading to release of sediment contaminants and increased risk of introduction and/or spread of marine Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS), are not significant.

Similarly, potential impacts during the operational phase (including permanent and/or long-term habitat loss/alteration, changes in physical processes and increased risk of introduction and/or spread of marine INNS), are also predicted to be not significant.

For diadromous fish, the assessment finds that during construction are not significant and impacts during operation were scoped out of the assessment.

The assessment also considered the potential for cumulative effects from other developments within the region and concluded that impacts were not predicted to be significant, with the other developments not connected to and located a fair distance from the proposed development.

Mitigation measures have been recommended to further minimise any impacts, such as the development of a suitable dredge strategy/method to prevent the spread and disposal of elevated concentrations of contaminants, implementation of a marine INNS biosecurity management plan and the use of soft start piling procedures as secured in the Marine Mammal Mitigation Plan (MMMP); the proposed development is unlikely to result in significant adverse effects on marine and coastal habitats, and diadromous fish.

5.9 COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

The assessment looked at how the port extension could affect local fishing. Most fishing in the area is carried out close to shore by small boats (under 15 m) using pots, creels, and trawls for shellfish like crab, lobster, whelk, and Nephrops.

Construction may cause minor, short-term disruption, but as fishing is already not allowed within the port limits, any effects are expected to be limited and temporary. No significant impacts are expected during operation.

Nearby marine works could briefly restrict access for smaller vessels, but these effects are local and short-lived. With the implementation of mitigation measures, including advance notification to vessel operators through Notice to Mariners (NtMs), and the existing prohibition of fishing activity within the port limits, the proposed development is unlikely to result in significant adverse effects on the commercial fisheries fleet métiers identified during baseline characterisation. Ongoing stakeholder engagement will be key to ensuring adaptive management and minimising disruption throughout the Project lifecycle.

5.10 MARINE BIOSECURITY PLAN

The marine Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Biosecurity Management Plan provides guidance for reducing the risk of introduction and spread of marine INNS. The plan covers operational activities and the proposed development project. The development of this plan constitutes an embedded mitigation measure within the broader EIA.

The plan includes: a summary of marine INNS recorded in the Moray Firth; an overview of activities undertaken / to be undertaken at Ardersier Port; and an assessment of the risk of marine INNS introduction and spread

via these activities. It provides best practice guidance in the form of practical and feasible measures for port users and development contractors. For completeness, it also includes recommendations for awareness raising, monitoring and reporting, and contingency planning.

5.11 MAJOR ACCIDENTS & HAZARDS

The proposed development has been designed with due consideration of potential risks associated with major accidents and natural disasters, in accordance with relevant UK legislation and guidance, including the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations where applicable. The project will incorporate robust design standards, operational procedures, and emergency planning measures to minimise the likelihood and potential consequences of such events. Key risk factors considered include marine incidents, hazardous material spills, fire, explosion, flooding, and extreme weather events.

5.12 CLIMATE RESILIENCE & ADAPTION

The resilience of the proposed development to climate change relates to the effects that climate change may have on the proposed development such as increased risk and severity of flooding, rainfall events and other extreme weather conditions.

The climate of the study area is projected to change significantly over the lifetime of the proposed development. Present day extreme weather events are increasing in frequency and there is a risk that the proposed development may be affected during construction and operation. A flood risk assessment has been produced and a drainage impact assessment which assess the impact of increased sea levels and precipitation on the site.

Resilience to climate change has been built into the design of the extension areas with the design of the Sustainable Drainage and the designed height of the platform (to the height of the currently consented land platform).

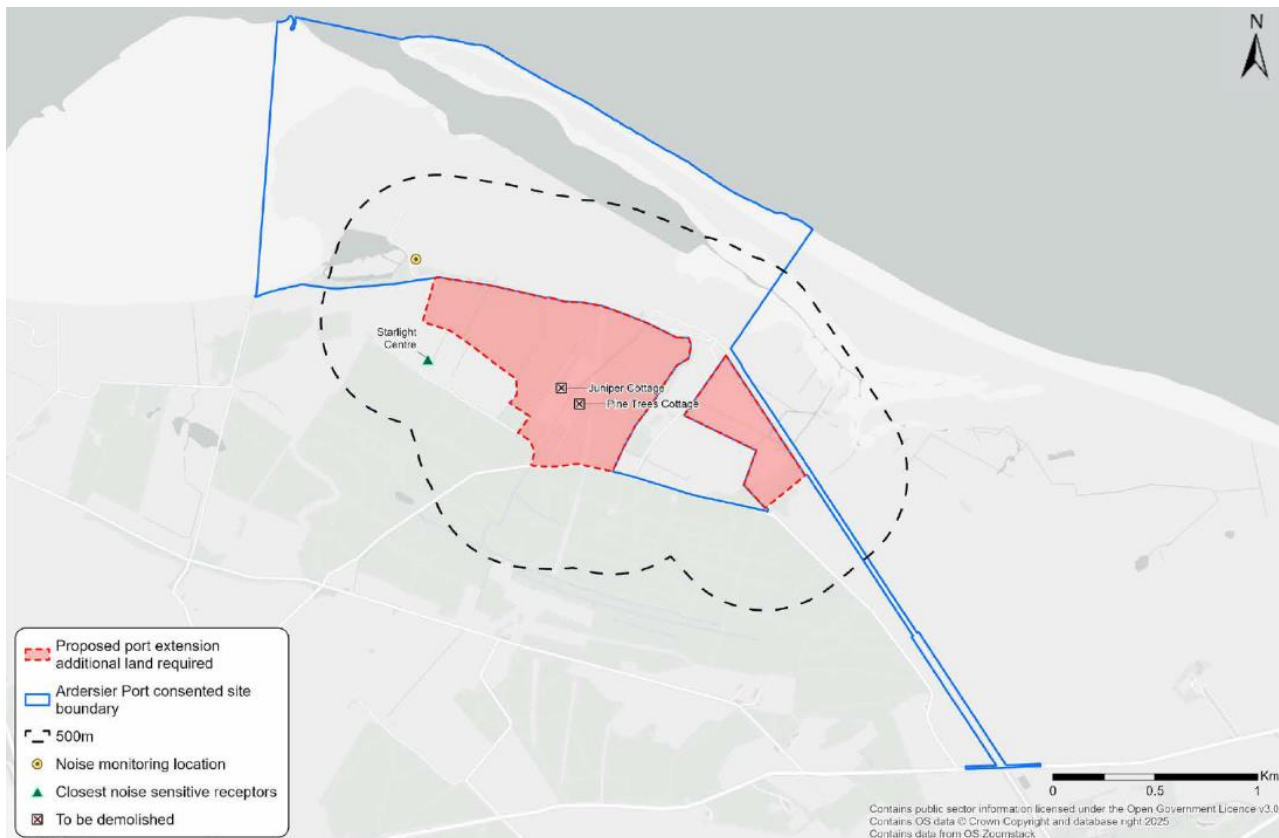
As the Statutory Harbour Authority (SHA) Ardersier Port Limited also has extensive HSEQ procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated and will incorporate operational adaptations for climate resilience over the longer term. In the context of the vulnerability of the proposed development projected climate change is not anticipated to have a significant effect.

CHAPTER 6. AIRBORNE NOISE AND VIBRATION

This section provides an assessment of the implications of the proposed development on noise. It presents an assessment of the potential effects of airborne noise and ground borne vibration of the proposed development on nearby sensitive receptors.

The assessment utilised the same operational noise sources as the October 2013 and September 2018 applications for Ardersier Port. The site was modelled using an indicative layout and source noise levels at the two closest noise sensitive receptors was calculated. These results were then considered in the context of the background noise measurements to determine the sensitivity of the receptors (Figure 6.1). Thereafter, the difference between the total noise level (measured + source noise) and the measured noise level was calculated to determine the final output.

Figure 6.1: Site Layout



Based on the installation of noise screening along the boundary nearest receptor NSR-A (Starlight Centre), the operational assessment outcome presented a magnitude of effect of **Minor Adverse**, this was not considered to be significant.

A construction noise assessment was also undertaken, utilising the measured noise levels to determine the threshold category. The assessment then considered an indicative programme with the potential activities that could take place on site and the scope of plant that could be based on site. By using the shortest distance between the receptors together with an indicative works area, the noise levels from the activities were

calculated. As the construction works will only be undertaken during daytime hours, the results of the construction noise assessment predicted a maximum magnitude of effect of **Minor Adverse**, this was not considered to be significant.

The potential for vibration impacts was considered for both the construction phase and operational phase of the development. Due to the large distances between the areas where vibration-generating activities could take place and the nearest receptors, the levels of vibration were considered unlikely to be perceptible and assessment was scoped out.

CHAPTER 7. LANDSCAPE, SEASCAPE, VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Figure 7.1: Viewpoint 05 of the Existing Ardersier Port



Figure 7.5.5b - Viewpoint 05 - Chanonry Point

Distance to site: 4.7km Camera: EOS 5D Mark IV Focal length: 50mm Horizontal Field of View: 65.5° Camera height: 1.5m Date: 10/07/2025 Time: 12:03

This section provides an assessment of the likely effects of the proposed extension of the port facility at Ardersier on landscape character, seascape character, and visual amenity. This has included an assessment of effects on surrounding areas of differing landscape character as well as detailed consideration of the visual effects upon 24 representative viewpoints including important coastal locations such as the Rosemarkie seafront, Chanonry Point, Fort George, and Nairn beach (Figure 7.2). These different assessments have then also fed into an overall assessment of the effect of the extension of the port on the Sutors of Cromarty, Rosemarkie (Figure 7.1), and Fort George Local Landscape Area – a protected local landscape designation within which the Port is located.

The assessment of landscape, seascape and visual effects has taken account of the activities that are likely to take place within the extended port. The proposed extension would enable the port to support the construction of off-shore wind energy facilities including new floating-turbine technology. It is therefore likely that assembly of very tall structures as well as the storage of large components would take place on the site.

The assessment concludes that significant landscape, seascape, and visual change could occur during future periods of intense activity on the site compared to its current appearance (during the latter part of 2025). However, the assessment emphasises that:

- Planning permission has already been granted for this type of activity to take place on the existing site over future years; and
- The main landscape, seascape and visual effects would be transient in nature because off-shore wind turbine assembly would be seasonal (likely to be in the lighter summer months)

Overall, therefore, and taking account of the extant consented port facility, the additional landscape, seascape, and visual effects of its extension are not considered likely to be significant.

Figure 7.2: Viewpoint 07 of the Existing Ardersier Port

CHAPTER 8. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Figure 8.1: Former Farmstead



This section provides an assessment of the implications of the proposed development on the historic environment. The study focused on two areas: a 1km zone around the site for direct physical impacts, and a wider area based on visibility modelling to assess potential changes to the setting of designated heritage assets. While no scheduled monuments or listed buildings lie within the immediate 1km zone, several undesignated features were identified, including a former farmstead (ORCA 09) within the proposed development boundary (Figure 8.1).

Construction works will require the removal of ORCA 09, the ruins of a farmstead of post-medieval date. Prior to construction proceeding, remains of the building will be recorded in accordance with ALGAO Scotland's *Historic Building Guidance* (2013) ⁹ and in consultation with the Highland Council's Historic Environment Team. This will ensure that a permanent record of the structure is made.

There is also a low but possible chance that previously unknown archaeological remains or palaeoenvironmental deposits (such as ancient soils or organic material) could be uncovered during groundworks. To address this, a programme of archaeological monitoring will be agreed with The Highland Council's Historic Environment Team and implemented during construction, and specialist assessment of existing borehole logs to identify whether there is the potential for deposits of palaeoenvironment and geoarchaeological interest.

In terms of visual impacts and their effect on the setting, the temporary presence of large offshore wind turbines during assembly could affect views that form a key element of the setting of Fort George (Figure 8.2), a Category A Listed Building, and 18th-century military site. While these turbines will not be permanent, their scale means they may be visible from key viewpoints within the Fort. This is considered a major, short-term (temporary) adverse effect. Permanent buildings associated with the port extension are not expected to significantly alter the setting of Fort George, especially when considered alongside existing consented development.

No other significant effects on heritage assets have been identified. The assessment concludes that, with appropriate mitigation in place, the proposed development would not result in unacceptable harm to the historic environment.

Figure 8.2: Image of Fort George



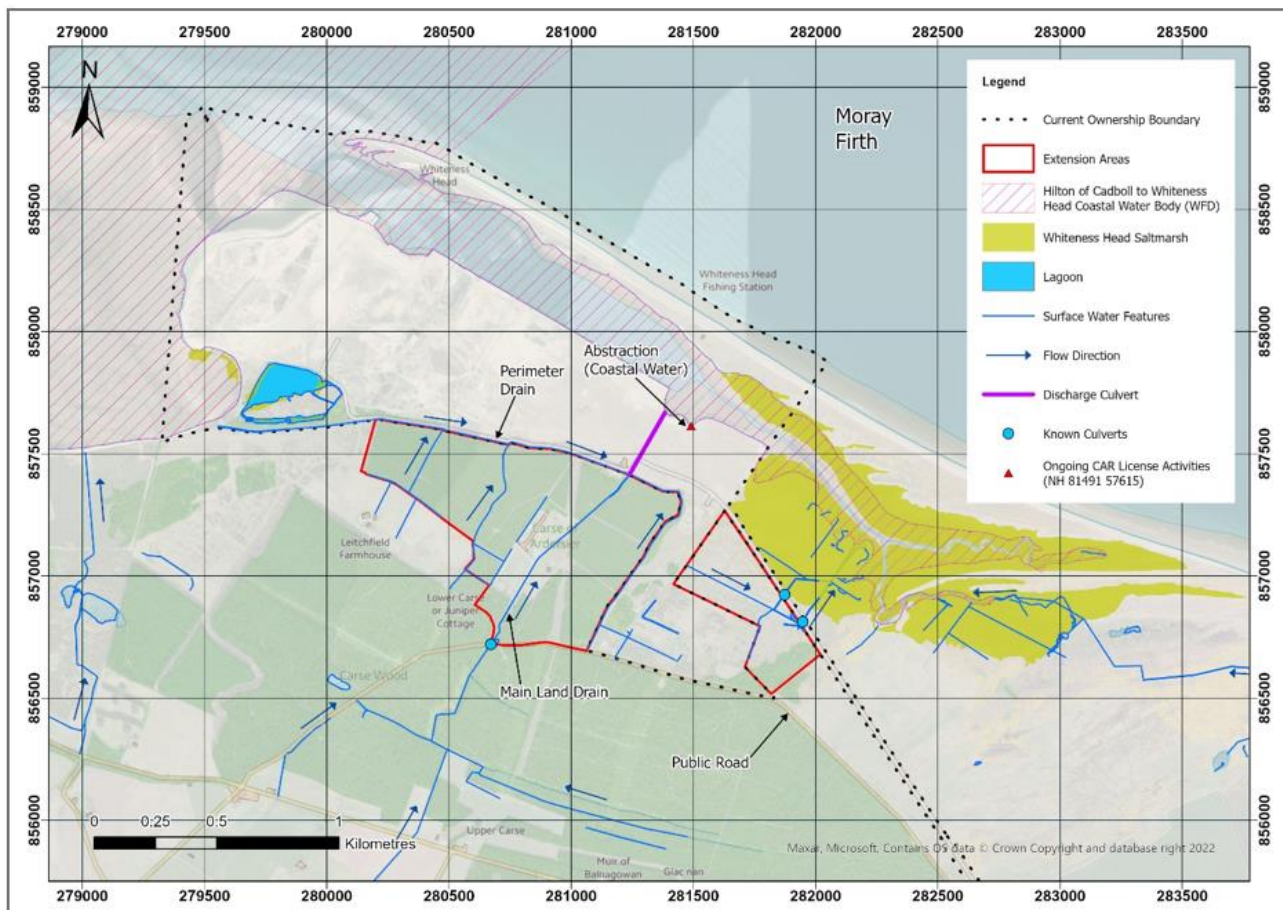
CHAPTER 9. HYDROLOGY AND HYDROGEOLOGY

This section provides an assessment of the implications of the proposed development on the water environment. Both construction and operational phases of development were considered for the assessment.

The assessment involved a desk-based review of available information including water quality, geology, abstractions, private water supplies (PWS), groundwater-dependant terrestrial ecosystems (GWDTEs), outfall structures and surface water features (Figure 9.1). It concluded that:

- No private water supplies were identified with 2km of the site.
- An active abstraction on site lies a suitable distance from marine works.
- Potential GWDTE habitats identified within the eastern application site are considered to be dependent upon rainfall and surface water flows which means that the site does not support GWDTEs.

Figure 9.1: Site Layout



A quantitative flood risk assessment was undertaken and a drainage impact assessment, inclusive of surface water and foul water drainage.

The impact assessment included identification of sensitive receptors and environmental constraints, identification of potential impacts, and assessment of potential impact magnitude. Mitigation measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts were identified and assessed where appropriate.

The environmental assessment looked at how a proposed development might affect nearby water bodies, including land drains, groundwater, coastal waters, a lagoon, saltmarsh, and a public road.

To manage water flow, the site will be reshaped and existing drainage channels will be filled in. New perimeter ditches will redirect water safely to the coast. Flood risk is considered very low, even in extreme weather events.

Rainwater from the site will soak into the ground through permeable surfaces and infiltration trenches, preventing runoff and flooding. During construction, temporary measures like silt fences will help control erosion and protect water quality.

Overall, the assessment concluded that most residual effects of the proposed development are negligible, and accordingly no significant effects on the water environment have been identified. The residual effects are negligible – moderate relate to the coastal waters of Hilton of Cadboll to Whiteness Head, saltmarsh and the lagoon from possible pollution incidents. The significance of these effects is due to the designations of the receptors identified.

The assessment identified suitable mitigation measures which aim to avoid, manage, control and further minimise impacts from the proposed development on the water environment. The risk of impacts from pollution during construction will be managed through a Construction Environmental Management Document (CEMD) including a Pollution Incident Response Plan (PIRP). An Environmental Clerk of Works will monitor the construction works to ensure that the CEMD and associated mitigation measures are being implemented effectively.

During construction, silt fences and temporary bunds will be installed around open or exposed ground, slopes will be stabilised during early-phase planting, and topsoil and vegetation stripping will only be undertaken when necessary to minimise the risk of sediment mobilisation and erosion. Additionally, where required, settlement measures such as settlement lagoons will be installed within diversion drains.

Dredging activities will be undertaken in line with the marine licence and BPEO and subject to any conditions.

During construction and operation, oil and fuel management will be undertaken in line with SEPA PPG and GPP documents and the PIRP will deal with accidental spillages.

During the operational phase, an Operational Environmental Management Document (OEMD) will be in place, ensuring best practice is followed. This will include an updated Pollution Incident Response Plan taking account of operational activities and risks.

CHAPTER 10. COASTAL PROCESSES AND GEOMORPHOLOGY

Figure 10.1: Whiteness Split



This section provides an assessment of the implications of the proposed development on coastal processes and geomorphology during construction and operation. Proposals include dredging, construction of a quay wall, placement of rock armour and installation of mooring dolphins (a standalone structure in the marine environment for mooring vessels) within the existing harbour.

Coastal processes are considered to encompass tidal action, wave climate, and sediment transport.

The assessment process involved an initial desk-based review of available information including site history, topography and bathymetry, tidal

regime, wave and wind climate, sediment and geomorphology. The impact assessment included identification of sensitive receptors and environmental constraints, identification of potential impacts, and assessment of potential impact magnitude. Mitigation measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts were identified and assessed where appropriate.

The assessment identified the following sensitive receptors: the operational waters and sediment of Ardersier Port, the wider coastal waters and sediment of Hilton of Cadboll to Whiteness Head, Whiteness Head SSSI and Inner Moray Firth RAMSAR (Figure 10.1).

Overall, the assessment concluded that the residual effects of the proposed development are considered to be negligible, and accordingly no significant effects on coastal processes and geomorphology have been identified.

Mitigation measures which aim to avoid, manage, control and further minimise impacts from the proposed development have been recommended including a Construction Environmental Management Document (CEMD), a Pollution Incident Response Plan (PIRP), and an Environmental Clerk of Works to monitor the construction works to ensure that the CEMD and associated mitigation measures are being implemented effectively.

Dredging activities will be undertaken in line with the marine licence and BPEO and subject to any conditions.

During the operational phase, an Operational Environmental Management Document (OEMD) will also be in place, ensuring best practice is followed. This will include an updated PIRP taking account of operational activities and risks.

CHAPTER 11. MARINE MAMMALS

Figure 11.1: Bottlenose Dolphin



This section provides an assessment of the implications of the proposed development on marine mammal species that may occur within or near the project footprint during both the construction and operational phases.

The species considered in this assessment include harbour porpoise, bottlenose dolphin, minke whale, harbour seal, and grey seal, which are known to use the Moray Firth and surrounding waters.

The assessment identifies potential impacts including underwater noise from construction activities; behavioural disturbance caused by increased vessel traffic; the risk of physical injury or

mortality from vessel collisions; indirect effects on marine mammals arising from reduced prey availability; and potential displacement from important habitat areas. The assessment is based upon baseline surveys that have been undertaken and by using a defined methodology in accordance with current industry best practice and guidance.

During construction, the most significant sources of potential impact are underwater noise generated by piling and dredging, and associated increases in vessel traffic. Quantitative modelling indicates that the impacts are typically within 10 metres for most species and hearing groups. Mitigation measures to reduce any impacts will be therefore put in place such as soft-start procedures, pre-piling visual and acoustic monitoring by Marine Mammal Observers (MMOs) and Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM), and adherence to a Marine Mammal Mitigation Plan (MMMP) to prevent animals from entering zones where auditory injury could occur. As such, the magnitude of impact is assessed as negligible, and the residual effect is deemed non-significant for all species.

Behavioural disturbance could also occur during piling. While some displacement is anticipated, particularly for bottlenose dolphins and harbour porpoise, this is expected to be temporary and reversible. Evidence from monitoring in the Moray Firth suggests that marine mammals frequently return to areas shortly after construction noise ceases and have a demonstrated capacity to compensate for short-term reductions in foraging or resting opportunities. The overall effect was assessed as not significant due to the short duration (12 non-consecutive days of piling) and the limited area required for the works.

For dredging and disposal activities, the assessment considered both underwater noise and vessel movements. While continuous noise from cutter suction dredgers may be detectable by marine mammals, modelling shows that the zones in which it might result in injury or disturbance are similarly small. A 5 km 'effective deterrence range' (EDR) was conservatively applied for harbour porpoise, seals, and minke whales, and a 1 km for bottlenose dolphins. Even using these broad assumptions, the number of individuals potentially disturbed remains a small fraction of the local or wider populations. Furthermore, mitigation through route planning, vessel speed restrictions, and timing of disposal operations (in accordance with a Navigational Risk Assessment) further reduces potential for meaningful impact.

In addition, a more qualitative assessment was undertaken specifically for spoil disposal vessel movements, which are expected to generate a temporary but notable increase in traffic—up to 13 to 23 barge movements per day over a ten-week period. This assessment incorporated detailed acoustic and visual monitoring data from the University of Aberdeen to estimate the likely overlap between periods of bottlenose dolphin presence and spoil disposal activity. For example, it was conservatively estimated that approximately 14.6% of spoil disposal operations may coincide with bottlenose dolphin presence, potentially resulting in up to 66 vessel

interactions over the ten-week disposal window. However, even under this scenario, the number of individuals likely to be affected remains small (e.g., mean group size of 8 individuals), and the transient nature of vessel transits further limits the duration of any disturbance. Embedded mitigation measures—including an MMMP and NRA to coordinate routing, minimise overlap of vessel traffic, and manage operational timing—are expected to further reduce the likelihood and severity of impacts.

Operational impacts, including long-term changes in vessel traffic and habitat availability, were also assessed. These pressures are not novel to the region and are not predicted to increase substantially in intensity as a result of the proposed development. While marine mammals may occasionally interact with vessels during normal port operations, the frequency, intensity, and geographical extent of these activities are such that the risk of collision remains extremely low. Similarly, no significant long-term displacement or barrier effects are predicted due to habitat change, and no measurable reduction in prey availability is expected.

Seasonal considerations were also accounted for, particularly with regard to seal haul-out sites near the development area. While hauled-out seals may be more vulnerable to disturbance during the breeding and moulting seasons, dredging activities near haul-out areas will be short-term and occur at a sufficient distance to prevent flushing or behavioural change. Construction activities will largely take place behind harbour walls or other acoustic barriers, further limiting their detectability at haul-out locations.

The cumulative impact assessment considered potential disturbance to marine mammals from construction activities such as piling, dredging and associated vessel use, in combination with other projects in the region. The results indicate that effects would be negligible or minor, and therefore not significant in EIA terms. The greatest potential for cumulative disturbance was identified for bottlenose dolphin and harbour seal during peak construction activity at the proposed development in 2028, although the contribution from the proposed development remains within acceptable limits. For other species, including harbour porpoise, minke whale and grey seal, the project's contribution was assessed to be very small. With embedded mitigation and adherence to NRA's, no significant cumulative effects are anticipated during construction.

The assessment also considered cumulative impacts from vessel activity during both construction and operation. Construction will result in a temporary increase in barge movements during peak activity, while operation will add a small number of additional vessel movements when compared with baseline conditions to the Moray Firth each year. These changes are minor when compared with existing levels of vessel traffic. Most species are considered to have low sensitivity to disturbance from vessels, and while some receptors may be more sensitive at certain times of year, the overall scale of change is not sufficient to give rise to significant cumulative effects. Overall, the proposed development predicted to make only a small contribution to wider cumulative pressures on marine mammals.

In summary, all construction and operational phase impacts, for the project alone or cumulatively with other developments, were assessed as resulting in either negligible or low magnitude depending on species sensitivity and exposure. With the implementation of embedded mitigation measures—the overall conclusion of the assessment is that no significant adverse effects on marine mammals are predicted.

CHAPTER 12. TERRESTRIAL ECOLOGY

Figure 12.1: Red Squirrel



This section provides an assessment of the implications of the proposed development on terrestrial ecology (plants, habitats, and terrestrial animals) that may occur within or near the project footprint during both the construction and operational phases. The extension will require the clearance of some woodland, scrub, and grassland habitats to create new industrial and operational areas.

The assessment included:

- Desk studies and field surveys to identify habitats and species present on and around the site.
- Consultation with The Highland Council, NatureScot, and other stakeholders to agree the scope and methods.
- Evaluation of the importance and sensitivity of ecological features, using a standard geographic scale (from site to national/international).
- Assessment of potential impacts during both construction and operation, considering direct and indirect effects.
- Identification of measures to avoid, reduce, or compensate for negative impacts (the “mitigation hierarchy”).
- Consideration of cumulative effects with other nearby developments.

The site is mainly commercial Scots pine plantation, with areas of gorse scrub, modified grassland, and patches of heath, wetland, and birch woodland. Some of these habitats are recognised as being of local or county importance for biodiversity. The site supports several protected and notable species, including:

- Bats (with confirmed roosts in buildings)
- Badger (multiple setts)
- Red squirrel (active dreys)
- Pine marten (confirmed presence)
- Reptiles (common lizard, toad)
- Other species (otter, water vole, great crested newt) were surveyed but not found to be present or were scoped out due to lack of suitable habitat.

During construction, the main risks are:

- Permanent loss of woodland, scrub, and grassland habitats.
- Disturbance, injury, or loss of protected species (e.g., bats, badgers, red squirrels) due to vegetation clearance, demolition, and construction activity.
- Fragmentation of habitats and loss of ecological connectivity.
- Indirect effects such as noise, lighting, and pollution.

During operation, the site will be largely hardstanding and industrial, with limited landscaped areas. The main risks are:

- Ongoing disturbance to wildlife from lighting, noise, and vehicle movements.
- Potential for invasive species colonisation if not managed.

The project has been designed to avoid or reduce impacts wherever possible. Key mitigation and compensation measures include:

- Careful timing of works to avoid sensitive periods for breeding or hibernating species.
- Retention of habitat margins and boundary features where feasible.
- Pre-construction checks and supervision by qualified ecologists.
- Species Protection Plans for bats, badgers, red squirrels, pine marten, and reptiles, including licensing where required.
- Creation of artificial roosts, setts, dreys, and refuges to replace lost features.
- Off-site compensatory woodland planting to replace lost Scots pine plantation, with native species and habitat enhancements.
- Ongoing habitat management and monitoring to ensure the effectiveness of mitigation.

With all mitigation and compensation measures in place, the assessment concludes that there will be no significant residual adverse effects on important terrestrial habitats or protected species at the local, county, or national scale. Losses of lower-value habitats will be offset by habitat creation and enhancement, and the project will not affect the integrity of nearby designated sites (such as the Inner Moray Firth Ramsar, Moray Firth SAC, or local SSSIs), as there are no direct or indirect impact pathways. A review of other developments in the area found no evidence of significant cumulative effects on important ecological features when considered alongside the proposed development.

The proposed development has been carefully assessed and designed to protect local wildlife and habitats. No significant residual adverse effects are predicted, and the proposed development includes compensatory planting and habitat enhancement that provide opportunities for biodiversity gain.

With the proposed mitigation and compensation, the project is not expected to result in significant adverse effects on terrestrial ecology.

CHAPTER 13. ORNITHOLOGY

Figure 13.1: Common Buzzard



This section assesses potential effects of on ornithology during construction and operation. The assessment considers designated-site bird features (Inner Moray Firth SPA/Ramsar, Whiteness Head SSSI), onsite breeding birds, raptors (including Schedule 1 species), and pinewood specialists associated with retained Scots pine plantation and buffer habitats.

The assessment included a review of existing data, field surveys, and consultation with key organisations. It considered both the construction and operational phases of the project, focusing on:

- Disturbance to important bird populations (such as waders and waterbirds) during construction, especially from noise, movement, and habitat loss.
- Loss of breeding and foraging habitat for birds on site, including species of conservation concern.
- Potential effects on protected sites (SPA, Ramsar, SSSI) due to disturbance or changes in water quality.

Baseline surveys and desk study confirm the presence of waders and other sensitive receptors in proximity to the site. Potential impacts include disturbance and displacement during construction, lighting and traffic effects, and low-probability collision/barrier risks from intermittent tall lifts.

A comprehensive mitigation strategy has been embedded in design and construction planning, including:

- Physical screening and buffers (e.g., existing 3 m bund and additional eastern bund; ECoW-verified setback distances to roosts).
- Timing controls to avoid peak high-tide and breeding periods where practicable.
- Directional lighting and traffic discipline to minimise visual disturbance.
- Habitat management for pinewood specialists and retained woodland buffers.
- Raptor and nesting bird protection through pre-works checks and species-specific exclusion zones.
- Appointment of an Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW) to oversee implementation, monitoring, and adaptive management.

With these measures in place, the assessment concludes that **no significant residual effects** on ornithology receptors are predicted during construction or operation.

Following review of the cumulative list of developments and the extended 15 km buffer, it is concluded that the proposed development is **unlikely to give rise to significant cumulative effects**, either in combination with other projects or as part of the combined effect of multiple developments within the zone of influence.

CHAPTER 14. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The cumulative effects chapter of the EIA assesses intra-cumulative effects, which occur when multiple impacts from the proposed development significantly affect a single receptor or a group of receptors. For intra-cumulative effects, significant residual effects only occur for the historic environment as a result of the proposed development, and there are **no potential intra-cumulative effects** between environmental topics on receptors during construction or operation of the proposed development.

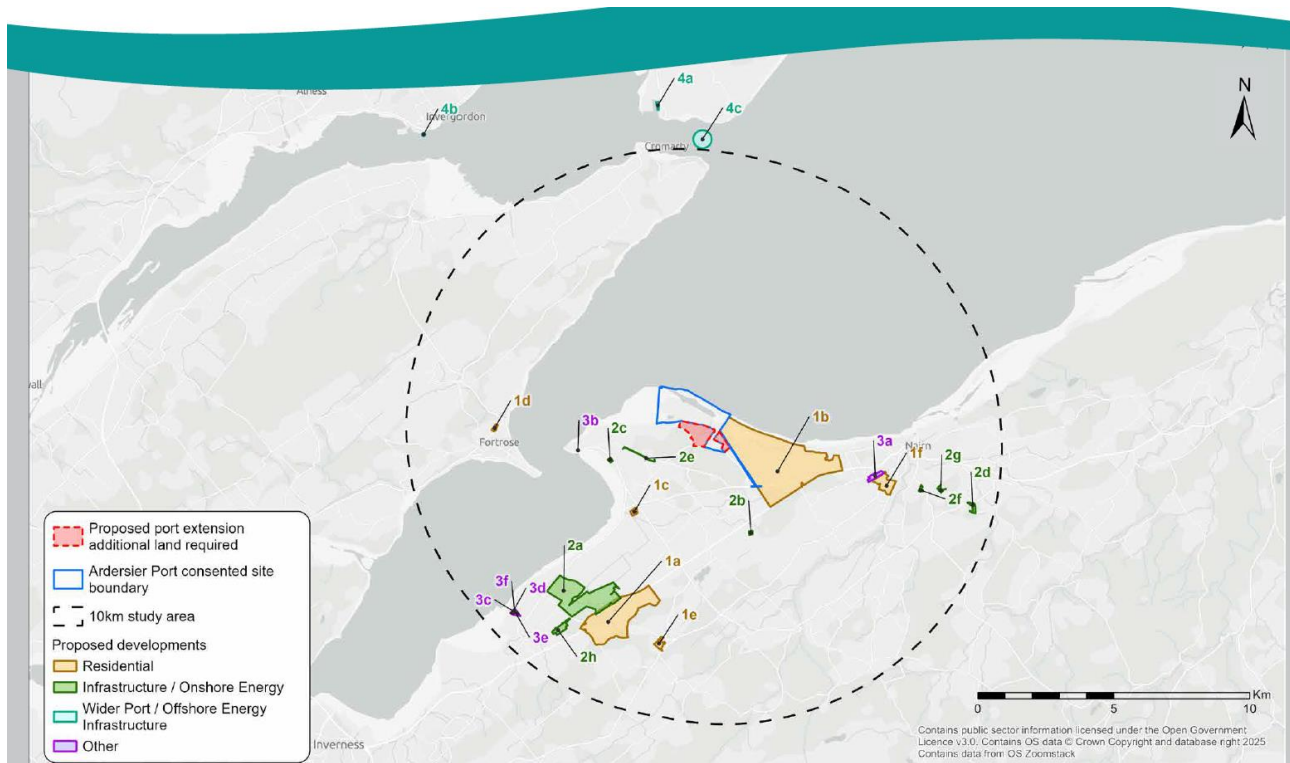
The chapter also summarises each environmental topic chapters' inter-cumulative effects assessments, where impacts from several other different developments combined with the proposed development, can create a significant cumulative effect. This comprehensive evaluation is essential for understanding the overall environmental impact of the proposed development in conjunction with other existing and approved developments.

For the inter-cumulative assessment, other developments within 15km of the proposed development were identified (Figure 14.1) and cumulatively assessed by the environmental specialists.

It was concluded that it is unlikely that there will be inter-project effects, and no further assessment or mitigation is required.

As such, **no significant inter-cumulative effects** have been identified for the proposed development.

Figure 14.1: Other Proposed Schemes Within 15 km of the Proposed Development



CHAPTER 15. MITIGATION & ENHANCEMENTS

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is to identify and eliminate potential negative effects on the environment through the design and planning phase. Where impacts cannot be fully avoided, the EIA process helps determine appropriate mitigation measures to reduce or manage those effects. This ensures that development proceeds responsibly, balancing progress with environmental protection.

The design of this proposed development has been shaped through close collaboration between environmental and infrastructure teams to reduce environmental impacts from the start — a process known as embedded mitigation.

Three key embedded measures include:

- Following Highland Council's environmental management guidance for large projects, with an Outline Construction Environmental Management Document (CEMD) already prepared.
- Designing the dredge area to avoid disturbing the sensitive Whiteness Spit intertidal zone.
- Planting 120 acres of Scots Pine at a separate location to offset environmental impacts.

Additional mitigation measures have also been identified through each of the technical assessments to further reduce or compensate for potential impacts. All commitments are listed in a Schedule of Mitigation and will be incorporated into the CEMD.

Before construction begins, the contractor will develop detailed Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs), based on the outline CEMD, which must be approved by relevant authorities.

For the operational phase, an existing Port Environmental Management Plan (PEMP) will be updated to cover the extension area. This plan will guide environmental monitoring, management, and continual improvement, ensuring compliance with laws and best practices throughout the port's operation.

In addition to the mitigation, a number of enhancements have been designed as part of the proposed development that will seek to ensure the proposed development delivers positive effects and strengthens the existing nature networks on land and in the marine environment. The enhancements being considered may include.

Planting for pollinators - Approximately 2km of verge side vegetation along the port access road will be enhanced to benefit pollinators by seeding, planting of native trees and shrubs, and vegetation management. Invertebrates and brownfield plants. Where opportunities exist the creation of 'butterfly and bee banks' to support invertebrates and plants that would have naturally colonized the sandy open undeveloped areas of the site. As this enhancement will, at least in part, opportunistically use long-term features on the site it will not be possible to provide a location or final designs for this enhancement until the site plans are finalised.

Island extension (Bird Roosting and Nesting Area) - An island created in 2023 from dredging activity is actively used by breeding terns and roosting waders. A portion of the island was lost during the 2025 dredge campaign. The island could be expanded by approximately 10,000m² to increase the nesting and roosting space for seabirds, waders and sea ducks.

Wader and Wetland Biodiversity - The 'lagoon' is artificially created although it is part of the Whiteness Head SSSI and Inner Moray Firth SPA. This area will be enhanced by removing a portion of the bund to reconnect the lagoon with Whiteness Sands. Further enhancements will aim to encourage SPA species to make better use of the lagoon area by creating islands and a network of pools behind the lagoon.

Whiteness Head SSSI Vegetation Management - A NatureScot condition assessment of the sand dune features of Whiteness Head SSSI list invasive gorse and rosebay willowherb as negative pressures

contributing to the decline of some features of the SSSI. Approximately 90% of the gorse will be removed and rosebay willowherb will be reduced on the section of the SSSI within Ardersier Port control.

Wetland Creation - 2 ha of the development site has been set aside to create a wetland area. The final design of the wetland area is still to be determined but it is envisioned that the design will include a permanent waterbody and a network of ephemeral pools. As the 2ha has been set aside for biodiversity purposes part of it may, if required, be used for mitigation purposes such as transplanting plant communities. This area will also in part be used to translocate/establish habitats.

Woodland Enhancement - A strip of plantation, 20m deep, will be retained as a screen buffer for the road and neighbouring properties. This strip primarily consists of commercial Scots pine plantation with gorse scrub and heath in open areas and a small roadside pond. This strip may, in part, be used for mitigation purposes as required, however it can be further enhanced for biodiversity benefits. The monoculture plantation strip will be enhanced for biodiversity by introducing native broadleaf species, deadwood creation and selective felling to increase light permeability to encourage natural regeneration from the existing seed bank.

Detailed design and implementation would be carried out in consultation with The Highland Council ecology team and NatureScot should the concepts be approved and permission for the extension obtained.

CHAPTER 16. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

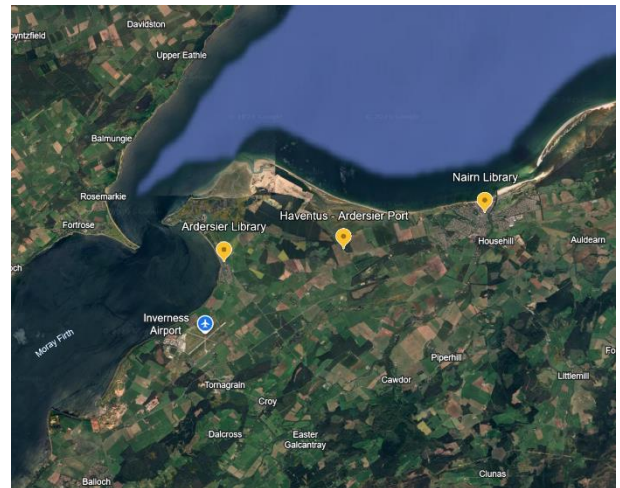
16.1 WHERE CAN I VIEW THE APPLICATION AND THE EIA?

The planning application and supporting documents (including this EIAR) will be submitted to The Highland Council and the Marine Directorate. These will be publicly accessible through the planning authority website ([View planning applications](#) | [Planning permission](#) | [The Highland Council](#)) and for the Marine Directorate they can be viewed here ([All applications](#) | [marine.gov.scot](#)). On these websites you can find all documentation related to the applications.

The development website (www.montagu-evans.co.uk/public-consultation-haventus) will also provide a direct link to the planning application and hard copies will be available for viewing at the following locations during the stated opening hours¹.

Figure 16.1: Planning Application Viewing Locations

Location 1	Location 2
Ardersier Library Station Road Ardersier IV2 7SU	Nairn Library 68 High Street Nairn IV12 4AU
Opening times Mon 12:00 – 17:00 Wed 10:00 – 13:00 Fri 12:00 – 17:00 Sat 10:00 – 13:00 Closed Tue, Thurs, and Sun	Opening times Mon 09.30 – 17:30 Tues 09.30 – 17.30 Wed 09.30 – 14:00 Thurs 09.30 – 19:00 Fri 09.30 – 17.30 Sat 10.00 – 14.00 Closed Sun



Hard copies of the EIAR are available for a charge of £1,000 or electronic copies can be provided for £25 (including VAT). Hard copies of the Non-Technical Summary are also available for free. These can be obtained by writing to: **Montagu Evans LLP, 4th Floor, Exchange Tower, 19 Canning Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8EG** (ardersier@montagu-evans.co.uk)

16.2 NEXT STEPS

Following submission of the planning application and the marine licence, all documents will be publicly available online on the regulator's website and in hard copy at the locations noted above. There will be advertisements in the local press (Inverness Courier) and the national press, and the website will be updated. Details are provided below if you wanted to make a representation to the Highland Council and/or the Marine Directorate.

¹ Correct as of November 2025.

16.3 REPRESENTATIONS TO THE APPLICATION

Any representations to the application, whether to object, to support or make a general comment should be made within the prescribed timescale should be made directly to The Highland Council via the Council's eplanning portal using the following email: <http://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/> <http://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/>

Everyone can use the site to view and search for planning applications, but to make a comment, save searches and track applications, you must register your details.

If you wish to submit a representation by post, an email address must also be provided.

Any correspondence from the planning authority in relation to the application will be sent by email.

All representations should include:

- Your full name and address
- Your email address
- Application description, address and application reference number
- The matters on which you are making comment

Representations to the Marine Directorate for the proposed Marine License Application should be made to the Marine Directorate using the following links. The proposal will be advertised in the Edinburgh Gazette and representation must be lodged within 30 days of the public advertisement. Copies of the press advertisement will be available to view on the application electronic case file.

Email: MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot

Post: Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team
Scottish Government
375 Victoria Road
Aberdeen AB11 9DB