Agenda Item	**8.1**
Report No	**PLN/045/22**

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: North Planning Applications Committee

Date: 15 June 2022

Report Title: 21/05582/FUL: Mowi Scotland Ltd

Loch Hourn, Arnisdale

Report By: Area Planning Manager – North

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Modification to equipment & biomass. Reduction in number of pens from 12x120m circumference pens (and 1x100m circumference pen) to 8x160m circumference pens. Proposed biomass increase and relocation of existing feed barge

Ward: 05 - Wester Ross, Strathpeffer And Lochalsh

Development category: Local (with EIA)

Reason referred to Committee: Number of third party objections in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the recommendation to **GRANT** the application as set out in section 11 of the report

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

1.1 This application seeks planning permission for a pen layout re-configuration of the existing fish farm approved by planning permission 16/02079/FUL. The current design features twelve 100m circumference circular pens in a group of eight (2x4) and a group of four (2x2). This application seeks to change the arrangement to a single 1x8 line of 160m circumference circular pens. The existing feed barge is to be repositioned very slightly to the south-east. Although the new layout requires an enlarged sea-bed mooring area, the mooring area remains within the existing planning permission boundary for the farm.

The original application also sought to increase the biomass of fish stocked within the pens to 3100 tonnes from the existing 2500 tonnes - a 24% increase.

1.2 The site is serviced from an existing shore base and pontoon within the main settlement of Arnisdale at Camas Bàn on the northern shore of the loch.

1.3 Pre Application Consultation: No formal pre-application submission although modifications to the farm have been raised with the authority since the last grant of planning permission in 2016 including EIA screening and scoping for a 16 cage proposal – see planning history.

1.4 Supporting Information: The application is EIA development and has been submitted with an EIA report covering all aspects of the visual and ecological effects of the proposal.

1.5 Variations: Following discussions with SEPA in respect of the CAR license for the 3100 tonne proposal and the appropriate methodology for calculating the likely depositional footprint, the applicant decided to reduce the biomass applied for to 2750 tonnes – a 10% increase over the existing.

This 2750 tonne figure correlates to the peak biomass reached during the emergency Covid-19 interim regulations period during the 2020-2021 production cycle and the applicant states they have empirical data from that time to support their CAR license application.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Fish farming at the site goes back to the time before such activity was defined as development requiring planning permission. The planning history at section 3 below identifies changes since then.

2.2 The site lies off the southern shore of Loch Hourn in a small bay beneath the cliffs of Creag ant-Sagairt and some 4.5km to the west of the nearest main settlements of Arnisdale and Corran which spread round the Camas Bàn bay on the northern coast of the loch.

2.3 The site is within the Knoydart NSA and the coastline immediately to its south is within the Kinlochhourn - Knoydart - Morar wild land area. The eastern boundary of the Inner Hebrides and the Minches SAC (harbour porpoise) lies just over 1km to the west.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1	10.12.2008	08/00585/FULRC - Modification of finfish farm site (expansion)	Approved
3.2	02.11.2012	12/03347/FUL - Modifications to an existing marine salmon farm. Installation of 12 circular pens (120m circumference), in a 2(2x3) configuration, and held in a 75m matrix. Reposition existing feed system.	Approved
3.3	17.10.2013	13/02780/FUL - Installation of a 75m pontoon.	Approved
3.4	09.04.2015	15/00248/FUL - Replacement of C-cap feed barge (200 tonne capacity) with Sitecna feed barge (240 tonnne capacity) at marine fish farm	Approved
3.5	30.06.2015	15/01623/FUL - Replacement of automated feed barge with a larger capacity model of different design	Approved
3.6	05.11.2015	15/03709/PNO - Marine Fish Farm - Atlantic Salmon - Installation of additional cage 100m Circumference to be lined with tarpaulin and used as a reservoir for fresh water for fish health treatments	Prior Approval not required
3.7	05.08.2016	16/02079/FUL - Modifications to an existing marine fish farm - atlantic salmon. Installation of 12 circular pens (120m circumference), in a 1(2x2) & 1(2x4) configuration, held in a 75m matrix grid. Retention & reposition of existing ancillary equipment including a raft, feed system, and freshwater treatment pen. Retrospective permission to modify the colour of the feed system to blue & white	Approved
3.8	03.12.2018	18/05379/SCRE - Marine Fish Farm - Modification to increase the number of pens from 12 to 16 and to increase biomass	EIA report required
3.9	18.12.2018	18/05382/SCOP - Marine Fish Farm - Modification to increase the number of pens from 12 to 16 and to increase biomass	Decision issued
3.10	19.02.2020	20/00466/PNO - Replacement of current AkvaMaster Comfort 320 feed barge with a Gaelforce Seamate 400 barge, which will be placed in the same position as the current feed barge	Prior Approval not required

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Advertised: EIA development

Date Advertised: 17 December 2021

Representation deadline: 16 January 2022

Representations: 216 in total. 159 objecting. 56 in support

4.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

Objections;

- Sea lice emissions will harm local wild salmonids – particularly because of the low flushing rate of the loch
- Waste feed and faeces will poison the loch and its ecosystems
- Salmon farming is not sustainable – input protein exceeds output protein
- Beautiful scenery will be harmed and will have a negative impact on tourism
- There will be significant adverse effects on protected species and habitats
- Will increase traffic on the settlement road
- Will reduce wild shellfish harvest and harm local fishing employment
- Will not create more jobs
- Will result in increased boat movements, noise, odour and light pollution
- Will detract from the sense of wildness and tranquillity of the loch as experienced from Arnisdale
- Existing problem of sea front rubbish from the farm will become worse
- Will endanger local environmental projects
- Increased negative impact on Oysters, blue mussels, horse mussels and freshwater pearl mussels (FWPM)
- Increased risk of algal blooms
- Increased risk to wild swimmers
- Increased risk of farmed fish escapes and genetic introgression
- Populations of sea trout and salmon in the River Arnisdale are already very low and could be damaged further. Existing EMP is not robust enough to avoid this
- CoGP standards for lice per fish were breached during recent production cycle
- No employment created in local community

Support;

- Farm supports 9 highly skilled, well paid, full time jobs directly and many other jobs indirectly. Has provided a good start to young workers over the years
- Covid showed an over-reliance on tourism employment to be a mistake
- Nationally, the aquaculture industry supports 11,700 jobs an adds £885 million to the economy on an annual turnover of £1.5bn. Salmon is Scotland's second largest export = £614 million in 2021.
- Farm has a good environmental record over the 25 years it has been in this location
- Farm operates to RSPCA and freedom food standards
- Salmon farming is sustainable in terms of conversion ratio of feed input to meat produced compared to other farming
- Reduction in pen numbers and increased capacity of workboats should reduce time spent at the site and disturbance generally. Fish welfare and health will benefit too
- East coast salmon numbers are fluctuating in a similar way to those in the west
- Farm has a very low visual impact from the north side road and settlement
- Those working on and around the farm experience an abundance of wildlife
- Salmon farming is the most heavily regulated animal farming sector in Britain
- EIA shows extra biomass can be accommodated by the carrying capacity of the local environment

4.3 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet www.wam.highland.gov.uk/wam.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Glenelg and Arnisdale Community Council

- Recognise both sides of the argument in this locally controversial issue

5.2 Marine Scotland Science

- Stocking density acceptable
- Mort removal procedure acceptable
- Most recent production cycle (stocked April 2020) maintained sea lice numbers within CoGP suggested criteria for all but three weeks (August 2021). Cleaner fish and physical treatment in Sept 2021 reduced sea lice levels to below CoGP suggested criteria

- Sea lice management strategies exceed CoGP suggested criteria. Cleaner fish, deep water feeding, lighting, sea lice skirts, aeration, hydrolicer and thermolicer are all available. Reduced cage numbers will support some of these.
- Azamethiphos expected permitted quantities could treat one cage a day for eight days. Emamectin Benzoate has been used in early, low-biomass stages of previous three production cycles
- Larger cages will require stronger handling equipment
- Improved sea lice management techniques and strategies should mitigate any impact from greater biomass
- Escapes contingency plan and equipment attestations are acceptable
- River Arnisdale is grade 3 for 2022 = <60% chance of meeting its conservation limit. It is below its sustainable level
- The development has the potential to increase the risks to wild salmonids
- The submitted EMP (already active) includes Marine Scotland's minimum criteria.

5.3 NatureScot

- Appropriate Assessment required in respect of several SPAs for breeding gannets. As with similar proposals recently NS conclude that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of these SPA sites so long as the recommended mitigation – top net mesh size, entrapment recording/reporting and adaptive management - is followed
- Proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on harbour porpoise protected by the Inner Hebrides and the Minches SAC. No acoustic deterrents are proposed, and EPS licensing would be required if they were installed in the future
- Proposal will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Knoydart NSA or the objectives of its designation.
- Proposal is unlikely to have any additional effect on wild land qualities and attributes as experienced within the Kinlochhourn - Knoydart - Morar Wild Land Area.
- Unlikely to have a significant effect on Glen Beasdale (FWPM) SAC – 46km away. However, NS have advised on the methodology for a survey of a more local FWPM population with connectivity to the fish farm through the wild fish populations. A survey has been carried out and the report is expected. The submitted EMP may need to be updated in light of the FWPM report. This will be particularly important if the surveyed FWPM population is considered to be of national importance.
- Loch Hourn supports a number of PMFs including native oyster, burrowed mud, tall sea pen, fireworks anemone and Northern feather star. Proposal is considered unlikely to have significant impacts on the national status of any PMFs

5.4 SEPA

- Currently in the process of determining an application under The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (CAR)
- CAR will control the final biomass and quantities of sea lice medicines
- NatureScot may wish to comment on the potential for azamethiphos from the farm to be carried out and back into the loch by the tide in the vicinity of native oyster habitat. Modelling indicates exposure would be below EQS.

5.5 Historic Environment Scotland

- No assets within our remit in the vicinity of the proposal

5.6 Transport Scotland

- No objection

5.7 Scottish Water

- No objection

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application

6.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012 (HwLDP)

28 - Sustainable Design
36 - Development in the Wider Countryside
49 - Coastal Development
50 - Aquaculture
57 - Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage
58 - Protected Species
59 - Other important Species
60 - Other Importance Habitats
61 - Landscape
72 – Pollution

6.2 West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan 2019

No specific policies apply

6.3 Highland Council Supplementary Planning Policy Guidance

Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (March 2013)

7. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Scottish Government Planning Policy and Guidance

- SPP (2014) paragraph 204 states;

"…Planning authorities should apply the precautionary principle where the impacts of a proposed development on nationally or internationally significant landscape or natural heritage resources are uncertain but there is sound evidence indicating that significant irreversible damage could occur. The precautionary principle should not be used to impede development without justification. If there is any likelihood that significant irreversible damage could occur, modifications to the proposal to eliminate the risk of such damage should be considered. If there is uncertainty, the potential for research, surveys or assessments to remove or reduce uncertainty should be considered..."

- SPP (2014) paragraph 250 states;

"…The planning system should:

• play a supporting role in the sustainable growth of the finfish and shellfish sectors to ensure that the aquaculture industry is diverse, competitive and economically viable;

• guide development to coastal locations that best suit industry needs with due regard to the marine environment;

• maintain a presumption against further marine finfish farm developments on the north and east coasts to safeguard migratory fish species…"

- SPP (2014) paragraph 253 states;

"…The planning system should not duplicate other control regimes such as controlled activities regulation licences from SEPA or fish health, sea lice and containment regulation by Marine Scotland..."

- The National Marine Plan 2015;

supports the industry's target to grow marine finfish (including farmed Atlantic salmon) production. Policy 'Aquaculture 5' of the Marine Plan requires that developments should avoid and/or mitigate adverse impacts upon the seascape, landscape and visual amenity of an area, and follow Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) guidance on the siting and design of aquaculture.

- Scotland 2045 – fourth National Planning Framework (draft for consultation)

Policy 21: Aquaculture states;

"…In order to safeguard migratory fish species further salmon and trout open pen fish farm developments on the north and east coasts of mainland Scotland should not be supported…" thus maintaining the policy approach of SPP (2014) paragraph 250 above.

- Loch Hourn Aquaculture Framework Plan - September 2001

This document has been quoted by third parties and can still be found on the Council's website. However, it was produced before aquaculture was defined as 'development' and came within planning control. Consequently, as a document produced without reference to any development plan, little or no weight can be given to it in the current planning context.

8. PLANNING APPRAISAL

8.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Determining Issues

8.2 This means that the application requires to be assessed against all policies of the Development Plan relevant to the application, all national and local policy guidance and all other material considerations relevant to the application.

Planning Considerations

8.3 The key considerations in this case are:

a) compliance with the development plan and other planning policy

b) parliamentary reports, the precautionary principle, national policy and regulatory developments

c) the biomass amendment to this application and a general observation on the third party comments received

d) impact upon wild salmonids and freshwater pearl mussel (FWPM)

e) risk of escapes

f) impact on Gannet SPAs

g) impact upon Priority Marine Features (PMF)

h) visual and landscape impact – NSA and wild land area?

i) economic impact including tourism and other fishery users

j) impact upon the Inner Hebrides and the Minches SAC

k) pollution - litter

l) noise amenity impacts

a) Compliance with the development plan and other planning policy

8.4 Policy 50 (Aquaculture) of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) is the key policy in respect of this application. Policy 50 states that the Council will support the sustainable development of finfish and shellfish farming subject to there being no significant adverse effect, directly, indirectly or cumulatively on the natural, built and cultural heritage and any existing activity.

8.5 In addition to Policy 50 above, Policy 28 'Sustainable Design', Policy 36 'Development in the Wider Countryside', Policy 57 'Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage' and Policy 61 'Landscape' are relevant to landscape, seascape and visual impacts. Policy 28 requires consideration of impacts on landscape, scenery, individual and community residential amenity and whether proposals demonstrate sensitive siting. Policy 36 requires developments to be assessed in terms of whether siting and design are acceptable and compatible with landscape character and capacity. Policy 57 indicates that for features of local/regional significance developments will be allowed where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated there would not be an unacceptable impact on the natural environment. Policy 61 requires that new developments are designed to reflect the landscape characteristics and special qualities identified in the Landscape Character Assessment of the area in which they are proposed.

8.6 Subject to ensuring that the above requirements are met then the proposal would accord with the development plan.

b) Parliamentary reports, the precautionary principle, national policy and regulatory developments

8.7 Fish farming has been the subject of considerable public interest in recent times as evidenced by two Scottish parliamentary committees in 2018 and their subsequent reports.

8.8 Several comments received in respect of this application have referenced these reports and particularly the criticism of the industry that they contained. One theme repeated in the objections was a call by the committees for regulators, including planning authorities, to employ the precautionary principle on a more regular basis.

8.9 As identified at paragraph 7.1 above, Scottish Planning Policy published in 2014 provides a definition of the precautionary principle to be used in Scottish planning decisions. As such it is considered compatible with Scotland's international obligations as the concept has been adopted by both the UN and the EU. It is noted that this post-dates the 2012 HwLDP Policy 28

8.10 The SPP definition sets some important limitations to the application of the precautionary principle;

- it only relates to interests of national and international importance

- there should be sound evidence indicating that significant irreversible damage could occur and
- if there is uncertainty, the potential for research, surveys or assessments to remove or reduce uncertainty should be considered.

8.11 In this case the interests of international importance are the Inner Hebrides and the Minches SAC and a number of SPAs designated for Gannets (evaluated below and in the Habitats Appraisal appendix B).

Many parties have suggested that the precautionary principle could be legitimately used more widely. Arguably, the status of both salmon and trout and other species as Priority Marine Feature species provides them with 'national importance'. However, as can be drawn from NatureScot's consultation response on this and other similar applications, the precautionary principle would only apply in these circumstances when the predicted effect related to the status of the national population as a whole rather than just a small component of it.

8.12 To date, the parliamentary reports have not resulted in any fundamental change to national aquaculture planning policy. National policy continues to be balanced between a generally positive approach on the mainland west coast, Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland and a presumption against any new aquaculture off the northern and eastern mainland coasts in the interests of protecting wild fish.

8.13 In this regard it is also important to fully appreciate the implications of paragraph 250 of SPP (also at 7.1 above). This is the part of national policy maintaining the presumption against further marine finfish farm developments on the north and east coasts of Scotland to safeguard migratory fish species. Two significant inferences can be drawn from this policy position;

i. the Scottish government accepts that the risk posed by finfish farming to migratory fish species (wild salmonids) is great enough to justify what, in effect, is a planning 'moratorium' around the north and east of the Scottish mainland coastline where particularly significant salmonid populations are found. A presumption against a certain form of development is unusual in national planning policy and this approach can be seen as an explicit example of the precautionary principle being applied at the national level.

ii. In allowing finfish farming on the west mainland coast and the northern and western isles, the government is aware and accepts the risk to wild salmonid populations in these areas but concludes that the overall environmental cost is justified and outweighed by the benefits derived from a successful aquaculture industry.

This is not to say that the policy can be read as a 'free for all' in the locality of this application. Environmental impacts must still be carefully assessed, and a balanced planning judgement made, but it does suggest that simply identifying an unquantified negative impact on wild salmonids, at the local level, is not enough to justify a refusal of planning permission.

Policy 21 of draft NPF4 indicates the government's intention to maintain this position into the future.

8.14 As part of the government's response to the parliamentary reports, working groups, including planning authority representation, were set up to specifically examine the issue of wild fish interactions with aquaculture. The Salmon Interactions Working Group reported back in April 2020, and this has led directly to the government identifying SEPA as the future lead body responsible for managing the risk to wild salmonids from sea lice from marine finfish farms.

SEPA's response has been to produce a risk-based framework which it has recently consulted upon. Ultimately, regulatory responsibility for wild fish interactions will, therefore, fall to SEPA, but for now it remains the responsibility of planning authorities. That said, planning authorities now need to have regard to the science behind the SEPA approach and its relevance to the form and content of any EMPs they approve and also the suitability of those EMPs for the transitional period between the EMP system for wild fish protection and that to be introduced by SEPA.

In that regard one clear change in policy position since 2018 has been from Marine Scotland which has endorsed the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) approach to post-consent adaptive management.

Finally, during the last year, Professor Russel Griggs has produced a report, commissioned by the government, proposing a new regulatory structure involving a single consenting unit for aquaculture. We await the government's response to this suggested revision but until then the planning authority is obliged to consider applications within the framework of current and applicable regulations, guidance and policy.

c) the biomass amendment to this application and a general observation on the third party comments received

8.15 Following discussions with SEPA in respect of the CAR license for the original 3100 tonnes biomass proposal the applicant has decided to reduce the proposed biomass to 2750 tonnes. This small 10% increase over the existing 2500 tonne capacity is considered by the applicant to be more likely to gain SEPA approval as there is empirical evidence available from the last production cycle of the farm operating at this biomass during emergency Covid regulatory relaxation.

8.16 The applicant has also stated that the reduced biomass is also a recognition and response to the large number of third party objections received.

8.17 The reduced scale of the proposal brings into focus a general observation in respect of both the objecting and supporting comments received. It must be remembered that the material consideration in the determination of this application is now only the impacts of the additional 250 tonnes of biomass and the visual effects of the new pen layout.

8.18 A number of the objection representations received make observations with reference on fish farming in general and the suitability of this site itself. However, refusal of this application will still leave the existing farm with planning permission to continue to operate as before. It is the additional impact of the 250 tonnes of biomass and the physical layout of the pens that is the basis of this planning

assessment. In fact, if the proposal did not include a biomass increase the pen replacement and layout change would be permitted development and could have been submitted as a prior notification to the planning authority.

8.19 Equally, support comments tend to focus on the past employment record of the farm and its place within the national export significance of the industry. However the actual changes sought by this application will not increase local employment.

8.20 Importantly for the planning authority, the applicant has agreed to accept a condition limiting any consent to a maximum biomass of 2750 tonnes, meaning that any increase agreed by SEPA would still have to come back through the planning system to be assessed again against the policies of the development plan.

8.21 For each of the material considerations assessed below, it is only the impacts of the additional 250 tonnes of biomass and layout re-configuration which are material. It must be kept in mind also that the third party comments and consultee comments (and, indeed, the whole EIA report) were all made in respect of the original proposal and a much larger 600 tonne (24%) increase in biomass.

8.22 The other general comment that needs to be emphasised is that the consenting of marine fish farms remains a multi-regulatory activity involving SEPA and Marine Scotland alongside the planning authority. As national policy in SPP (2014) paragraph 253 states;

"…The planning system should not duplicate other control regimes such as controlled activities regulation licences from SEPA or fish health, sea lice and containment regulation by Marine Scotland...".

Accordingly, although there is inevitably some overlap, the following sections only address those matters which are material considerations for the planning authority and not those covered by other regulators. Most importantly, the issue of the depositional benthic footprint from fish and feed waste and impacts from chemical residues within the water column, which received some considerable attention in the submission form the Friends of Loch Hourn and others, are matters regulated by SEPA. The planning authority recognises SEPA's authority in this regard.

d) impact upon wild salmonids and freshwater pearl mussel (FWPM)

8.23 Of all the potential ecological impacts identified in third party comments, the possible increased interactions between sea lice emanating from the larger biomass of the proposal and local Atlantic salmon and sea trout populations is considered the most significant.

8.24 The key sea louse species of concern is Lepeophtheirus salmonis. These are parasites found in the wild, which can infect farmed salmon. They feed on the fish mucus and flesh. Given the high numbers of fish in fin fish cages, the population of the lice can rapidly increase and affect both the farmed fish and infect/re-infect the wild population. In addition, numerous studies have shown that sea lice in the receiving environment tend to be higher during the second year of a production cycle and therefore pose a greater risk to wild salmonids at that time.

8.25 Marine Scotland state that adherence to the suggested criteria for treatment of sea lice stipulated in the industry CoGP may not necessarily prevent release of substantial numbers of sea lice from aquaculture installations.

The issue here relates to the very large numbers of fish reared within the pens of a farm relative to the much smaller number of wild salmonids inhabiting and/or transiting the waters in its vicinity. The 500,000 or more fish in the farm will exceed local wild fish populations to a very large extent. Consequently, even when the numbers of sea lice per farmed fish is relatively low, the total number of adult and planktonic sea lice entering the local receiving environment may still be many times greater than the naturally occurring 'background' level associated with the wild fish. This increases the risk of infection for wild fish to a corresponding degree including those wild salmon 'in transit' near a farm during the late spring migration.

The Marine Scotland consultation response stresses that there is now plenty of evidence from Norway and other producer states showing that sea lice emissions from fish farms can result in increased mortality among wild salmon and sea trout.

It is suggested that this evidence supports the national policy approach of keeping aquaculture production away from Scotland's best wild salmonid habitats and limiting any negative salmonid impact to areas such as Loch Hourn which are considered to offer less nationally significant habitats.

8.26 Significantly, the overall numbers of wild salmonids in Scottish coastal waters has declined dramatically over the last few decades. The government have identified 20 contributory factors to this decline including climate change, predation and river management as well as sea lice from fish farming. Whilst there is no definitive evidence to suggest a direct causal connection with fish farming, it has created a situation where planning authorities need to satisfy themselves that new fish farm permissions will not add to the environmental pressures on an already struggling set of species and make a bad situation even worse.

In this context, Marine Scotland's consultation response stating that the River Arnisdale's status is grade 3 for 2022 and has a less than 60% chance of meeting its conservation limit is, perhaps, less surprising. Such statistics mean that the salmonid population of the river is below its long-term sustainable level. Third party comments have stated that other rivers within the loch system which have historically supported wild salmonid populations no longer do so.

8.27 In their consultation response NatureScot (NS) have also raised the issue of a fresh water pearl mussel (FWPM) population with connectivity to this farm. Much of their advice to the authority is in a confidential annex to avoid identifying the exact location of the mussels. Illegal pearl mussel fishing has been a problem in other areas.

FWPM populations require healthy juvenile salmonid populations to complete their life cycle and so are at risk when that salmonid population declines.

8.28 At the time of writing the FWPM survey has been carried out but, regrettably, the report from the qualified ecologist had yet to be formally submitted to the planning authority or NS. However, in their consultation response, NS have confirmed that this should not preclude the planning authority from reaching a planning decision

on the application. The unknown outcome of the survey can be incorporated into any consent through a suspensive condition (see 8.34 below and condition 1) and this will provide appropriate protection to the FWPM.

8.29 It is clear that in respect of both the general wild salmonid situation and that specifically relating to FWPM, the extra 250 tonnes of biomass and the larger number of farmed fish it represents, has the potential to make an already unfavourable state of affairs worse. SEPA's assessment of the loch as part of its risk-based licensing framework consultation, classified it as a medium risk to salmon migrating out of the loch but contributing to a higher risk area immediately beyond in the Sound of Sleat. Approval of even this small biomass increase can only be recommended for approval if there is good evidence that it will not lead to an associated permanent increase in sea lice emissions.

8.30 The applicant has explained that the larger pens being proposed by this application are part of a wider strategy to maximise the effectiveness of their non-medicinal approach to reducing sea lice infestation on the farmed fish. Larger pens result in lower stocking density which assists in controlling the spread of sea lice infestations and other diseases/conditions among the farmed fish. A smaller number of larger pens also supports freshwater and other non-medicinal treatments to be carried out more efficiently and larger pens are more compatible with some of the newer and larger wellboats required for such operations.

Some of these techniques are already being used at the existing farm and Marine Scotland point out that sea lice performance during the most recent production cycle was improved over previous cycles. Code of Good Practice (CoGP) levels of on-farm sea lice were only breached for three weeks and were thereafter brought under control until harvest.

8.31 Environmental Management Plans (EMPs) are a form of adaptive management which through a combination of on-farm sea lice counting coupled with a wild fish health and numbers monitoring strategy, allows for an assessment of the impact of a farm on the receiving wild salmonid habitat. It provides a feedback framework for the discussion of any identified impacts to be discussed between the operator, local fisheries boards and trusts and the local planning authority, analysed for any correlation with on-farm sea lice numbers and, most importantly, for any mitigating adaptations to the farm management to be suggested and agreed.

8.32 EMPs have been promoted by Marine Scotland and have led to increased and more focussed wild fish monitoring activity as well as fostering contact and discussion between the aquaculture industry and Fisheries Boards and Trusts. In fact, the applicant has also embraced their use to the extent that the EMP submitted as part of this application has been independently drawn up and has not been a direct requirement of a previous Loch Hourn planning permission. It also covers the three nearest Mowi farms at Loch Alsh, Ardintoul and Loch Duich, something which is considered to enhance its effectiveness. Wild fish monitoring commenced last year with coastal seine netting in Loch Hourn and electrofishing in the Arnisdale river.

8.33 However, EMPs are not without critics, and it is noted that the local Rivers Trust working within Loch Hourn do not think that they are robust enough to ensure that the wild fish situation in the loch does not deteriorate. Moreover, as reported above, EMPs are due to be replaced by a new license based system from SEPA at some point in the future and that, in itself, indicates a wider appreciation of their limitations. In comparison to a licensing system, EMPs generally have a 'softer' enforcement mechanism, relying on agreement between parties rather than imposed solutions. This is appropriate where there are a lot of unknowns being examined, but perhaps less acceptable as monitoring results and the wider scientific studies of SEPA and Marine Scotland begin to fill the knowledge gaps that exist in the area of wild fish interactions with fish farming.

8.34 The applicant has agreed that the submitted EMP may have to be adjusted to take account of the FWPM report. NatureScot have suggested that, in the unlikely event of the FWPM population being considered to have national importance, they might need to be a signatory of the EMP and to require strengthened commitments and enforceability. EMPs have been considered acceptable mitigation by NS elsewhere on the Highland west coast when interactions between farm proposals and FWPM SACs were a material consideration.

Furthermore, once the timing and form of the new SEPA sea lice monitoring system is known, it may also be necessary to amend the EMP so that it functions as a transitional stepping-stone between the two regimes.

A condition is recommended to require an amended EMP to be submitted, if necessary, but it should be noted that the concept of continuous review is written into the EMP document anyway.

Thus, as stated at 8.28 above, the FWPM survey does not preclude the making of a planning decision before the survey report is received.

8.35 Taking all of the above into account, officers are satisfied that the extra fish represented by the 250 tonne biomass increase are unlikely to result in a greater sea lice load within the loch than at present. Furthermore, should that not prove to be the case, the EMP is considered to be sufficiently robust to allow action to be taken to rectify this problem before it has harmful impacts upon the local wild fish population and any FWPM present.

e) risk of escapes

8.36 Farmed fish which escape from their pens are considered an environmental problem primarily because of evidence that they can interbreed with wild salmonids and so degrade the natural genetic strengths of the wild population. The government is currently funding widespread introgression studies to understand this issue better.

8.37 The EMP submitted with this application includes an escapes strategy which integrates with the reporting requirements of Marine Scotland also. In general terms, the site is relatively sheltered and so the risk of equipment failure leading to mass escapes is considered low. Furthermore, the application includes (appendix 6) an equipment attestation document explaining how the infrastructure for the site is chosen and the standards that are required of it.

8.38 It is not considered that there is a raised level of risk of escapes associated with this proposal.

f) impact on Gannet SPAs

8.39 This is a relatively recent concern that has been raised during the last year in response to the increased use of pole mounted top nets above fish pens which are replacing the previous design supported by a central structure. Unfortunately, there have been reports that this system can raise the risk of entanglement for marine birds. Instances have occurred, in different regions of Scotland and at sites operated by different companies, where significant numbers of gannets have become entrapped under and/or entangled within ceiling nets after plunge diving into cages from above. This is the top net design proposed by this application.

Breeding gannets have a very large foraging range and consequently there is potential connectivity between gannets from Sule Skerry and Sule Stack, St Kilda, North Rona and Sula Sgeir, Ailsa Craig and he Forth Islands SPA colonies and this fish farm. On the basis of best available current evidence, NatureScot consider that Likely Significant Effect (LSE) should be concluded with respect to gannet qualifying features of these SPAs for this proposal

Consequently, the authority is required to carry out an appropriate assessment in respect of this issue and this can be found at Appendix B

8.40 To summarise the outcome of this appropriate assessment and following the advice of NatureScot, the assessment concludes that so long as conditions are used to;

- limit ceiling mesh sizes to a maximum of 100mm
- ensure that an adaptive management regime of record keeping, notification and mitigation is in place

then it is unlikely that any adverse effect on site integrity will occur, and the requirements of the Habitats Regulations will have been satisfied.

g) impact upon Priority Marine Features (PMF)

8.41 Third party comments have raised numerous concerns about the impact of the proposal on priority marine features. Again, when addressing this issue, it must be remembered that it is only the impact of the additional 10% of biomass than is material to this application.

8.42 In their consultation response NatureScot have identified five specific PMFs – Native Oyster, Burrowed Mud habitat, Tall Sea Pen, Fireworks Anemone and Northern Feather Star which could be affected by this proposal. For each they have provided an assessment of likely impacts and a reminder that the material consideration is whether there will be any significant impacts on the national status of the PMF in question.

8.43 For the burrowed mud habitat, tall sea pen, fireworks anemone and northern feather star NS conclude that the increase in biomass and re-design of the pen layout could result in changes to the depositional footprint of the farm. Judging by

the seabed video survey submitted, this change could have some negative impact on these PMFs. However, in each case the impact is considered to be very localised and small in respect of the national status of the habitat/species.

8.44 For the native oyster, NS agree with SEPA's conclusions that by the time any plume of chemical residue from farm treatments reaches any known oyster location it will have dispersed to a safe level below Environmental Quality Standards (EQS) and will not harm the species.

It is also noted that there is no reason to believe that the farm proposal will interfere with the Friends of Loch Hourn project to promote the reestablishment of native oysters in the loch. Third party comment had suggested it would.

h) visual and landscape impact

8.45 NatureScot have also provided advice in respect of the visual and landscape impacts of the proposal. The existing farm is considered by NS to have some localised adverse effects on the special qualities of the NSA and the wild land area in respect of the experience of the 'majesty of the mountains' and loss of remoteness and sanctuary. However, they also recognise that it is the 'degree of change' which defines the acceptability or otherwise of this proposal;

"…The current proposal is for fewer larger pens, covering a similar area as the existing fish farm. We agree with the Landscape and Visual Statement that the photomontages indicate that the proposed increase in size and the reconfiguration of the pens within the existing site will not substantively alter the appearance of the fish farm…".

They go on to state that the proposed cage layout conforms to NS siting and design guidance being a well-ordered linear design which relates well to the adjacent coast. The dark grey cages are considered to assimilate well with coastal backdrop when seen from the northern shore and the small increase in biomass is unlikely to result in a significant increase in human/boat activity.

8.46 In summary, NS advise that the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Knoydart National Scenic Area or the objectives of the designation. The proposed changes are unlikely to have any additional effect on wild land qualities and attributes as experienced within the Kinlochhourn-Knoydart-Morar Wild Land Area.

Officers agree with this assessment and recommend a condition requiring the new cages to maintain the dark grey colour scheme of the present cages.

i) economic impact including tourism and other fishery users

8.47 A substantial number of third party comments related to the arguments concerning the net economic value of a fish farm to its locality and where the balance between the creation of jobs, the value of tourism and the real value of the environment lies.

The application submission includes an Economic Impact Assessment which concludes that a positive cost-benefit ratio can be shown for the project as originally envisaged.

8.48 In other fish farm applications this has been a significant material consideration which has exercised Reporters at appeal also. However, in this case the applicant has made clear that the reconfiguration of these cages and the small increase in biomass will not create any new jobs and the efficiencies it involves may actually reduce the number people directly employed at this farm. It is recognised that approval of the proposal will help safeguard those other existing jobs.

8.49 So, the assessment for this application is just to examine any economic costs associated with the proposal. These potential costs fall into two categories;

i. the loss of fishing opportunities due to the impacts of the proposal

ii. a reduction in tourism due to the negative impacts of the proposal

8.50 The first issue was raised by several third parties but as previously identified, the focus was on the existing farm and impacts relating to any fish farming in the loch rather than the specific degree of change caused by this proposal.

It is not considered that the small increase in biomass and reconfiguration of the cages would result in a material loss in the finfish or shellfish potential of the wider loch from its current position.

8.51 Given the conclusions drawn in respect of the visual and landscape impacts of the proposal it also seems very unlikely that the small degree of change involved could have a material impact on the attractiveness of the loch and its settlements as a tourist destination.

At a recent appeal on the Isle of Skye the Reporter concluded,

"…Given the attractiveness of both the island and the Trotternish Peninsula as a whole I consider that the development would be unlikely to have an effect on the number of visitors to the area…On balance, I believe that the development has greater potential to have a positive rather than a negative impact on the economy of the island…".

Loch Hourn is considered to be equally attractive, if less assessable, as the setting for the above appeal and it is considered that the Reporter's conclusions hold for this application also.

Arguments have also been made that the environmental impacts of the farm could put tourists off also but, again, the small biomass increase being proposed compared to the existing farm does not support this argument.

j) impact upon the Inner Hebrides and the Minches SAC

8.52 The potential for underwater noise disturbance of the harbour porpoise protected by this SAC has been a significant issue for farms in the past when they have been within or close to the SAC boundaries and were to be equipped with acoustic deterrent devices (ADD).

However, the recognition by Marine Scotland during the last two years that such devices should in most cases be subject to European Protected Species (EPS) licensing has greatly reduced their use.

This proposal does not include ADD use. Consequently, NatureScot have been able to conclude that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on the SAC.

k) pollution - litter

8.53 A number of third-party comments indicated concerns that the existing farm was responsible for pollution of the surrounding coastline and that there would continue to be a degradation of the shore and coastal waters. Policy 72 – Pollution – requires the applicant to show how pollution is to be avoided and mitigated.

8.54 The application has been submitted with the company's overarching Waste Management Plan for its fish farms. The Plan states that the applicant company is accredited to the ISO 14001 certification and the Plan is compliant with the requirements of this standard.

8.55 The Plan covers all of the aspects of pollution raised by the third party comments and this, given the complaints, suggests that there may be an issue of compliance with the Plan. Responsibility for compliance rests mainly with the farm manager and it is suggested that direct contact with the farm manager in the event of pollution or waste being identified should be the first approach.

Given the small increase in biomass proposed it is not considered proportionate to impose a waste management condition covering the activities of the whole farm.

l) noise amenity impacts

8.56 Comments have been made about the noise and disturbance caused by the activities of the existing farm. At other sites there are on-going issues with noise from fish farms being investigated as statutory nuisances under Environmental Health legislation. Officers are not aware of any such cases in respect of the Loch Hourn farm.

8.57 However, notwithstanding the above, it is considered unlikely that the changes represented by this proposal will cause any substantial increase in noise generating activity. It is noted that this was the conclusion of NatureScot also, albeit in respect of the visual impact of increased farm activity.

8.58 It is not considered that any further noise impact assessment analysis is required for this proposal, but the route of a statutory noise complaint remains if needed.

Other material considerations

8.59 None

Non-material considerations

8.60 A number of third party comments raised the concept of 'social licence' – the consent of the local population for the activity. This is not a material planning consideration, and, in fact, it might be argued that the planning system is in place

to allow wider considerations to be given equal weight to parochial concerns in cases such as this. The number of support comments suggest the matter is not so clear-cut.

8.61 Coupled to the above, there are also a number of comments suggesting that the approval of this application would undermine the environmental projects being taken forward by the Friends of Loch Hourn. This is not a material planning consideration and there doesn't appear to be much evidence to support these contentions either.

Matters to be secured by Section 75 Agreement

8.62 **None**

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The amended proposal involves the complete replacement of the existing surface infrastructure of the existing farm with fewer larger pens and a small 10% increase in biomass. In reducing the biomass increase from 600 tonnes to 250 tonnes the applicant has stated that they are responding to the technical requirements of SEPA CAR licensing, but also recognising the ecological concerns raised by local people.

9.2 A very large number of objections and support comments have been received and whilst they identify all the material planning considerations raised by the proposal, many focus upon the existing farm rather on the 'degree of change' represented by the actual proposal.

9.3 The proposal generates a number of ecological and visual material considerations, but none are considered to be reasons for refusal.

9.4 Mitigation of the potential negative impacts of sea lice on wild salmonids and the top nets on Gannets are covered by the recommended conditions.

9.5 The Council is satisfied that environmental effects of this development can be addressed by way of mitigation. The Council has incorporated the requirement for a schedule of mitigation within the conditions of this permission. Monitoring of operational compliance has been secured through conditions 1 and 3 of this permission.

9.6 All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

10. IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Resource: Not applicable

10.2 Legal: Not applicable

10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable

10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: Not applicable

10.5 Risk: Not applicable

10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATION

Action required before decision issued

Notification to Scottish Ministers	N
Conclusion of Section 75 Obligation	N
Revocation of previous permission	N

Subject to the above actions, it is recommended to **GRANT** the application subject to the following conditions and reasons;

1. The development hereby approved shall not commence until a revised Environmental Management Plan (EMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. The revised EMP shall take account of the findings and conclusions of the fresh water pearl mussel survey detailed in the confidential annex to the NatureScot consultation received on 16 March 2022 and shall be informed by NatureScot's recommendations in respect of those survey findings.

   Reason: In the interests of the protection of fresh water pearl mussel from the impacts of sea lice emanating from the Loch Hourn farm

2. The development hereby approved shall not be operated other than with a top net ceiling mesh size of 100mm or less.

   Reason: In the interests of protecting Gannet from entanglement

3. No commencement of the development hereby approved shall take place until wildlife entanglement/entrapment record keeping and notification plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority.

   The submitted plan should include a standardised proforma and a commitment to submit regular (typically six-monthly) returns to the LPA, copied to NatureScot. In addition, the plan should commit to immediate notification by operators to both the LPA and NatureScot in event of any significant entrapment or entanglement of gannets (e.g. involving three or more birds of any named species on any one day and/or a total of ten or more birds in the space of any seven day period and/or or repeat incidents involving one or more birds on four or more consecutive days).

The plan should also detail adaptive management options (such as changing net mesh sizes and/or top-net design) in the event that NatureScot identify a possible adverse effect on the site integrity of any gannet SPA.

Reason: In the interests of protecting Gannet from entanglement

4. The development hereby approved shall not be operated other than with a biomass of 2750 tonnes or less.

Reason: To define the permission in respect of its amended parameters

5. No Acoustic Deterrent Devices shall be installed or operated at the farm.

Reason: In the interests of protecting harbour porpoise from disturbance

6. The surface equipment shall be coloured to match the existing farm equipment unless agreed in writing by the planning authority

Reason: In the interests of minimising visual impact within the NSA

7. The fish farm hereby approved shall not be constructed or operated other than in strict accordance with the mitigation measures contained within the EIA report.

Reason: To minimise any impacts on the receiving environment

8. All lighting above the water surface and not required for safe navigation purposes should be directed downwards by shielding. It should be extinguished when not required for the purpose for which it has been installed. If lighting is required for security purposes, infra-red lights and cameras should be used.

Reason: To ensure the landscape and visual impact of the development upon the NSA is minimised

9. In the event of equipment falling into disrepair or becoming damaged, adrift, stranded, abandoned or sunk in such a manner as to cause an obstruction or danger to navigation, the site operator shall carry out or make suitable arrangements for the carrying out of all measures necessary for lighting, buoying, raising, repairing, moving or destroying, as appropriate, the whole or any part of the equipment so as to remove the obstruction or danger to navigation.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and navigational safety.

10. At least three months prior to cessation of use of the site for fish farming, a scheme for the decommissioning and removal of all equipment shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. Upon cessation the approved scheme shall be implemented.

Reason: To ensure that decommissioning of the site takes place in an orderly manner and to ensure proper storage and disposal of redundant equipment in the interest of amenity and navigational safety.

REASON FOR DECISION

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

REASONED CONCLUSION

The Council is in agreement with the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report that the modification to equipment & biomass is unlikely to give rise to any new or other significant adverse impact on the environment. The Council is satisfied that all environmental effects of this development can be addressed by way of mitigation. The Council has incorporated the requirement for a schedule of mitigation within the conditions of this permission. Monitoring of operational compliance has been secured through Conditions 1 and 3 of this permission.

TIME LIMIT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLANNING PERMISSION

In accordance with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), the development to which this planning permission relates must commence within THREE YEARS of the date of this decision notice. If development has not commenced within this period, then this planning permission shall lapse.

INFORMATIVES

Initiation and Completion Notices
The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) requires all developers to submit notices to the Planning Authority prior to, and upon completion of, development. These are in addition to any other similar requirements (such as Building Warrant completion notices) and failure to comply represents a breach of planning control and may result in formal enforcement action.

1. The developer must submit a Notice of Initiation of Development in accordance with Section 27A of the Act to the Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site.

2. On completion of the development, the developer must submit a Notice of Completion in accordance with Section 27B of the Act to the Planning Authority.

Copies of the notices referred to are attached to this decision notice for your convenience.

Construction Hours and Noise-Generating Activities: You are advised that construction work associated with the approved development (incl. the loading/unloading of delivery vehicles, plant or other machinery), for which noise is audible at the boundary of the application site, should not normally take place outwith the hours of 08:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays or at any time on a Sunday or Bank Holiday in Scotland, as prescribed in Schedule 1 of the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 (as amended).

Work falling outwith these hours which gives rise to amenity concerns, or noise at any time which exceeds acceptable levels, may result in the service of a notice under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (as amended). Breaching a Section 60 notice constitutes an offence and is likely to result in court action.

If you wish formal consent to work at specific times or on specific days, you may apply to the Council's Environmental Health Officer under Section 61 of the 1974 Act. Any such application should be submitted after you have obtained your Building Warrant, if required, and will be considered on its merits. Any decision taken will reflect the nature of the development, the site's location and the proximity of noise sensitive premises. Please contact env.health@highland.gov.uk for more information.

Protected Species – Halting of Work

You are advised that work on site must stop immediately, and NatureScot must be contacted, if evidence of any protected species or nesting/breeding sites, not previously detected during the course of the application and provided for in this permission, are found on site. For the avoidance of doubt, it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or disturb protected species or to damage or destroy the breeding site of a protected species. These sites are protected even if the animal is not there at the time of discovery. Further information regarding protected species and developer responsibilities is available from NatureScot: https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/protected-species

Designation: Area Planning Manager - North

Author: Mark Harvey

Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

Relevant Plans:

Document Type	Document No.	Version No.	Date Received
Equipment Plans and Elevations	EIA report Appendix 5		2 December 2021
Site Charts and Coordinates	EIA report Appendix 1		2 December 2021

Appendix B – Habitats Appraisal
Sule Skerry and Sule Stack, St Kilda, North Rona and Sula Sgeir, Ailsa Craig and the Forth Islands Special Protection Areas (SPA)

The status of European protected sites such as SACs and SPAs, under the EC Directive 92/43/EEC, the 'Habitats Directive', means that the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), also known as the 'Habitats Regulations', apply.

Under the Habitat Regulations, The Highland Council, as a competent authority in the planning system, must consider whether any planning proposal, prior notification for permitted development rights or plan (e.g. Local Development Plan) will have a 'likely significant effect' on a European site. If so, they must carry out an 'appropriate assessment'. The council must also seek advice from NatureScot and have regard to their representations during the HRA process.

The Highland Council must not authorise a plan or grant a planning application unless it can show beyond reasonable scientific doubt – using appropriate assessment – that the plan or planning proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of a European site.

This proforma can be used as template to conduct a Habitats Regulations Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment.

Date: 01/06/2022	**Author: Mark Harvey**

A. EUROPEAN SITE DETAILS

Name of European Site(\s) potentially affected:

Sule Skerry and Sule Stack, St Kilda, North Rona and Sula Sgeir, Ailsa Craig and the Forth Islands Special Protection Areas

Qualifying interest(s) at the site:

This information can be obtained from NatureScot (SNH) site link website - https://sitelink.nature.scot/map

The relevant qualifying interest at these sites is the Gannet (*Morus bassanus*)

Conservation objectives at the site:

This information can be obtained from NatureScot (SNH) site link website - https://sitelink.nature.scot/map

To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (Gannet) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and

To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:

- Population of the species as a viable component of the site

- Distribution of the species within site
- Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species
- Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species
- No significant disturbance of the species

B. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Planning Application Reference:

21/05582/FUL

Proposal Name:

Modification to equipment & biomass. Reduction in number of pens from 12x120m circumference pens (and 1x100m circumference pen) to 8x160m circumference pens. Proposed biomass increase and relocation of existing feed barge

Location:

Arnisdale, Loch Hourn

Description of proposal:

Modification to equipment & biomass. Reduction in number of pens from 12x120m circumference pens (and 1x100m circumference pen) to 8x160m circumference pens. Proposed biomass increase and relocation of existing feed barge

Is the proposal directly connected with or necessary to site management for conservation?

No

- *If **YES** for all elements of the proposal, for all qualifying interests, then consent can be issued. Rationale should be detailed below and no further appraisal is required.*
- *If **NO** for all qualifying interests, then continue the appraisal.*
- *If the proposal has elements which are not connected to site management for conservation these elements should be appraised.*

C. NatureScot Advice

While the responsibility to carry out the HRA Screening and Appropriate Assessment rests with the Council, NatureScot (previously SNH) provides an advisory role to help determine whether an Appropriate Assessment is needed and what needs to be included in the assessment. As part of the the HRA the council must consult with NatureScot and take consideration of their advice. This requirement is outlined in regulation 48 (3) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.)

Regulations 1994 as amended (The 'Habitats Regulations').

This advice is usually provided as part of NatureScot's formal consultation response for a planning application and will be detailed within the section of the relevant to designated European site.

Outline relevant advice from NatureScot received 12 March 2022:

Appraisal: Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

Breeding gannets have a mean foraging range of 120.4km (±50.0km) and a mean maximum foraging range of 315.2km (±194.2km). Consequently, there is potential connectivity between gannets from SPAs and all marine waters across Scotland suitable for finfish aquaculture. Hence there is potential for Likely Significant Effect (LSE) arising from incidental entanglement or entrapment of gannets at finfish farms deploying pole-mounted top nets.

However, the adoption of ceiling mesh dimensions of 100mm or less is considered, on both theoretical grounds and in light of the currently available empirical evidence, to pose minimal risk of damaging interactions with gannets. In addition, all SPA gannet populations in Scotland are in favourable condition and the overall gannet population is increasing and expanding its range. Consequently, subject to application of the planning conditions outlined below, we advise that there is no Adverse Effect on Site Integrity with respect to breeding gannet SPA populations associated with permitting the adoption of pole-mounted top nets with ceiling mesh dimensions of 100mm or less at existing finfish aquaculture sites in Scottish waters

Other marine birds, in particular herring gulls, lesser black-backed gulls, great black-backed gulls, European shags and great cormorants may also potentially be attracted to finfish farms in the vicinity of their breeding colonies or roost sites. Behavioural interactions with pole-mounted top nets are unclear, but such birds may attempt to access cages through the side panels to pole-mounted top nets.

These species' mean foraging ranges (Woodward et al, 2019; Thaxter et al, in prep) mean that there is limited potential connectivity between Loch Hourn fish farm and the likely core foraging areas for SPA populations of these species, such that significant effects are unlikely (no LSE). However, operators should be encouraged to adopt mesh sizes of 50mm or less in the lower sections of side nets (adjacent to the hand rails) to minimise risks to these species more generally.

Consenting Conditions

The above advice is based on best currently available evidence and expert judgement. However, the empirical evidence base around interactions between marine birds and pole-mounted top nets is currently very limited. Given the associated uncertainties with respect to marine bird interactions, **we advise that any and all permissions for pole-mounted top net systems, irrespective of location or mesh sizes, should include strict conditions that ensure systematic monitoring and prompt notification of any concerning patterns of entrapments or entanglements.**

In event of evidence emerging of potentially damaging interactions with relevant wild bird populations, NatureScot will provide further advice, including consideration of potential cumulative or in-combination effects. NatureScot will also advise on any mitigation measures that may be necessary to avoid future Adverse Effect on Site Integrity. **To ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations, additional planning conditions should be applied to ensure that any such mitigation measures will be applied timeously**.

Specifically, we advise that planning consents for pole-mounted top nets should require:

- Operators to maintain daily records of wildlife entanglement / entrapment using a standardised NatureScot proforma and to submit regular (typically six-monthly) returns of these records to the relevant LPA, copied to NatureScot;

- Immediate notification by the site operator to both the LPA and NatureScot in event of any significant entrapment or entanglement of gannets, gulls (any species), shags, cormorants or other single bird species. Significant should be interpreted as: involving three or more birds on any one day and/or a total of ten or more birds in the space of any seven day period and/or repeat incidents involving one or more birds on four or more consecutive days);

- Should an event or events be notified in accordance with the above conditions, the LPA to consult with NatureScot and the applicant to agree any mitigation measures required and any such mitigation measures to be implemented within a timescale determined by the LPA and to be retained throughout the life of the top nets unless agreed otherwise in writing by the LPA.

References

Murray, S., Harris, M.P. & Wanless, S. (2015). The status of the Gannet in Scotland in 2013–14. Scottish Birds: 35(1), pp3-18.
Thaxter, B.C. Quinn, L.R. & Humphreys, E.M. (in prep). Terrestrial and marine foraging ranges of Lesser Black-backed Gulls and Herring Gulls. NatureScot Research Report Woodward, I., Thaxter, *C.B., Owen, E and Cook, A.S.C.P. (2019).* Desk-based revision of seabird foraging ranges used for HRA screening. Report of work carried out by the British Trust for Ornithology on behalf of NIRAS and The Crown Estate. BTO Research Report No. 724.

D. SCREENING

'Screening' is the initial evaluation of a project's potential effects on one or more European sites to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment is required. If an appropriate assessment is required, the output of screening should indicate which Europeans sites are affected and which aspects of the project are likely to have significant effects.

IS THE PROPOSAL (EITHER ALONE OR IN COMBINATION WITH OTHER PROPOSALS) LIKELY TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE SITE?

It is evident that the proposal is not connected with or necessary to site management for conservation, hence further consideration is required.

The proposal seeks to use pole-mounted top nets. There are recent reports of a threat to marine birds from this system. Significant numbers of gannets have become entrapped under and/or entangled within ceiling nets after plunge diving into cages from above. The proposal therefore has

the potential to have a likely significant effect on Gannet should they be foraging in the area of the fish farm, both alone and in-combination with other nearby fish farms. Conservation objectives of other SPAs with gannet as designated species may also be at risk because the foraging range of gannets can be extensive.

The Council is therefore required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment of the implications of the proposal for the SPA in respect of its conservation objectives. The qualifying feature considered is Gannet (Morus bassanus). The AA and mitigations resulting from it will also apply to other Gannet SPAs that could be affected.

E. Appropriate Assessment

The appropriate assessment consists of two parts: a scientific, reasoned appraisal and a conclusion. Consider the proposed project, its impact on the qualifying interests assessed against their conservation objectives.

For each qualifying interest effected evaluate potential impacts of proposal detailing which aspects of the proposal are involved, the duration and size of the impact, and the overall effect on sites conservation objectives. Sufficient detail should be included to conclude the proposal will not adversely affect site integrity. This conclusion should be reached beyond scientific doubt.

Advice contained within Planning Circular 6/1995 stipulates that the assessment can be based on information submitted from other agencies e.g. NatureScot and the applicant.

The council can only agree to the proposal after having ascertained that it ***will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the sites (AESI)****. If this is not the case, and there are not alternative solutions, the proposal can only be allowed to proceed if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, which in this case can include those of a social or economic nature (please see seek further guidance if this is the case).*

Undertake an Appropriate Assessment of the implications for the site in view of its conversation objectives:

There have been documented examples of instances where gannets have interacted negatively with pole mounted top-nets and either become entangled or entrapped after diving into the pens from above. Concerns lie chiefly with mesh sizes greater than 100mm. The frequency and number of gannets impacted is hard to predict as there is an absence of gannet foraging information surrounding Loch Hourn

In the absence of this information and on the basis of NatureScot's appraisal, it can be concluded that adequate monitoring and adaptive management is required to guarantee there will be no adverse effect on site integrity (AESI) of the identified SPAs designated for gannet. This is needed to ensure the requirements of the Habitats Regulations will have been satisfied.

The following planning conditions will be imposed to ensure no AESI will occur as a result of the top nets used at the site.

1. The development hereby approved shall not be operated other than with a top net ceiling mesh size of 100mm or less.

2. No commencement of the development hereby approved shall take place until wildlife entanglement/entrapment record keeping and notification plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority.

The submitted plan should include a standardised proforma and a commitment to submit regular (typically six-monthly) returns to the LPA, copied to NatureScot. In addition, the plan should commit to immediate notification by operators to both the LPA and NatureScot in event of any significant entrapment or entanglement of gannets (e.g. involving three or more birds of any named species on any one day and/or a total of ten or more birds in the space of any seven day period and/or or repeat incidents involving one or more birds on four or more consecutive days).

The plan should also detail adaptive management options (such as changing net mesh sizes and/or top-net design) in the event that NatureScot identify a possible adverse effect on the site integrity of the St Kilda or other gannet SPA.

These conditions will allow for mitigation to be implemented in a timely manner ensuring the gannet population of the identified Gannet SPAs will not be adversely impacted should an issue be identified.

Marine Aquaculture Site Loch Hourn

PLANNING APPLICATION

Appendix 5. Equipment Plans and Elevations

Mowi Scotland Limited

November 2021

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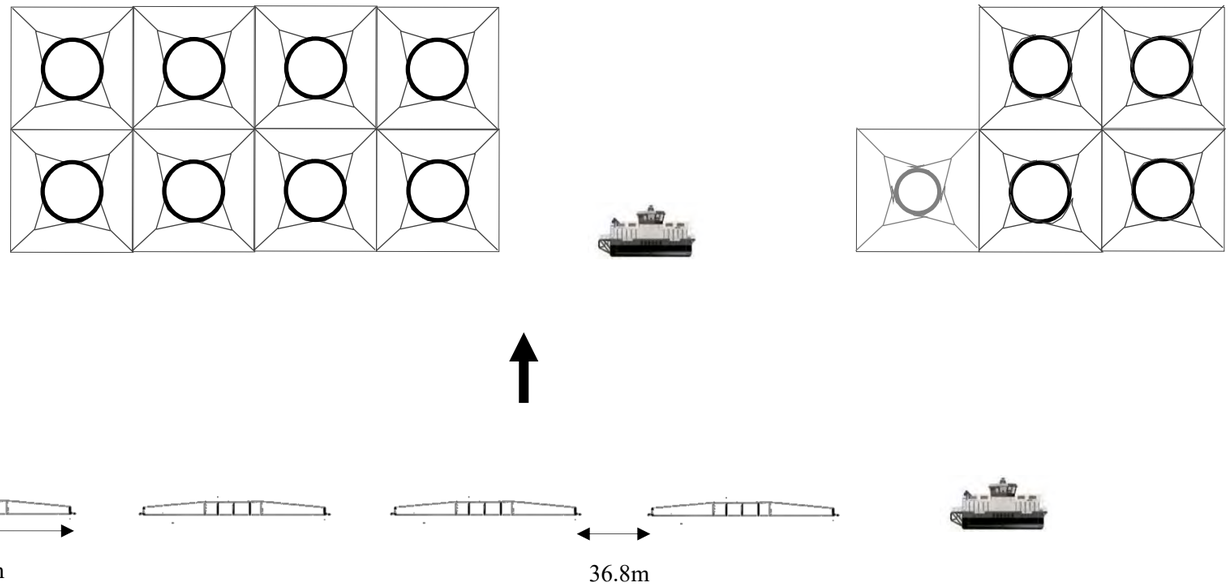
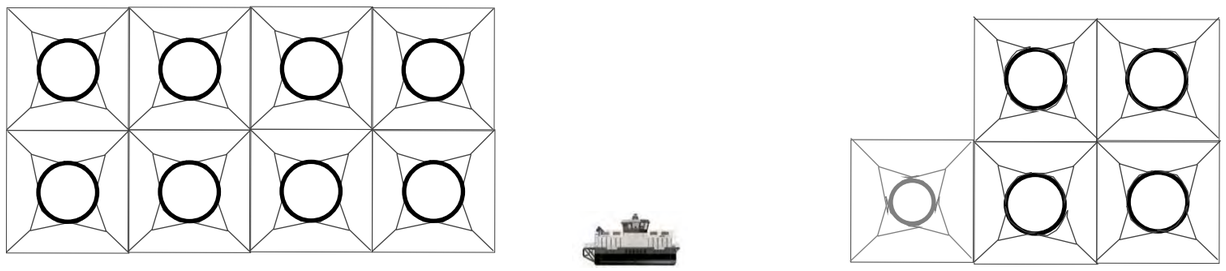
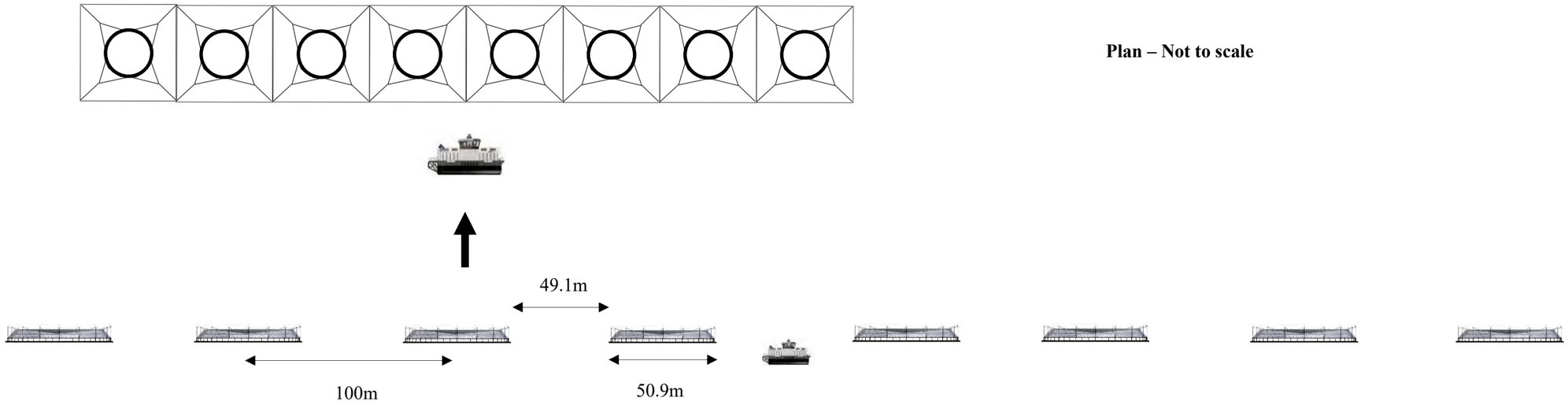
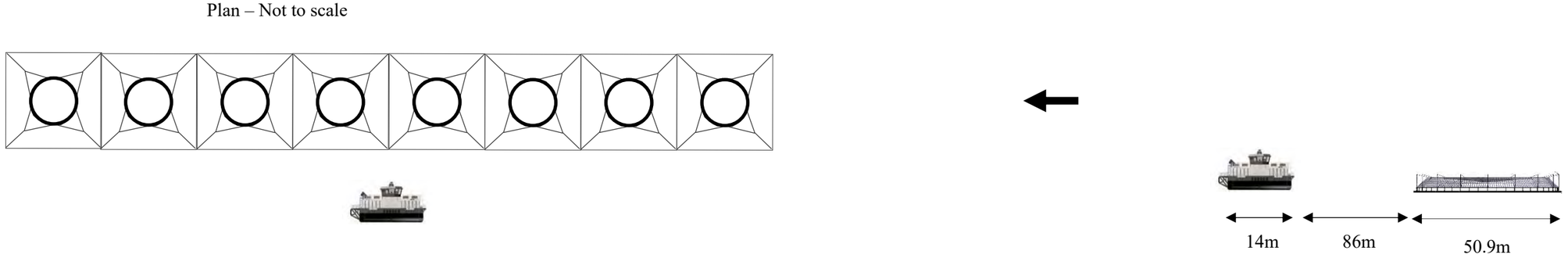
WEB
http://mowi.com





EXISTING: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key:	**NTS**	**26/02/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Draft**
PLANS AND ELEVATIONS - EXISTING SITE CONFIGURATION	Typical Pen Design with hamster wheel						
Figure 1: Surface Cross section view of 12 circular plastic pens of 120m circumference in a 75m matrix grid. Freshwater pen (100m circumference) shown in grey	Gaelforce Seamate 400T feed barge	Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status





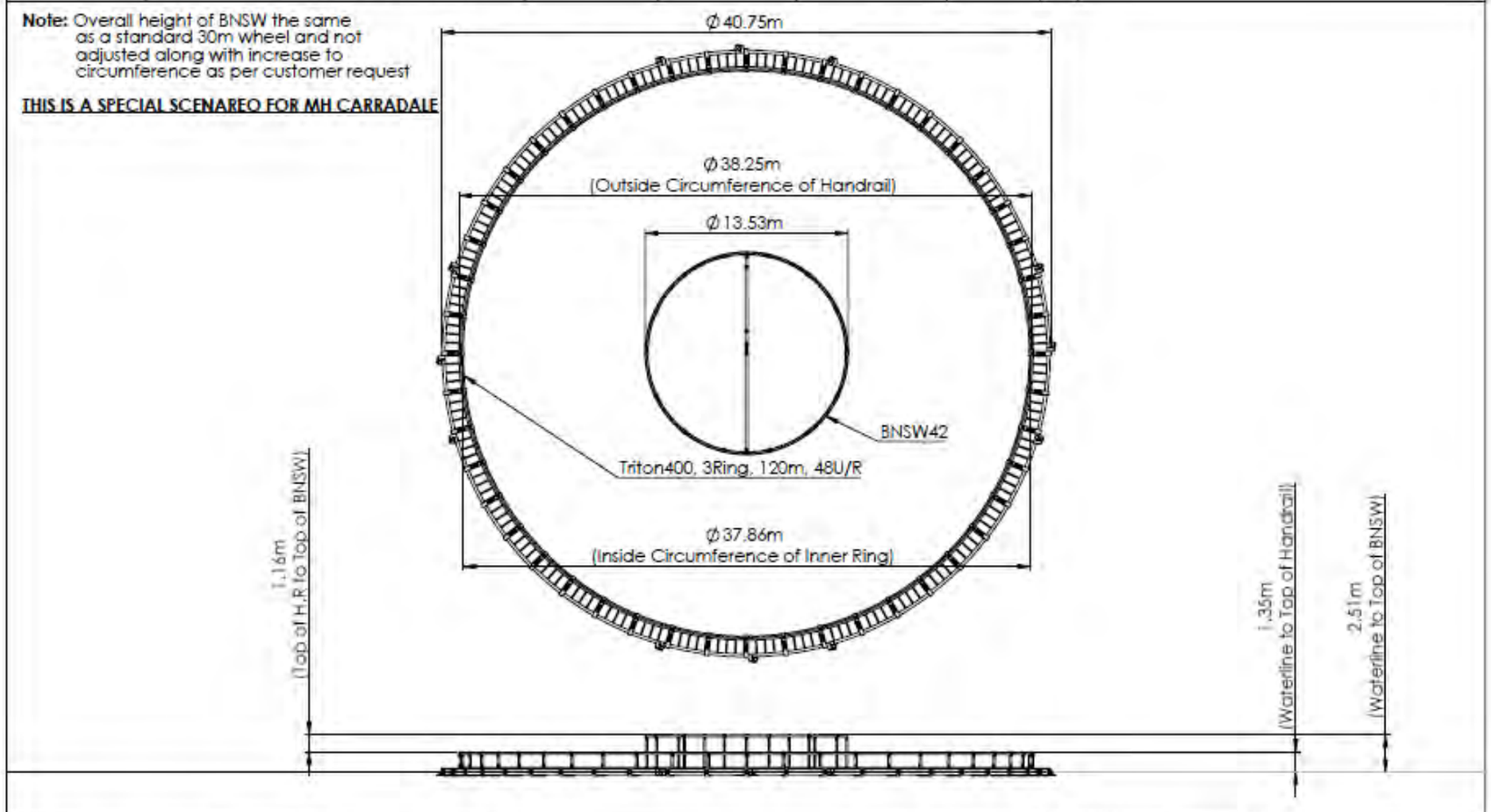
PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key:	**NTS**	**26/02/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Draft**
PLANS AND ELEVATIONS - PROPOSED SITE CONFIGURATION	Typical pen design with poles supporting the top net.						
Figure 2: Surface Cross section view of 8 circular plastic pens of 160m circumference in a 100m matrix grid.	Gaelforce Seamate 400T feed barge	Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status

3rd Angle Projection	If In Doubt Ask ~ Do Not Scale	Dimensions are in mm	Date	Rev	Details of Revision

Job Number	Customer	Date	Base Pipe Type	Uprights per Pen
	Marine Harvest Scotland - Carradale		400sdr21	48

Note: Overall height of BNSW the same as a standard 30m wheel and not adjusted along with increase to circumference as per customer request

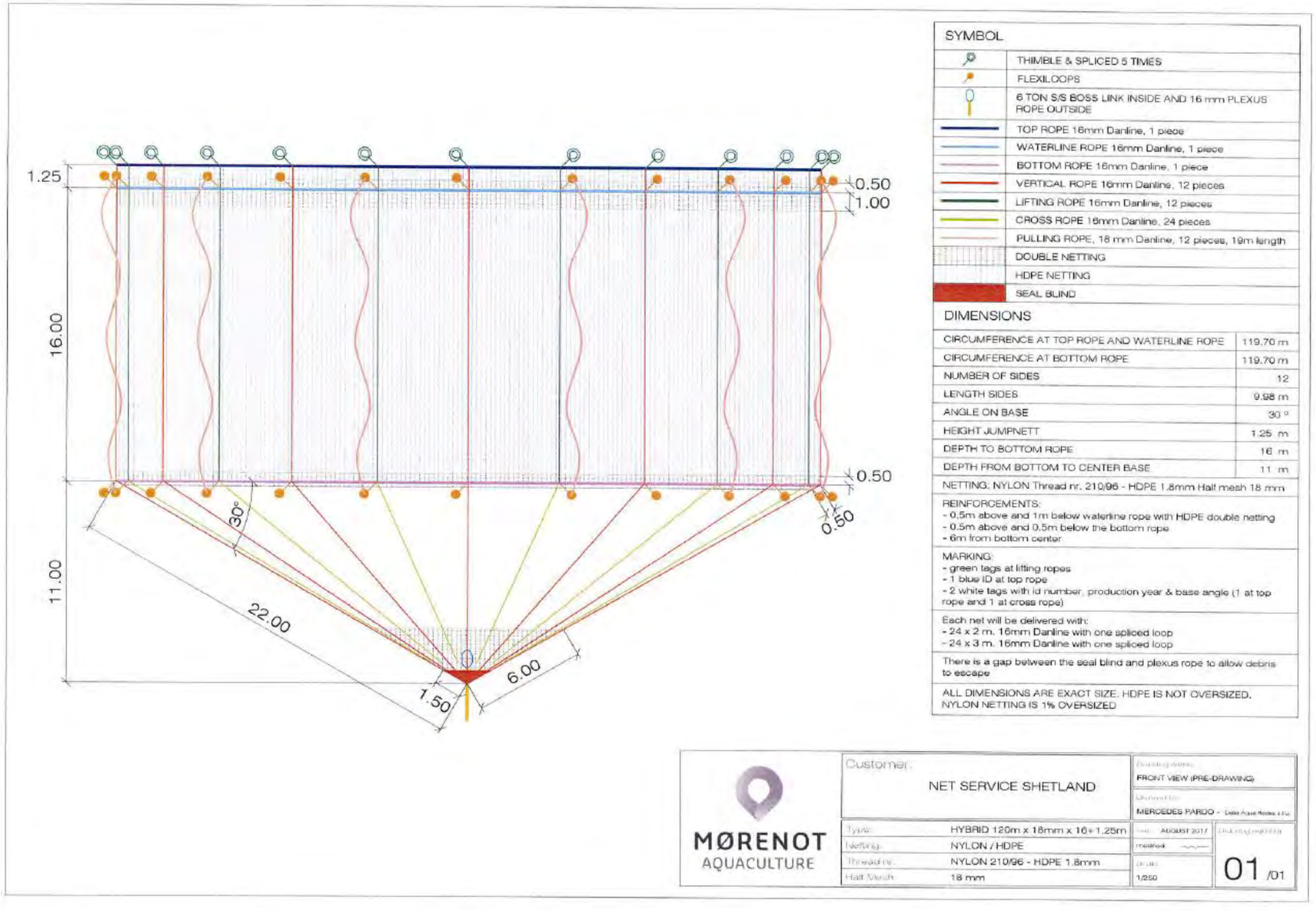
THIS IS A SPECIAL SCENAREO FOR MH CARRADALE



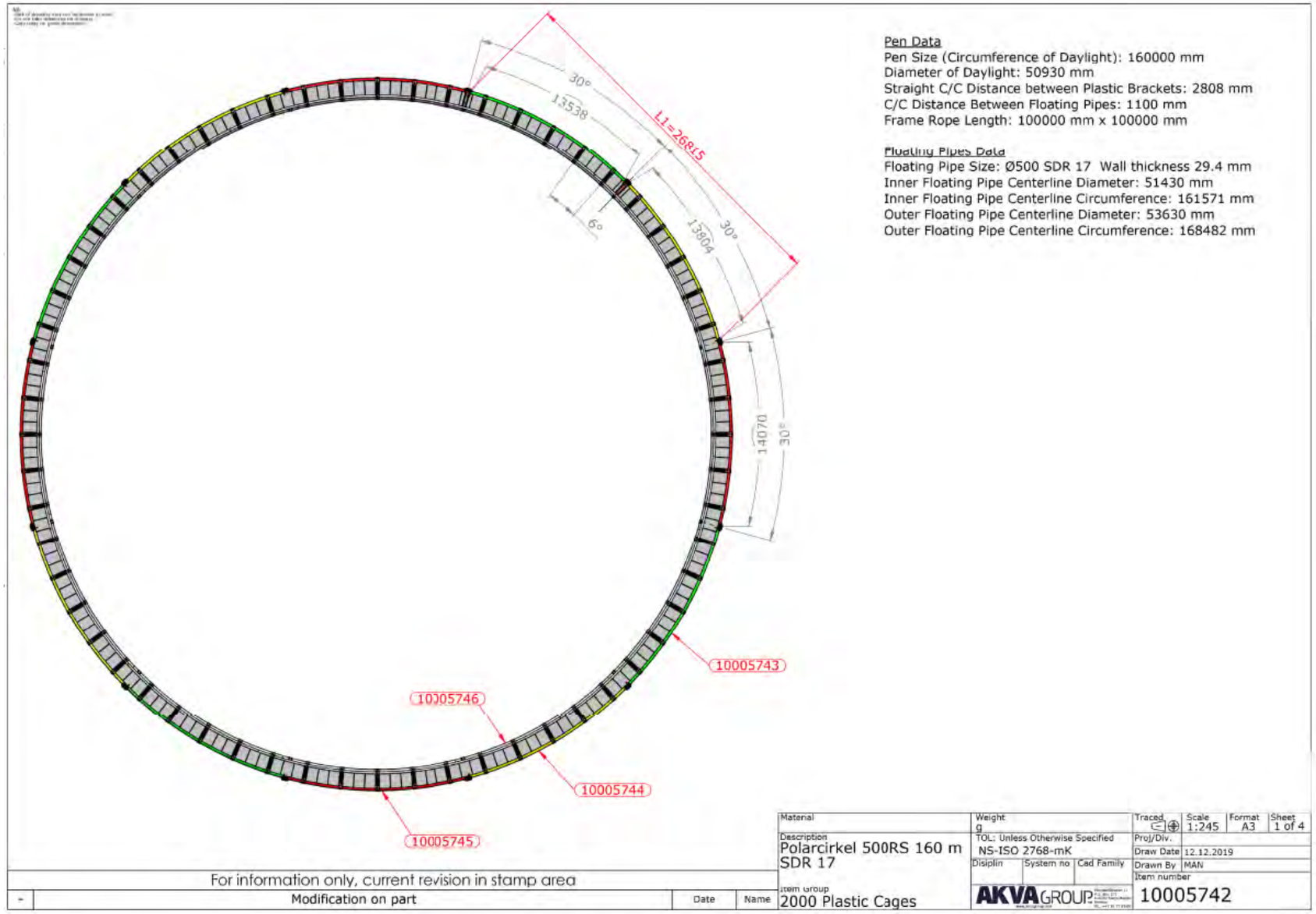
Fusion Marine Limited
Marine Resource Centre
Barcaldine
By Oban
Argyll PA37 1SE
www.fusionmarine.com

Title: T4003D120/48 c/w BNSW42CB			
Material: PE 100		Finish: Black	
Drawn:R.Edwards	Scale 1:250 @ A3	Drawing No:	Rev
Date: 25/08/2015	Reference Drgs	T4003D120/48BNSW42CB	
Checked			
Verified			

EXISTING: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Comments:						
PLAN & ELEVATIONS - EXAMPLE OF A TYPICAL PEN DESIGN TOP NET SUPPORT WITH HAMSTER WHEEL	Technical drawing of a typical circular pen of 120m circumference with a hamster wheel to support top nets	Not to Scale	**04/02/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
Figure 3: Manufacturers Diagram 1		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status



EXISTING: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key:	**Not to Scale**	**04/02/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
PLAN & ELEVATIONS - EXAMPLE OF A TYPICAL NET DESIGN	Technical drawing of a typical circular pen of 120m circumference with 16m side net depth and 11m cone						
Figure 4: Manufacturers Diagram – Typical Net Design		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status



Pen Data
Pen Size (Circumference of Daylight): 160000 mm
Diameter of Daylight: 50930 mm
Straight C/C Distance between Plastic Brackets: 2808 mm
C/C Distance Between Floating Pipes: 1100 mm
Frame Rope Length: 100000 mm x 100000 mm

Floating Pipes Data
Floating Pipe Size: Ø500 SDR 17 Wall thickness 29.4 mm
Inner Floating Pipe Centerline Diameter: 51430 mm
Inner Floating Pipe Centerline Circumference: 161571 mm
Outer Floating Pipe Centerline Diameter: 53630 mm
Outer Floating Pipe Centerline Circumference: 168482 mm

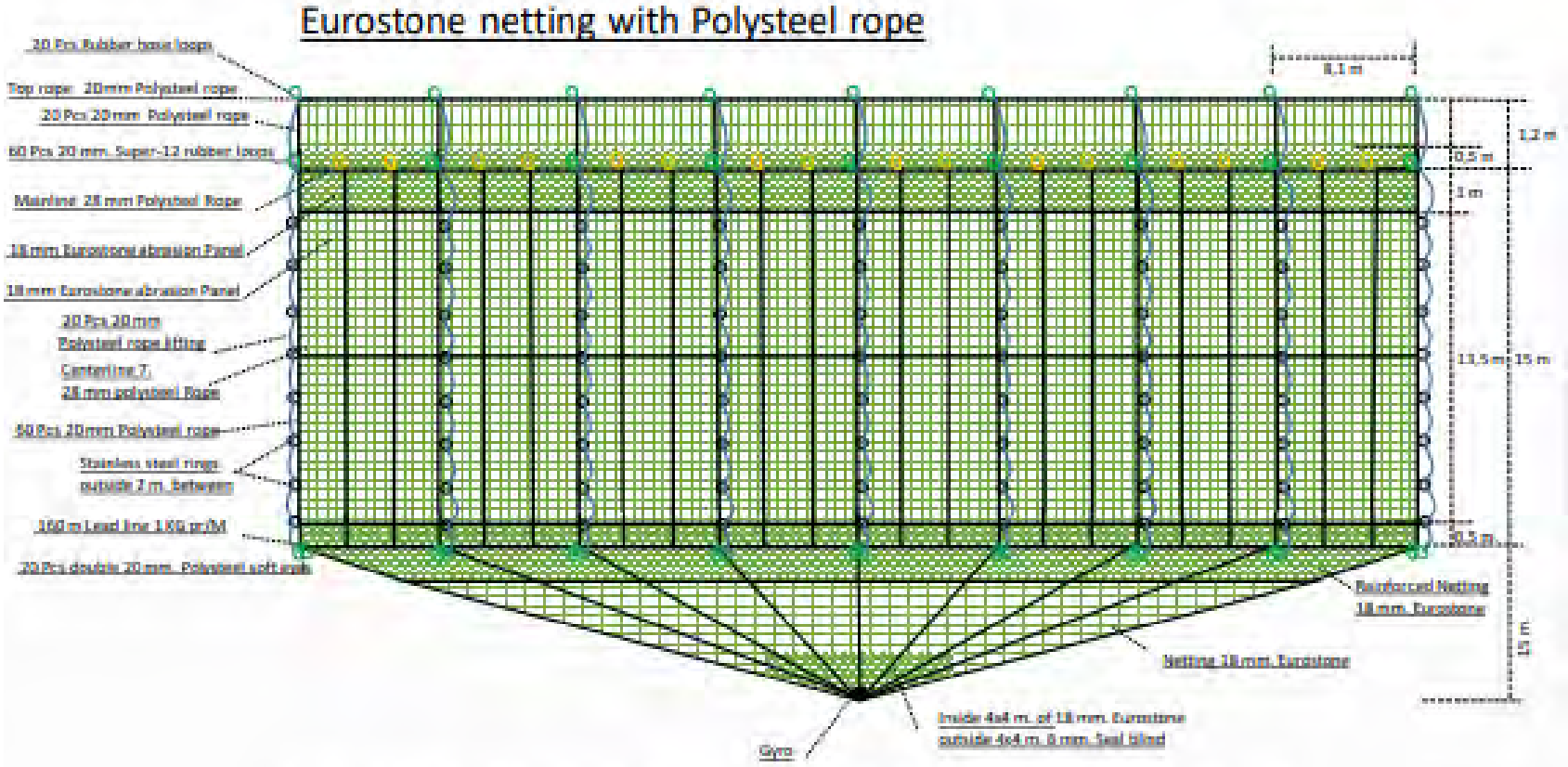
PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Comments:	Not to Scale	**10/11/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
PLAN & ELEVATIONS - EXAMPLE OF A TYPICAL PEN DESIGN	Technical drawing of a typical circular pen of 160m circumference						
Figure 5: Manufacturers Diagram		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status

VÓNIN

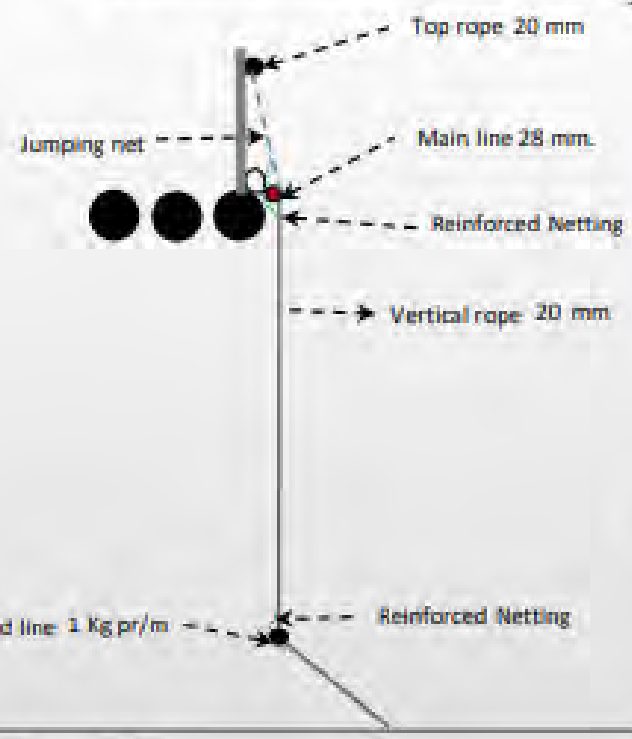
NORDIC DIAMOND

Circular Net Cage 160x15+1,2m

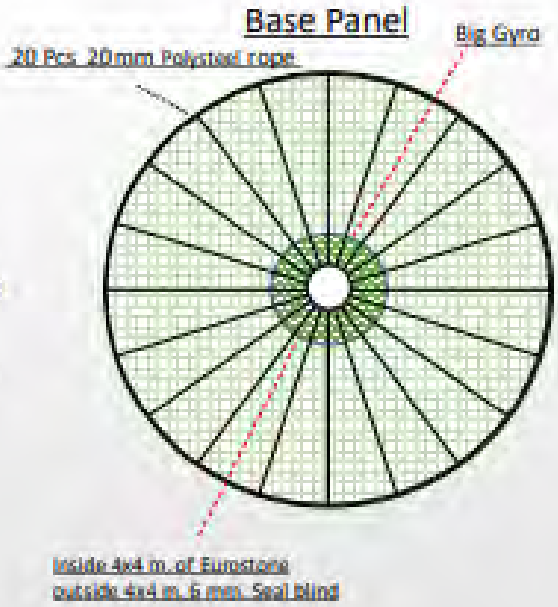
Eurostone netting with Polysteel rope



Brief setup explaination



Base Panel



Circumference:	160 m
Main line:	28 mm
Bottom line:	20 mm
Vertical Ropes:	20 mm
Depth:	15 m
Jump net:	1,2 m
Netting:	Knotted netting Eurostone MBS 99 kg with UV protection
Mesh size:	18 mm half mesh.
Lead line:	1kg/m
Abrasion Panel:	18 mm Eurostone.
Reinforced netting:	18 mm. Eurostone
Bottom reinforced:	Inside 4x4 m. of double netting, outside 4x4 m. 6 mm. Seal blind

Client: Mowi
Site:
Date:
Order nr:
Quantity:

Circular Net Cage 160x15+1,2m

Drawing produced by: Signar Poulsen

Drawing number: 1601512-99-22102021-Eurostone w/polysteel rope

Netting Type: Eurostone

PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Comments: Note. This is an example sub-surface net design. Annotations stating dimensions might not reflect those used at the site. The position of the pens at Loch Hourn allows a 20m side wall, 15m cone, and 5m+ clearance to the seabed.	Not to Scale	**25/11/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
PLAN & ELEVATIONS - SUB-SURFACE NET DESIGN		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status
Figure 6: Manufacturers Diagram							

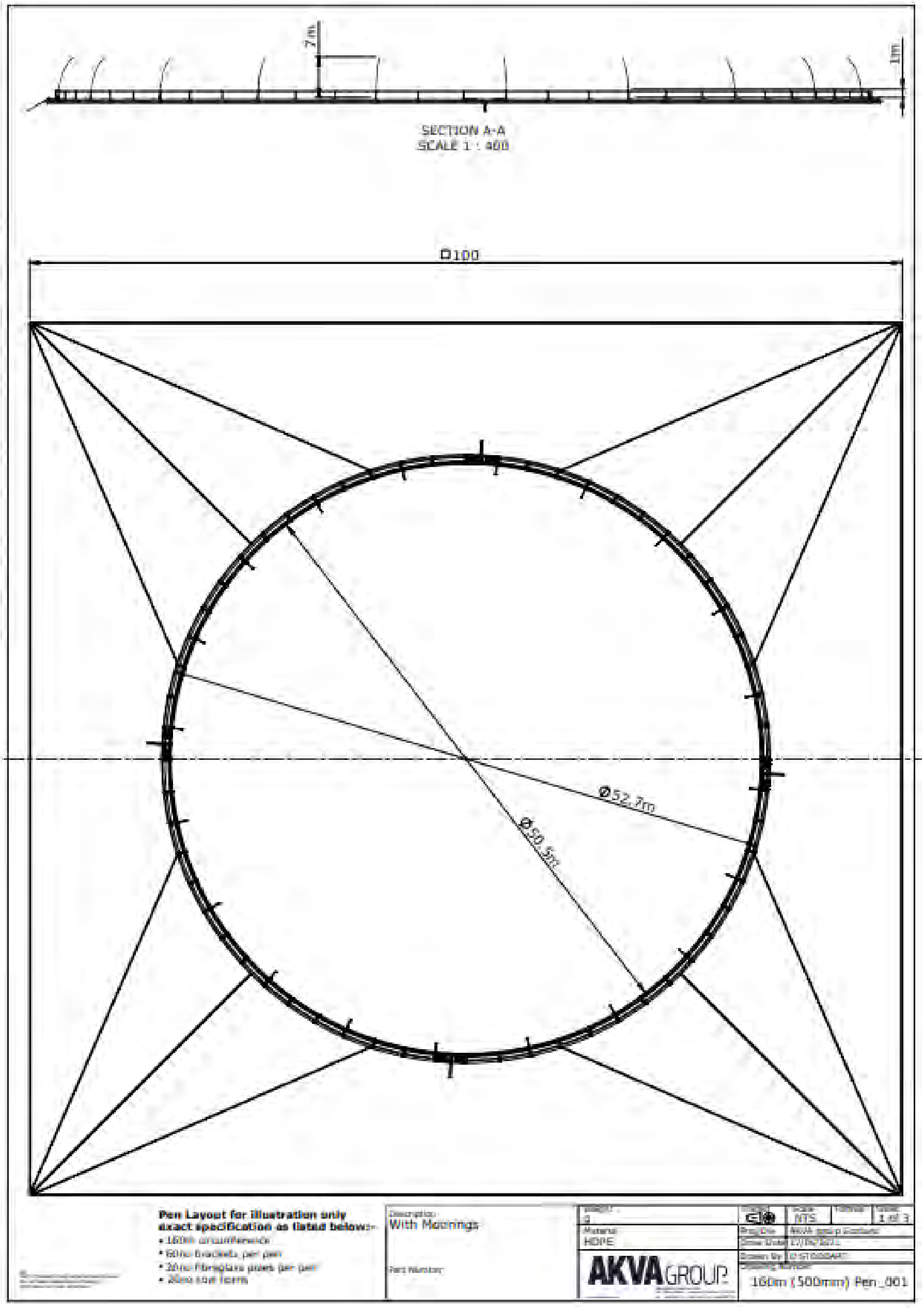


Figure 7. PROPOSED: Cross-section (above) and aerial (below) technical drawing of a typical circular pen walkway of 160m circumference with top net support poles

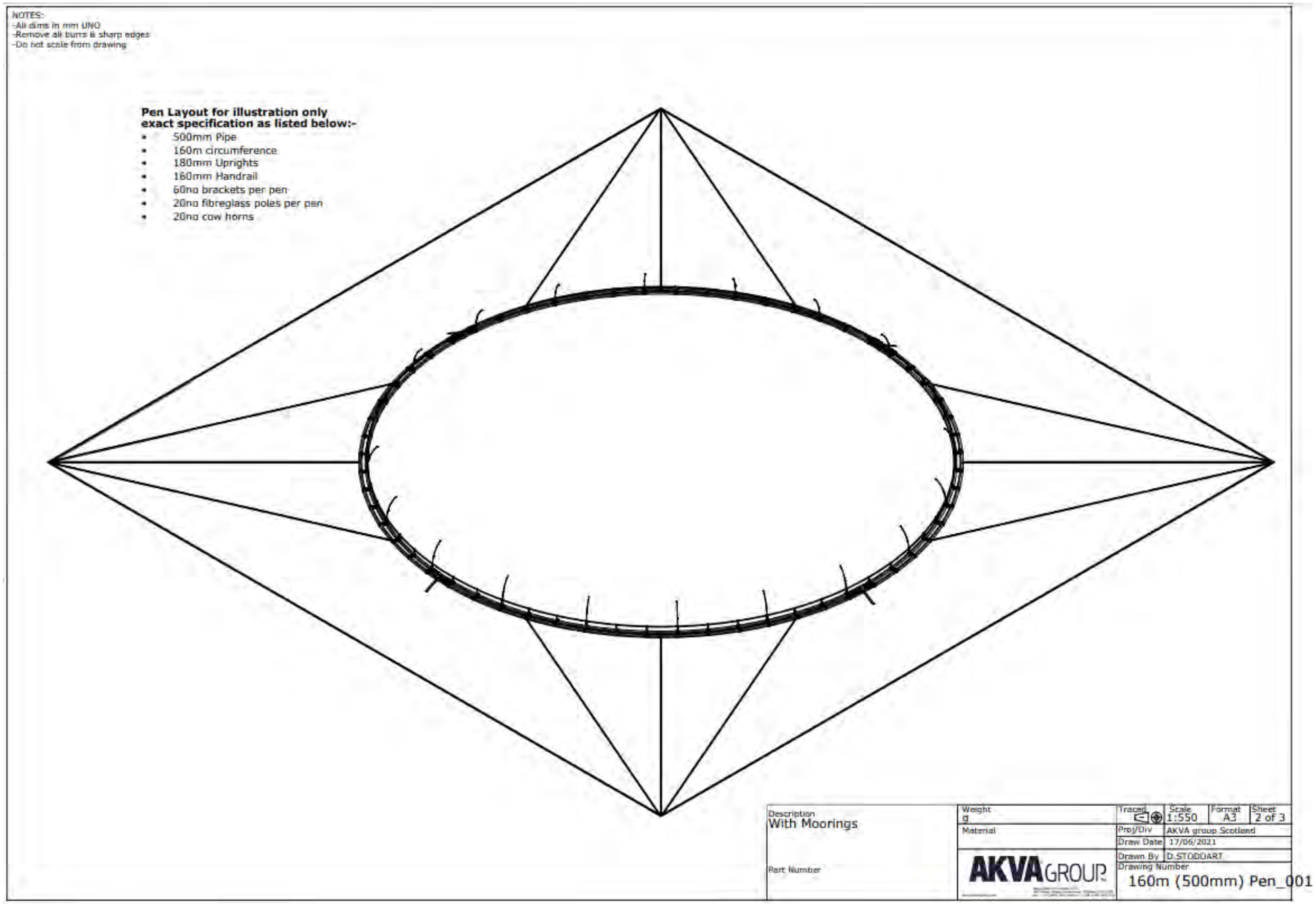


Figure 8. PROPOSED: Aerial technical drawing of a typical circular pen of 160m circumference with top net support poles and mooring grid

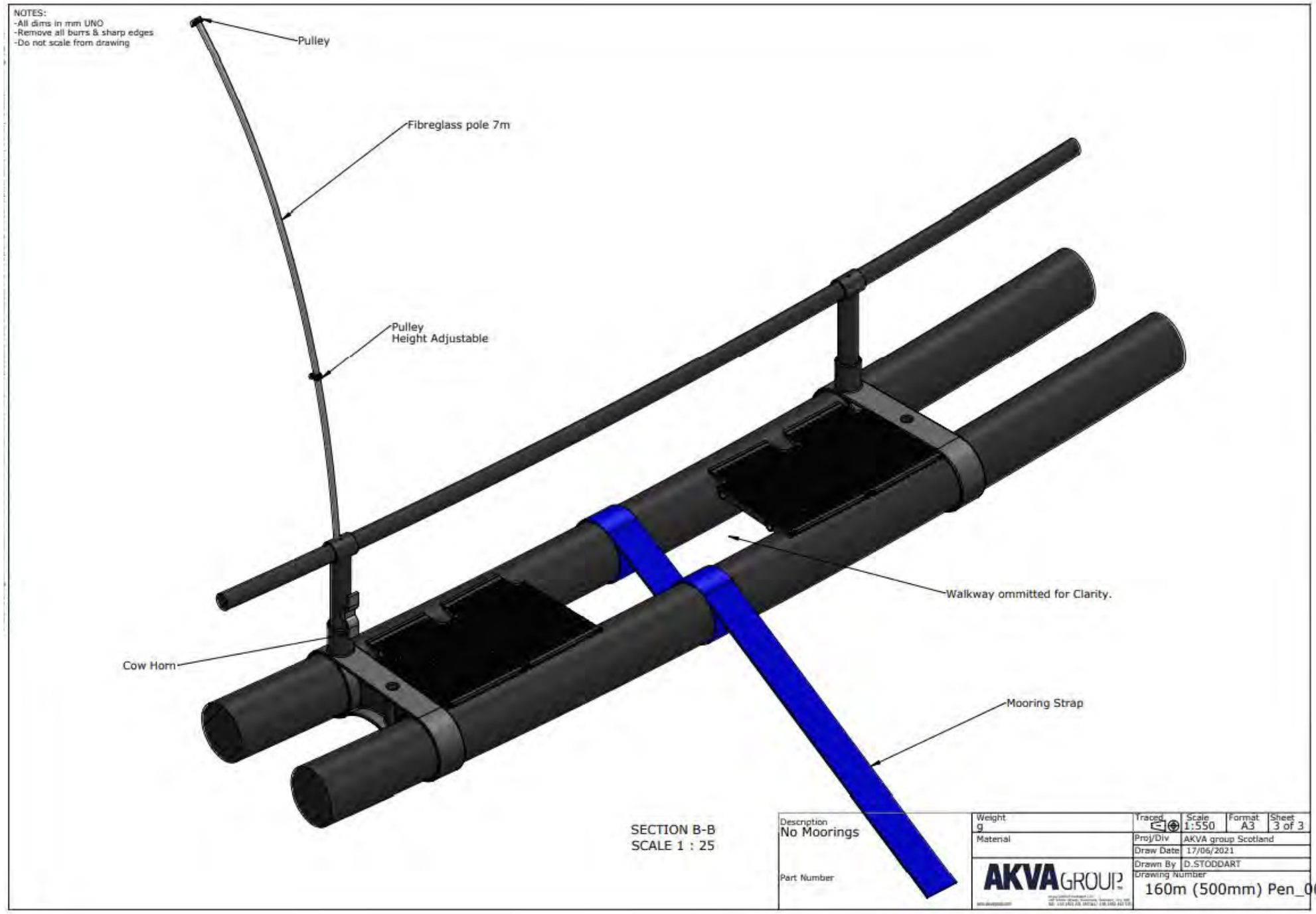
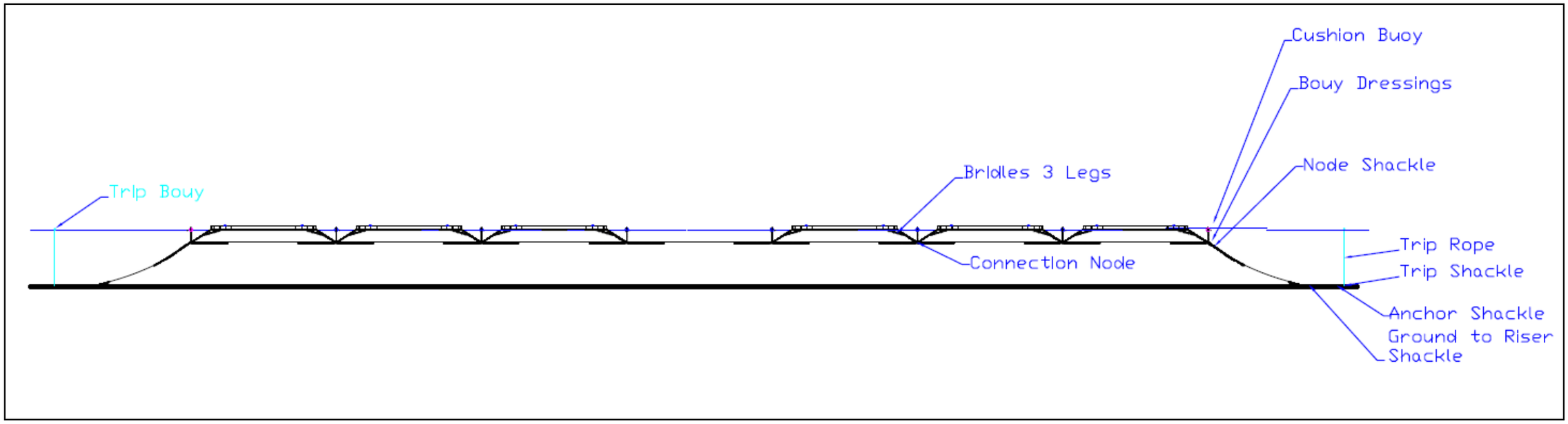
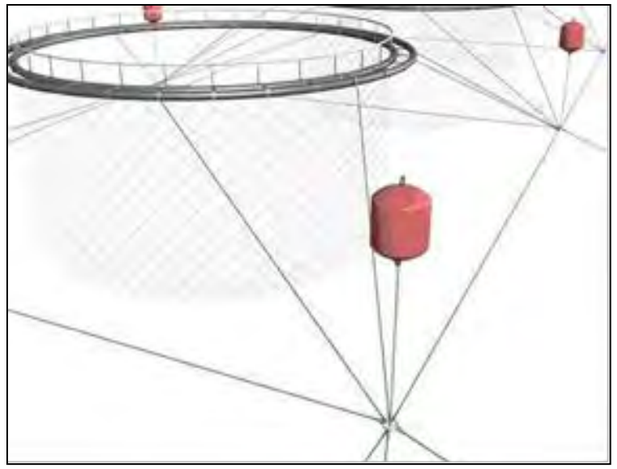
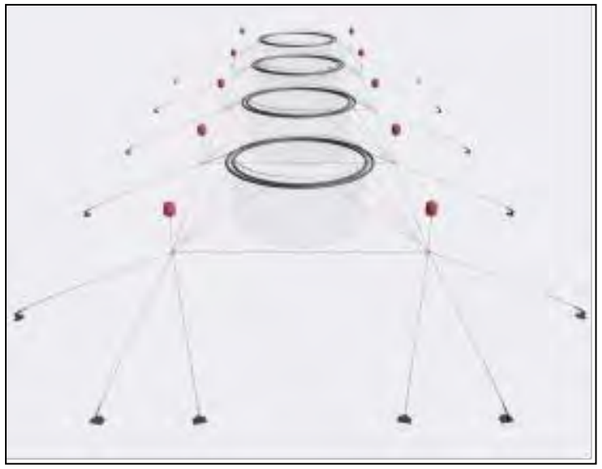
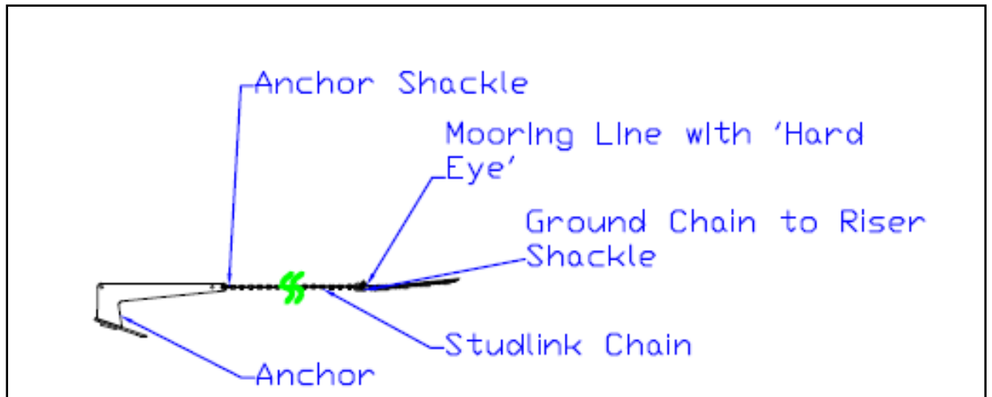


Figure 9. PROPOSED: Technical drawing of a typical circular pen walkway of 160m circumference with top net support poles

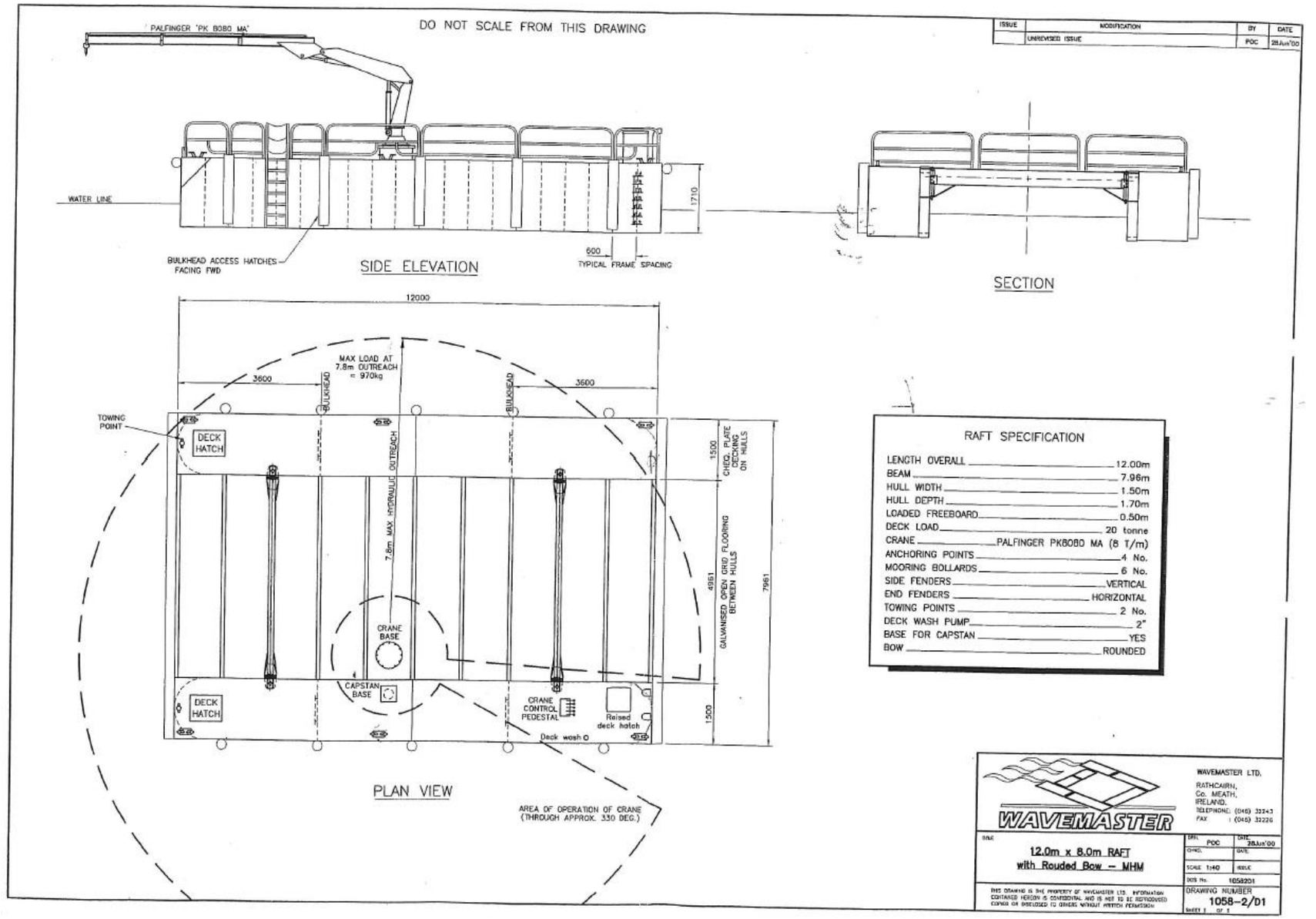




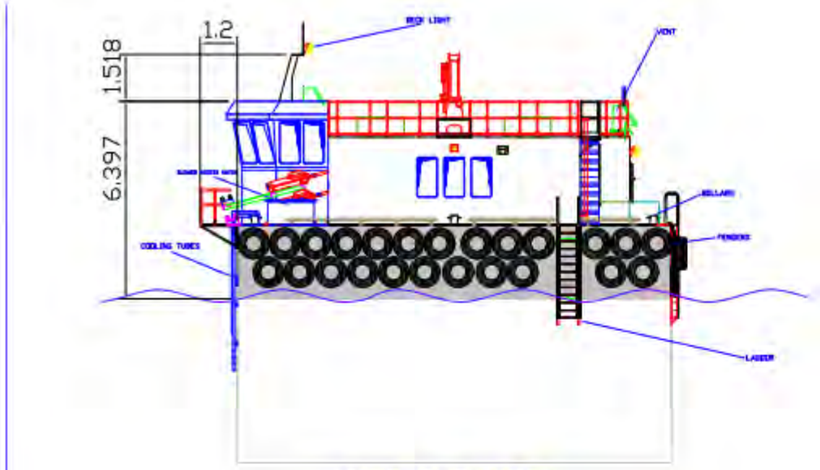




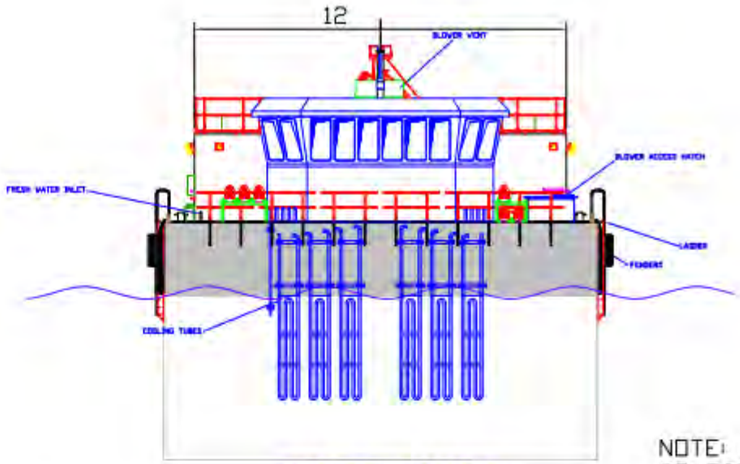
PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key:	**Not to Scale**	**04/02/2019**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
PLANS AND ELEVATIONS							
Figure 10: Manufacturers Diagram – Typical Mooring Design		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status



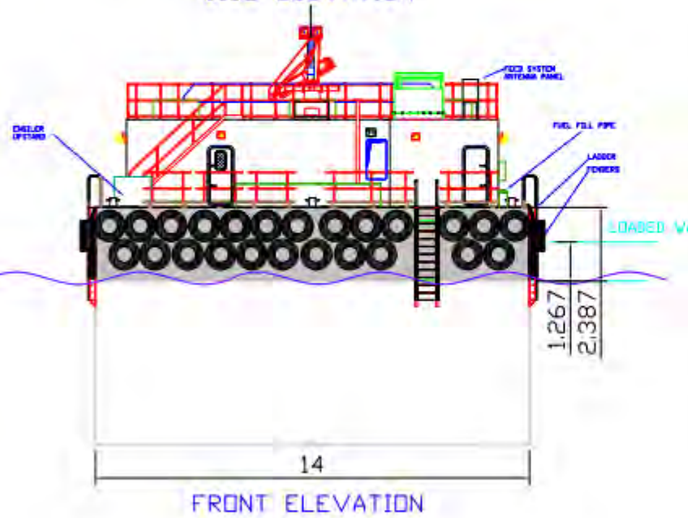
EXISTING & PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key:	Not to Scale	04/02/2021	LT	YB	0001	Final
PLAN & ELEVATIONS – Technical illustration of a Wavemaster raft	Illustration of the existing raft at Loch Hourn is to be retained						
Figure 11: Manufacturers Diagram Wavemaster raft		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status



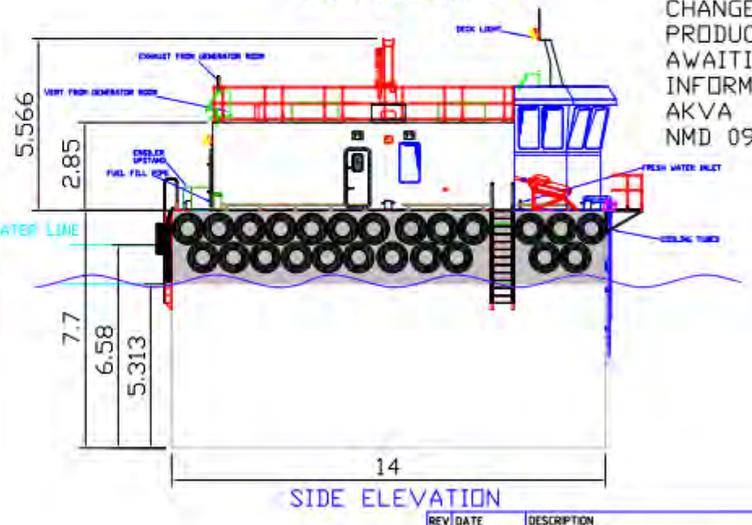
SIDE ELEVATION



REAR ELEVATION



FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION

NOTE:
SELECTORS TO CHANGE TO AKVA PRODUCTS AWAITING FURTHER INFORMATION FROM AKVA
NMD 09-JAN-13

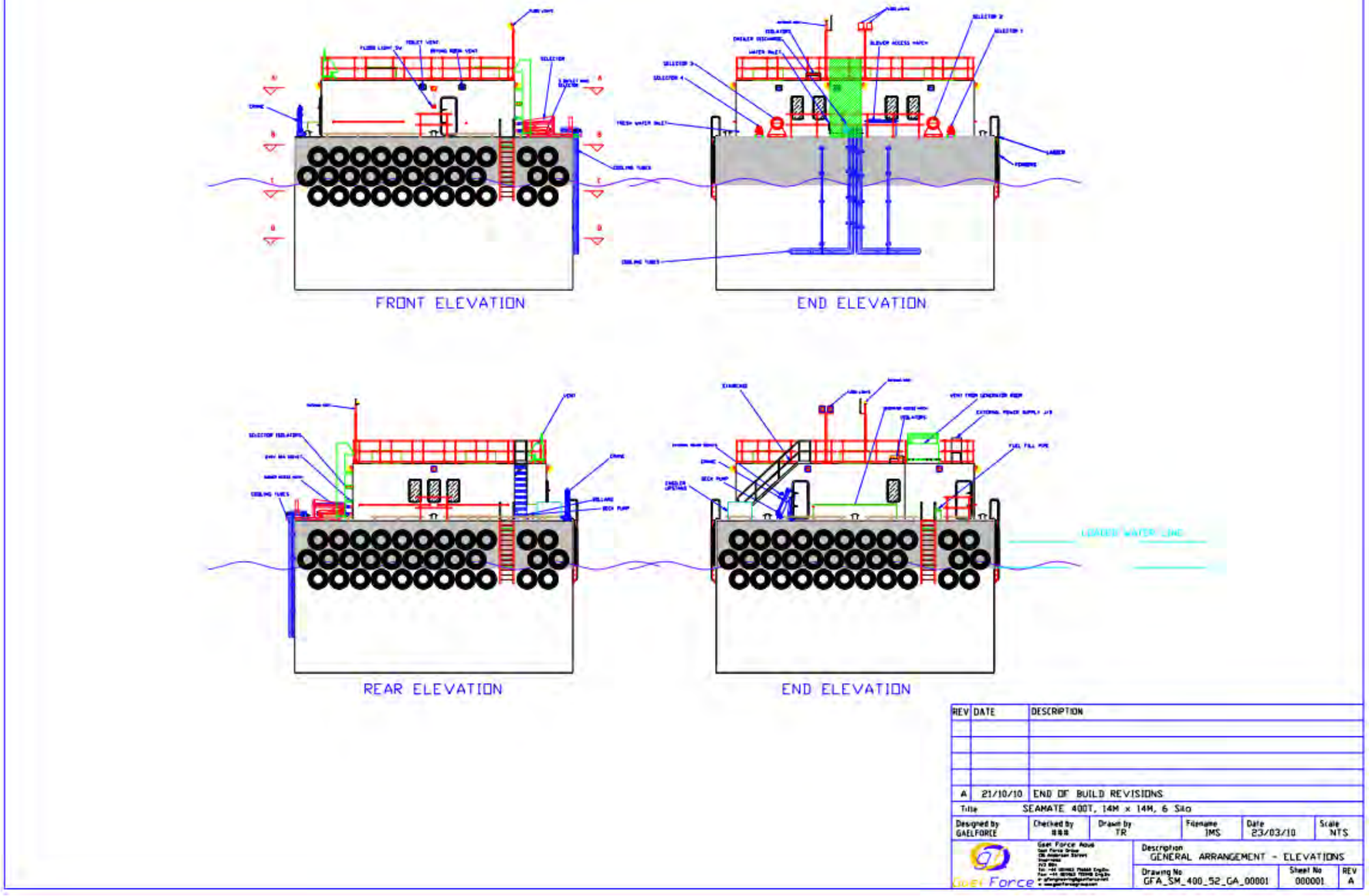
REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
E	09/01/14	DIMENSIONS ADDED
D	19/12/13	REVISIONS TO CLIENTS REQUIREMENTS
C	09/12/13	REVISIONS TO CLIENTS REQUIREMENTS
B	27/11/13	REVISED TO CLIENTS SPECIFICATION
A	12/11/13	ISSUED FOR DISCUSSION

Title: SEAMATE 400T, 14M x 14M, 6 Sko 6 Blower

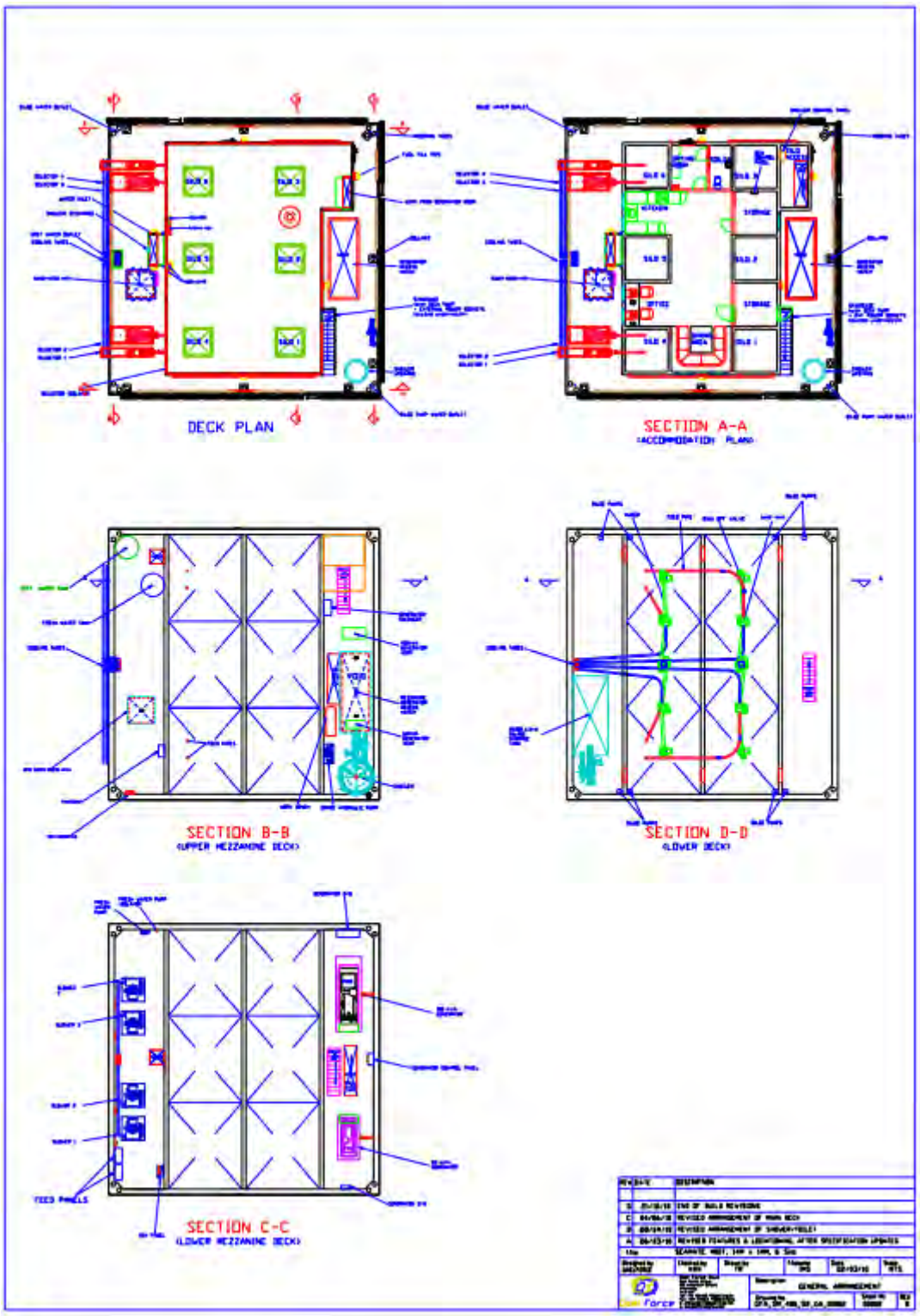
Designed by	Checked by	Drawn by		Date	Scale
GAELFORCE		JSD		12 11 2013	NTS

Gael Force Aqua
Description: GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
Drawing No.: GFA_SM_400_70_GA_00007
Sheet No: 00007
REV: D

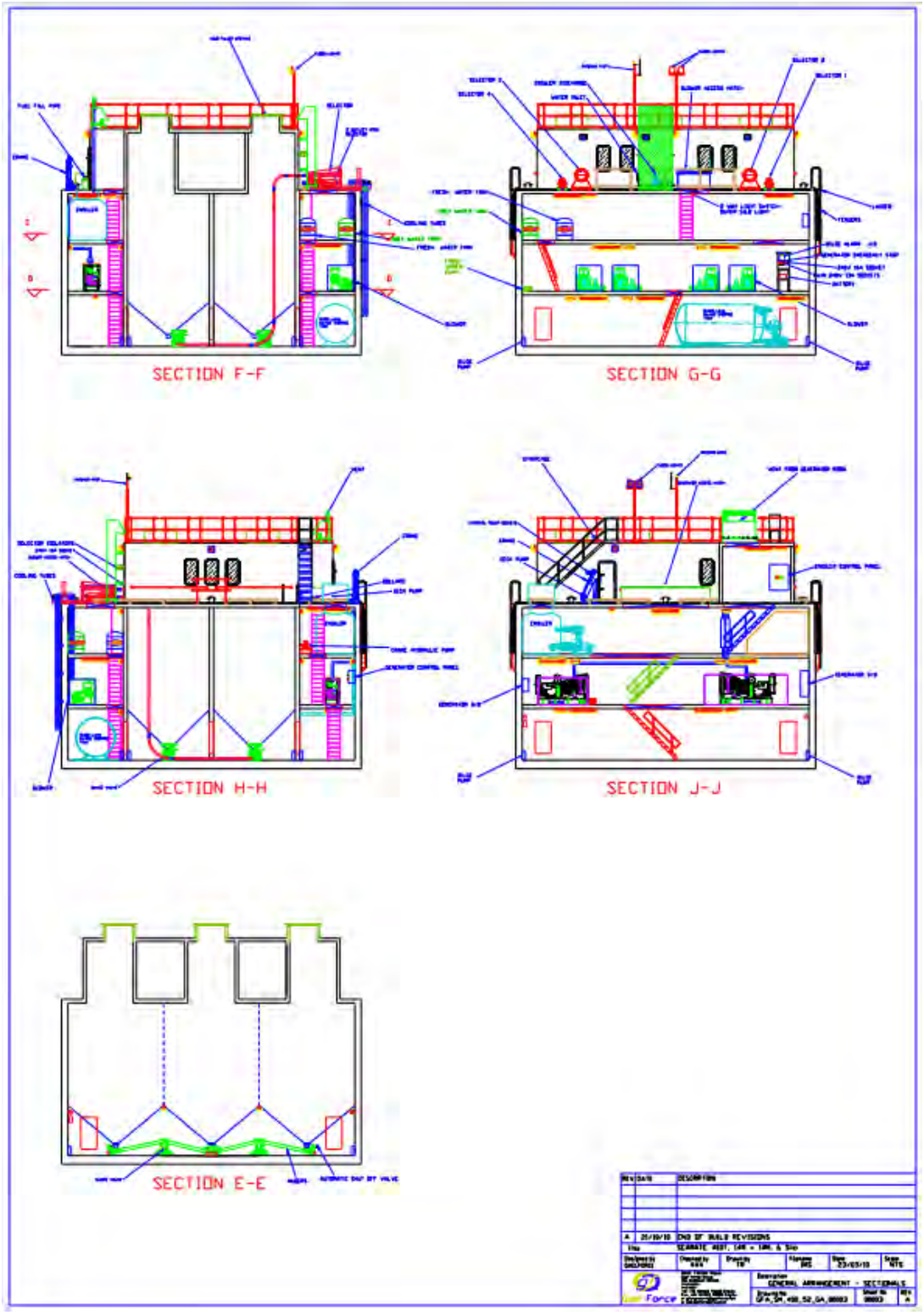
EXISTING & PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key:	**Not to Scale**	**15/06/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
PLAN & ELEVATIONS – Technical illustration of a GaelForce Seamate 400T	Illustration of the existing feed barge at Loch Hourn is to be retained						
Figure 12: Manufacturers Diagram Gaelforce Seamate 400T		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status



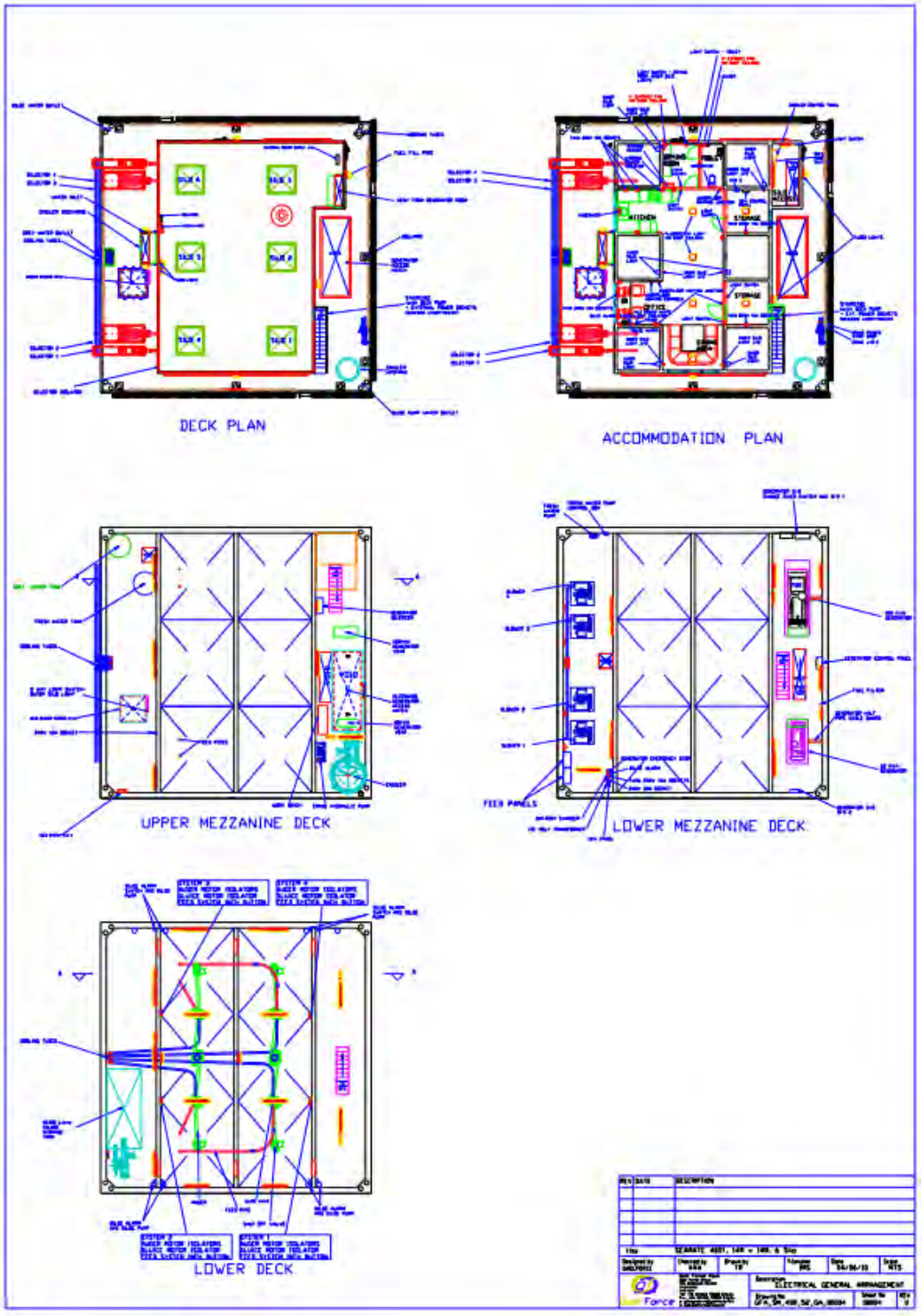
EXISTING & PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key:	**Not to Scale**	**15/06/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
PLAN & ELEVATIONS – Technical illustration of a GaelForce Seamate 400T	Illustration of the existing feed barge at Loch Hourn is to be retained						
Figure 13: Manufacturers Diagram Gaelforce Seamate 400T		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status



EXISTING & PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key: Illustration of the existing feed barge at Loch Hourn is to be retained	**Not to Scale**	**15/06/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
PLAN & ELEVATIONS – Technical illustration of a GaelForce Seamate 400T							
Figure 14: Manufacturers Diagram Gaelforce Seamate 400T		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status



EXISTING & PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key:	**Not to Scale**	**15/06/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
PLAN & ELEVATIONS – Technical illustration of a GaelForce Seamate 400T	Illustration of the existing feed barge at Loch Hourn is to be retained						
Figure 15: Manufacturers Diagram Gaelforce Seamate 400T		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status



EXISTING & PROPOSED: LOCH HOURN SALMON FARM	Key:	**Not to Scale**	**15/06/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**0001**	**Final**
PLAN & ELEVATIONS – Technical illustration of a GaelForce Seamate 400T	Illustration of the existing feed barge at Loch Hourn is to be retained						
Figure 16: Manufacturers Diagram Gaelforce Seamate 400T		Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked	Revision No.	Status

Marine Aquaculture Site Loch Hourn
PLANNING APPLICATION
Appendix 1. Site Charts and Coordinates

Mowi Scotland Limited

November 2021

› Registered in Scotland No. 138843
Registered Office,
1st Floor, Admiralty Park
Admiralty Road
Rosyth
FIFE
KY11 2YW

OFFICE
Farms Office, Glen Nevis Business Park
PH33 6RX Fort William

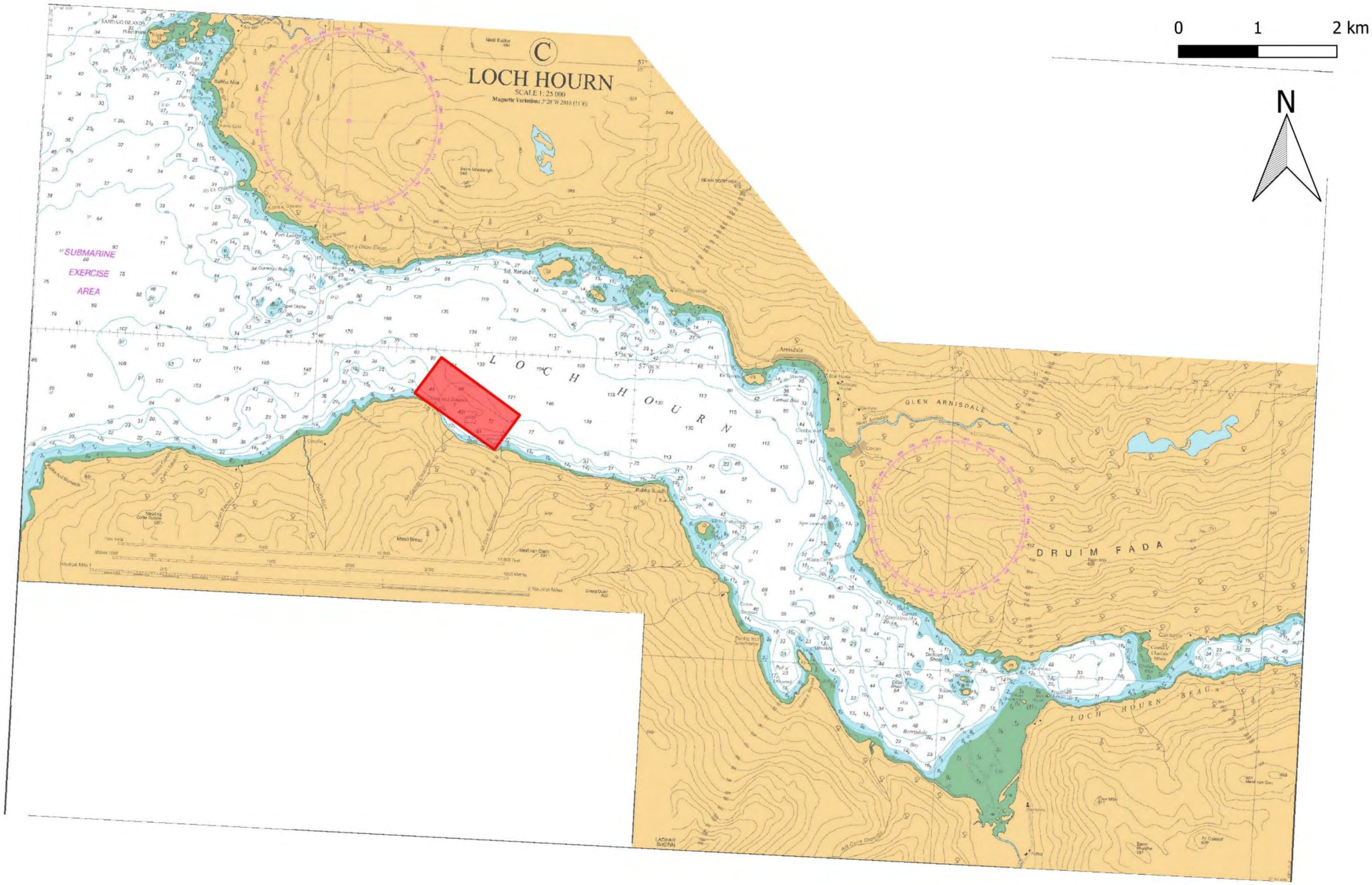
POSTAL
Farms Office, Glen Nevis Business Park
PH33 6RX Fort William

FAX
-

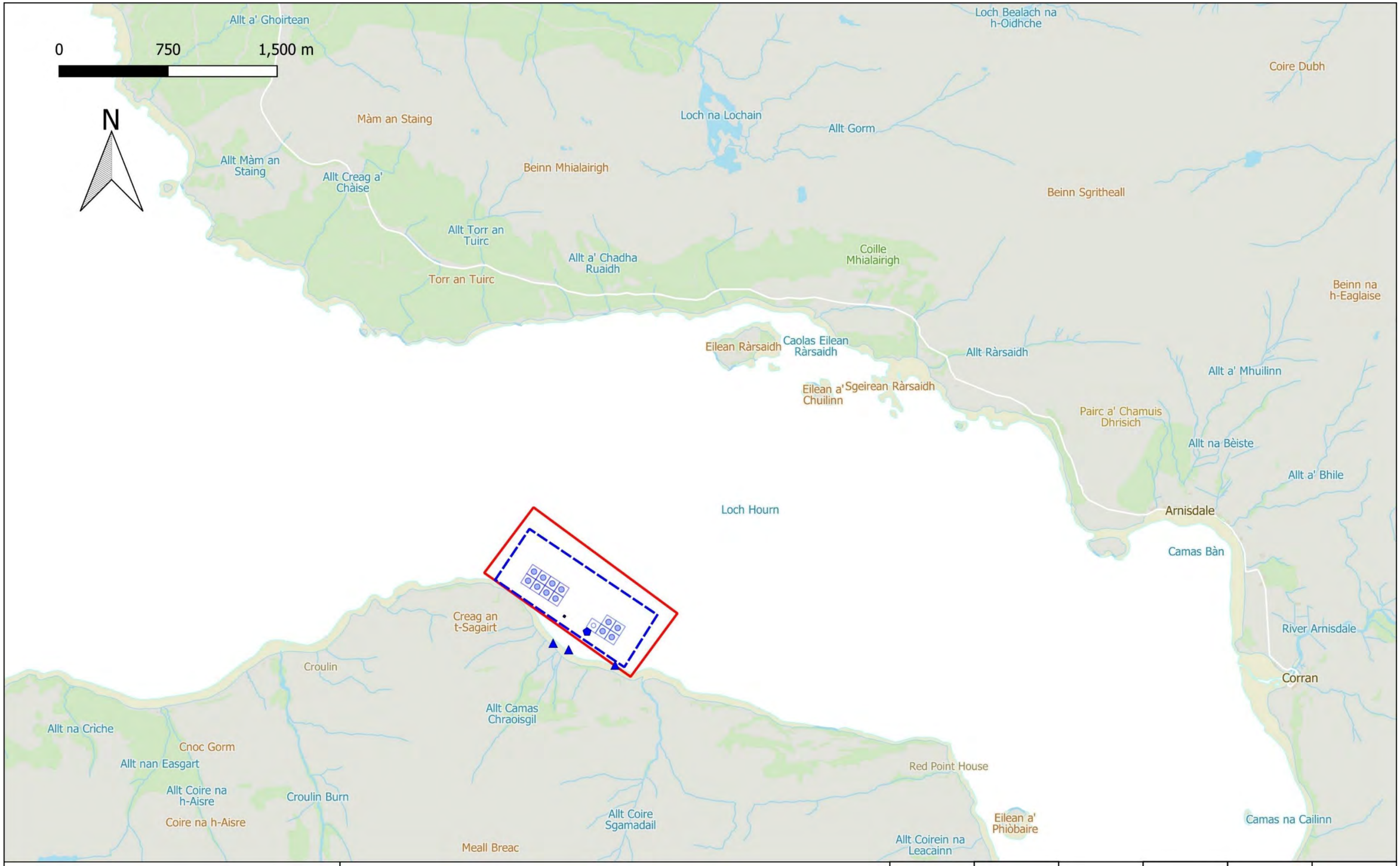
MAIL
environment@mowi.com

WEB
http://mowi.com

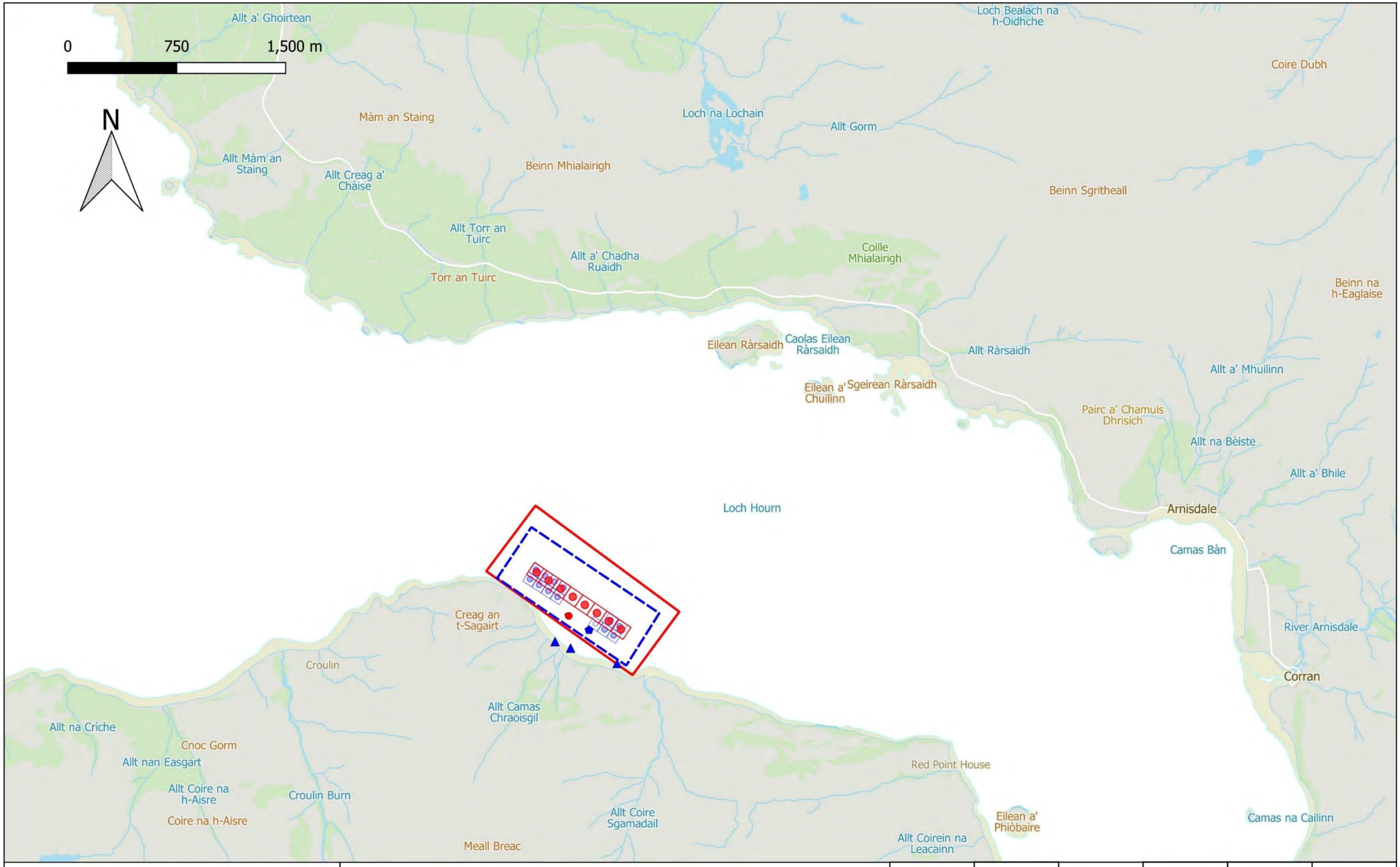
LOCH HOURN FISH FARM: LOCH HOURN	Key: Site Mid Point	**1:550,000**	**15/11/2019**	**LT**	**YB**	**v1**	**Final**
LOCATION PLAN: ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP		**Scale**	**Date**	**Drawn**	**Checked**	**Revision No.**	**Status**
Figure 1. General view showing the location of Loch Hourn							



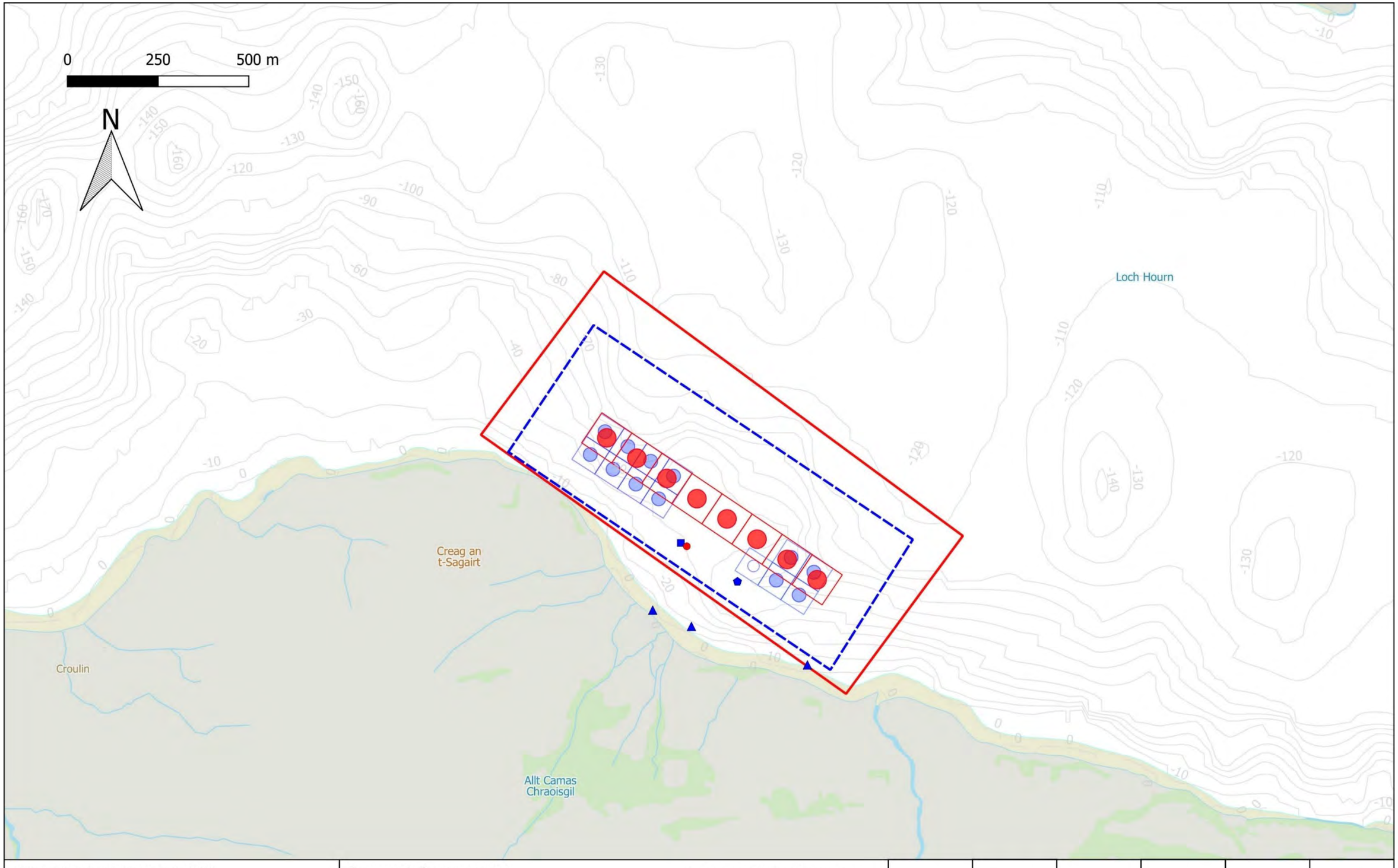
LOCH HOURN FISH FARM: LOCH HOURN	**Key:**	**1:50,000**	**04/08/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**v1**	**Final**
LOCATION PLAN: ADMIRALTY CHART	Current and proposed planning boundary						
Figure 2: General view of Loch Hourn Salmon Farm		**Scale**	**Date**	**Drawn**	**Checked**	**Revision No.**	**Status**



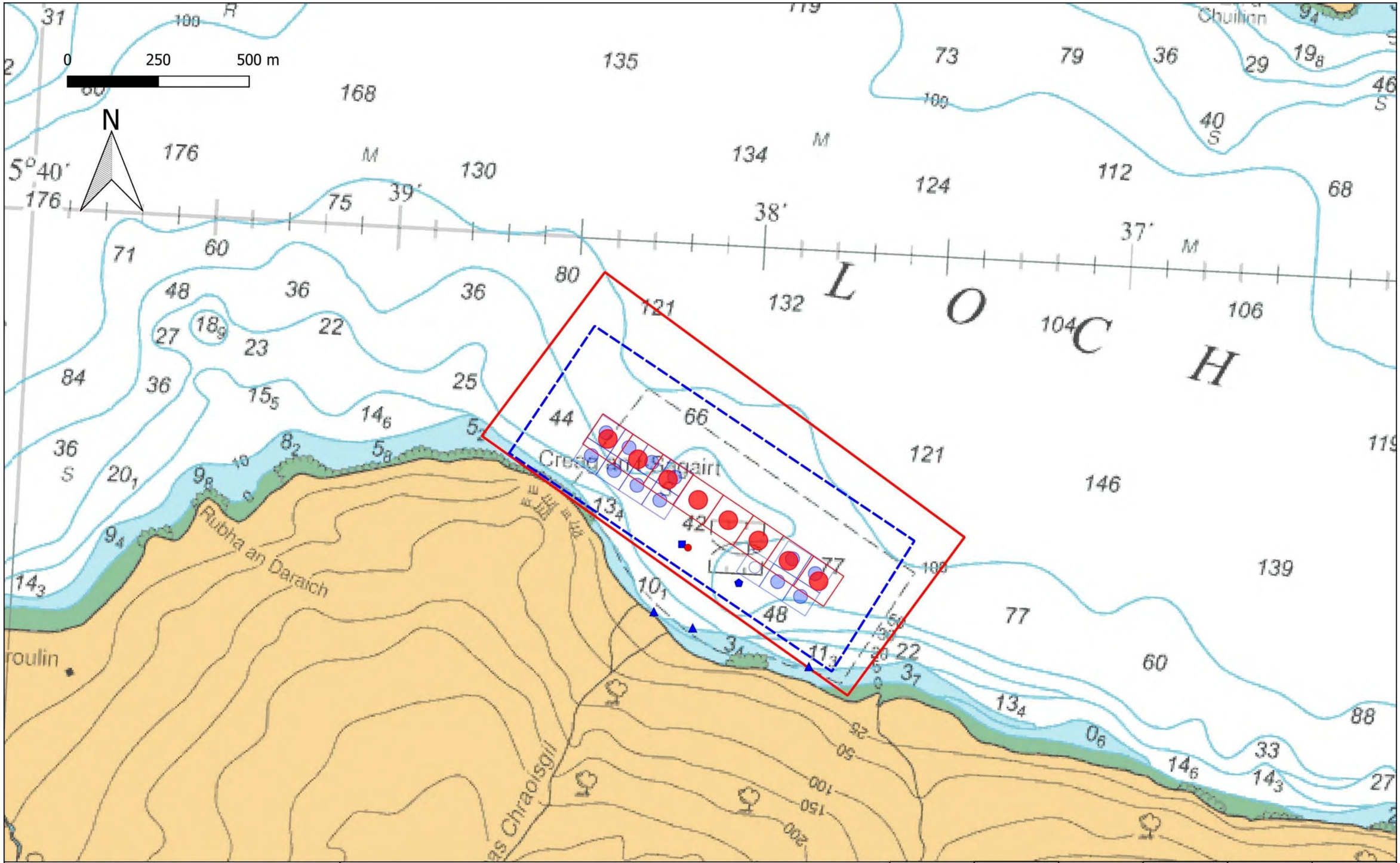
LOCH HOURN FISH FARM: LOCH HOURN	Current infrastructure:	**1:25,000**	**04/11/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**v1**	**Final**
LOCATION PLAN: ORDNANCE SURVEY	Current planning boundary; Freshwater pen (100m circ.); Single point mooring; Current mooring area; Feed barge centre; 120m circ. pens; Raft	**Scale**	**Date**	**Drawn**	**Checked**	**Revision No.**	**Status**
Figure 3: Detailed view of the current configuration of Loch Hourn Salmon Farm. 12 circular plastic pens 120m circumference and 1 freshwater pen 100m circumference							



LOCH HOURN FISH FARM: LOCH HOURN	Current infrastructure:	Proposed infrastructure:	**1:25,000**	**04/11/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**v1**	**Final**
LOCATION PLAN: ORDNANCE SURVEY	Current planning boundary Current mooring area 120m circ. pens Freshwater Pen (100m circ.) Feed barge centre Raft Single point mooring	Proposed planning boundary and mooring area Proposed 160m circ. pens Feed barge centre	**Scale**	**Date**	**Drawn**	**Checked**	**Revision No.**	**Status**
Figure 4: Detailed view of the proposed configuration of Loch Hourn Salmon Farm - 8 circular plastic pens 160m circumference, 1 feed barge, 1 raft, and 3 single point moorings.								

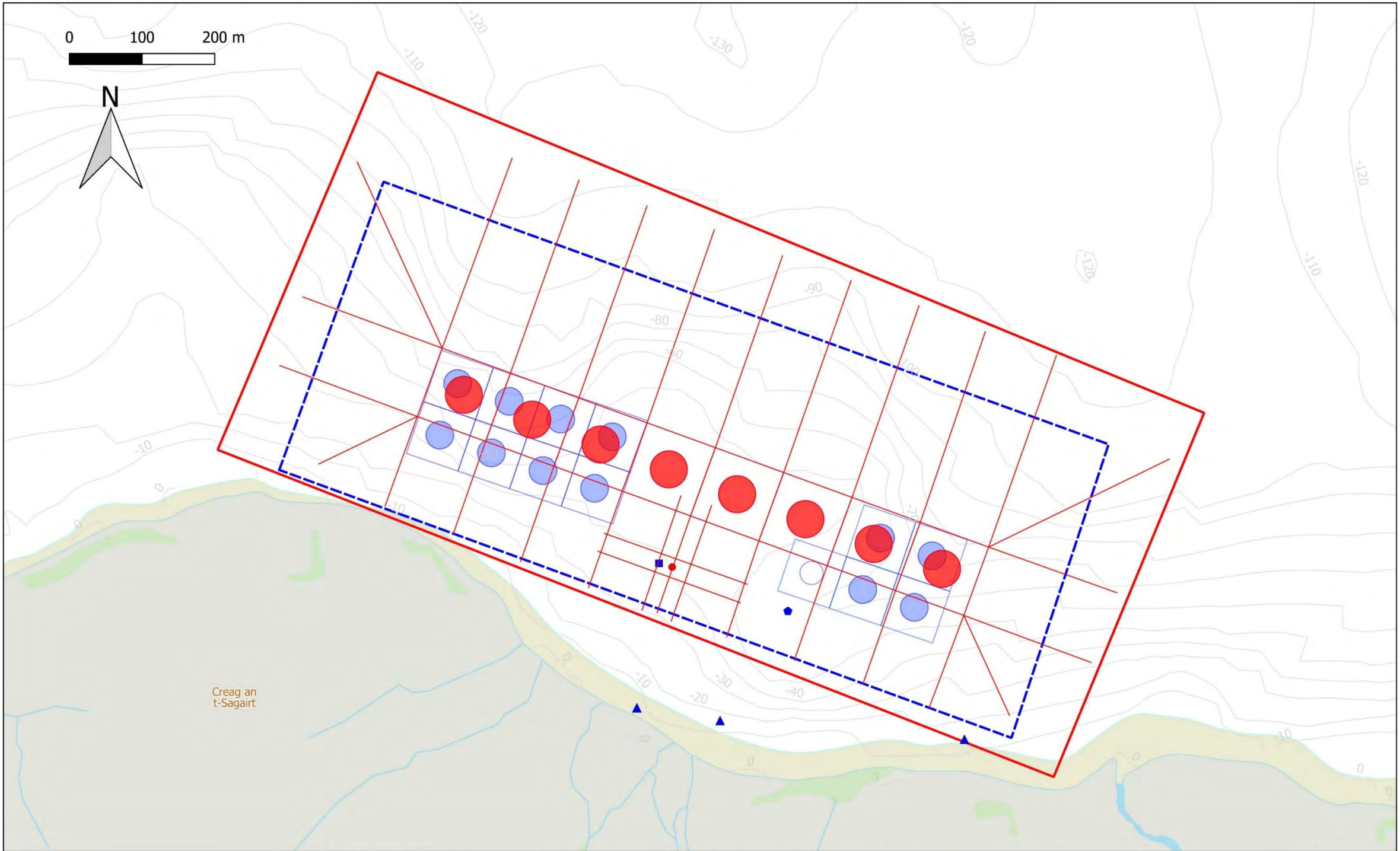


LOCH HOURN FISH FARM: LOCH HOURN	Current infrastructure:		Proposed infrastructure:	**1:10,000**	**04/08/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**v1**	**Final**
LOCATION PLAN: ORDNANCE SURVEY	Current planning boundary Current mooring area 120m circ. pens Freshwater Pen (100m circ.)	Feed barge centre Raft Single point mooring	Proposed planning boundary and mooring area Proposed 160m circ. pens Feed barge centre						
Figure 5: Detailed view of the proposed configuration of Loch Hourn Salmon Farm - 8 circular plastic pens 160m circumference, 1 feed barge, 1 raft, and 3 single point moorings.				**Scale**	**Date**	**Drawn**	**Checked**	**Revision No.**	**Status**

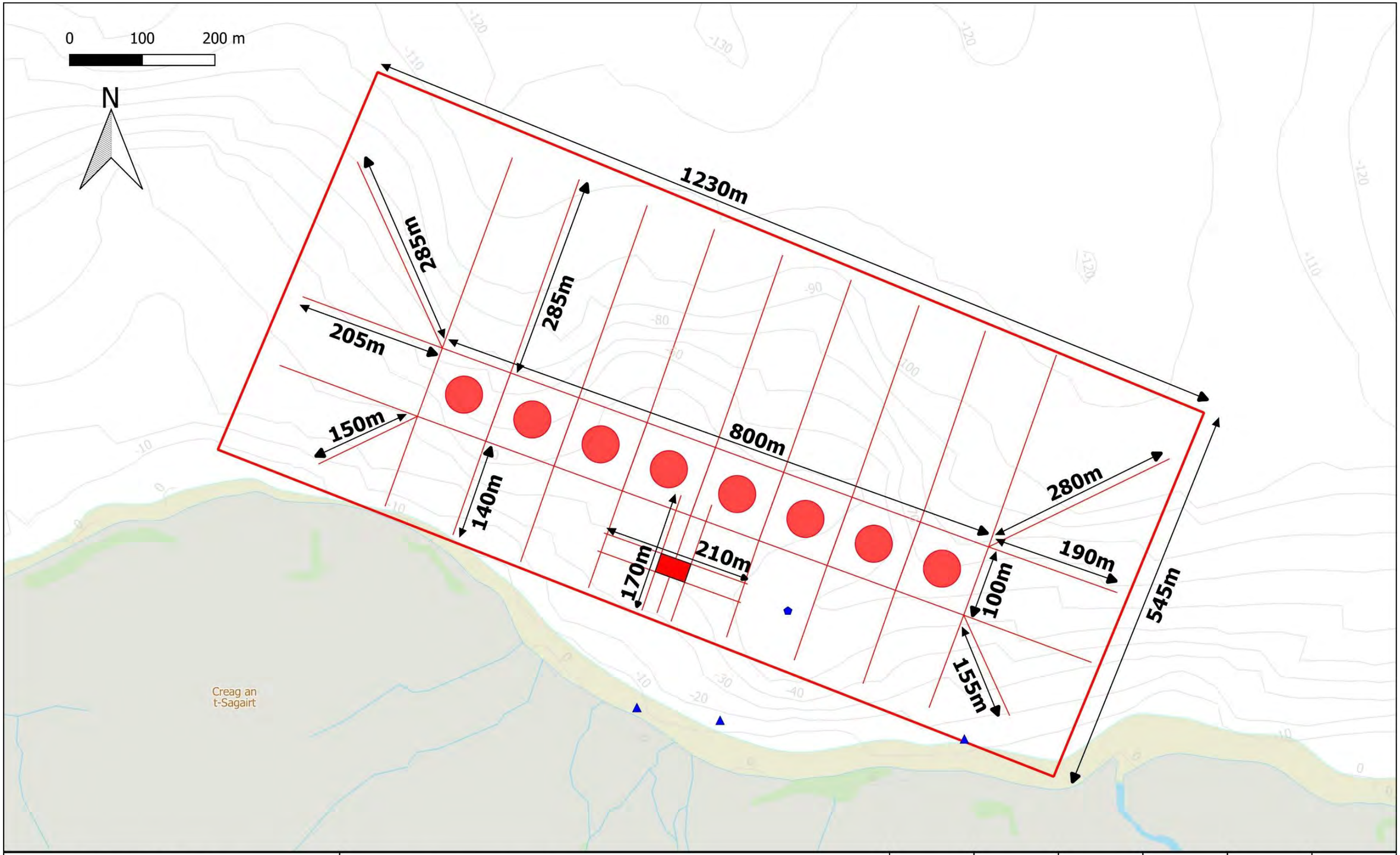


LOCH HOURN FISH FARM: LOCH HOURN	Current infrastructure:		Proposed infrastructure:	**1:10,000**	**04/08/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**v1**	**Final**
LOCATION PLAN: ADMIRALTY CHART	Current planning boundary Current mooring area 120m circ. pens Freshwater Pen (100m circ.)	Feed barge centre Raft Single point mooring	Proposed planning boundary and mooring area Proposed 160m circ. pens Feed barge centre	**Scale**	**Date**	**Drawn**	**Checked**	**Revision No.**	**Status**

Figure 6: Detailed view of the proposed configuration of Loch Hourn Salmon Farm - 8 circular plastic pens 160m circumference, 1 feed barge, 1 raft, and 3 single point moorings.



LOCH HOURN FISH FARM: LOCH HOURN	Current infrastructure:		Proposed infrastructure:	**1:5,000**	**05/08/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**v1**	**Final**
SITE PLAN: ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP	Current planning boundary	Feed barge	Proposed planning boundary and mooring area						
Figure 7: Detailed view of Loch Hourn Salmon Farm - 8 circular plastic pens 160m circumference, 1 feed barge, 1 raft, and 3 single point moorings. Chart includes mooring lines for the 8 x 160m pen grid and feed barge.	Current mooring area	Raft	Proposed 160m circ. pens	**Scale**	**Date**	**Drawn**	**Checked**	**Revision No.**	**Status**
	120m circ. pens	Single point mooring	Feed barge centre						
	Freshwater pen (100m circ.)		Pen grid & feed barge mooring lines						



LOCH HOURN FISH FARM: LOCH HOURN	Current & Proposed infrastructure:	**1:5,000**	**05/08/2021**	**LT**	**YB**	**v1**	**Final**
SITE PLAN: ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP	Current & Proposed planning boundary and mooring area; Pen grid & feed barge mooring lines; Proposed 160m circ. pens; Raft (current); Feed barge; Single point moorings x 3 (current)	**Scale**	**Date**	**Drawn**	**Checked**	**Revision No.**	**Status**

Figure 8: Detailed view of Loch Hourn Salmon Farm - 8 circular plastic pens 160m circumference, 1 feed barge, 1 raft, and 3 single point moorings. Chart includes mooring lines for the 8 x 160m pen grid and feed barge.

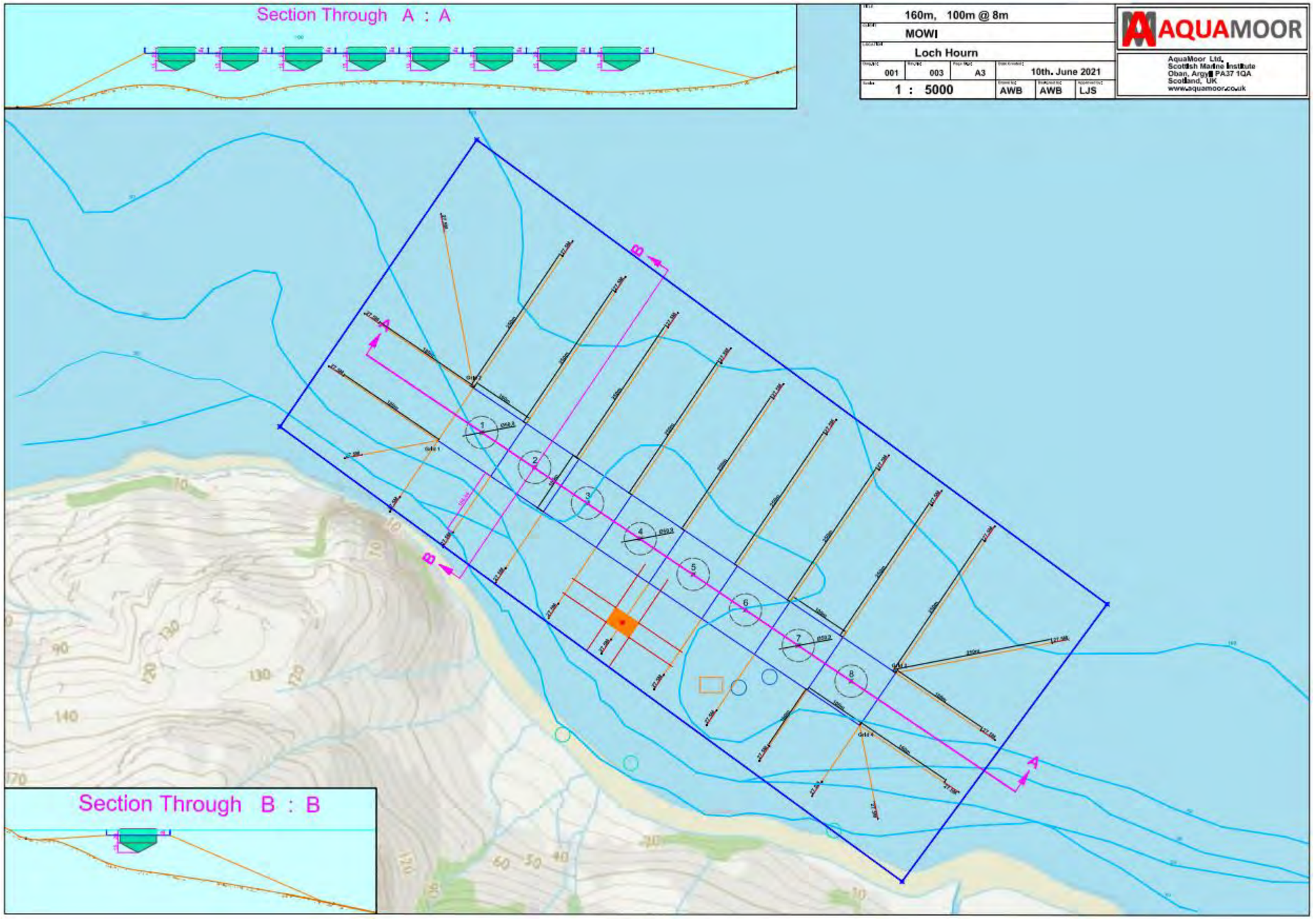


Figure 9. Aquamoor chart displaying pen grid and feed barge moorings

Loch Hourn Fish Farm Coordinates

Current coordinates

Planning Boundary Corner Coordinates

E 179786	N 810506	57° 7.950'N	-5° 38.431'W
E 179477	N 810055	57° 7.698'N	-5° 38.742'W
E 180776	N 809776	57° 7.586'N	-5° 37.413'W
E 180454	N 809340	57° 7.342'N	-5° 37.708'W

Mooring Boundary Corner Coordinates

E 179758	N 810355	57° 7.868'N	-5° 38.450'W
E 179523	N 810005	57° 7.673'N	-5° 38.664'W
E 180639	N 809763	57° 7.575'N	-5° 37.548'W
E 180411	N 809404	57° 7.375'N	-5° 37.754'W

Pen Grid Corner Coordinates

E 179780	N 810114	57° 7.739'N	-5° 38.416'W
E 179694	N 809990	57° 7.670'N	-5° 38.494'W
E 180418	N 809684	57° 7.526'N	-5° 37.762'W
E 180336	N 809560	57° 7.457'N	-5° 37.837'W

Pen Centre Coordinates

E 179790	N 810061	57° 7.711'N	-5° 38.403'W
E 179853	N 810020	57° 7.691'N	-5° 38.339'W
E 179916	N 809979	57° 7.670'N	-5° 38.274'W
E 179979	N 809939	57° 7.650'N	-5° 38.210'W
E 179749	N 809998	57° 7.676'N	-5° 38.440'W
E 179812	N 809957	57° 7.656'N	-5° 38.376'W
E 179875	N 809916	57° 7.635'N	-5° 38.311'W
E 179938	N 809876	57° 7.615'N	-5° 38.247'W
E 180303	N 809714	57° 7.539'N	-5° 37.877'W
E 180366	N 809673	57° 7.519'N	-5° 37.813'W
E 180262	N 809651	57° 7.504'N	-5° 37.914'W
E 180325	N 809610	57° 7.484'N	-5° 37.850'W

100m circ. Freshwater pen:

E 180192	N 809699	57° 7.528'N	-5° 37.986'W

Feed Barge Coordinates

E 179998	N 809757	57° 7.553'N	-5° 38.181'W

Raft Coordinates

E 180154	N 809650	57° 7.500'N	-5° 38.021'W

Single point mooring Coordinates

E 179921	N 809571	57° 7.451'N	-5° 38.248'W
E 180028	N 809526	57° 7.430'N	-5° 38.140'W
E 180347	N 809420	57° 7.382'N	-5° 37.818'W

Proposed coordinates

Planning Boundary Corner Coordinates **(no change)** & mooring boundary

E 179786	N 810506	57° 7.950'N	-5° 38.431'W
E 179477	N 810055	57° 7.698'N	-5° 38.742'W
E 180776	N 809776	57° 7.586'N	-5° 37.413'W
E 180454	N 809340	57° 7.342'N	-5° 37.708'W

Pen Grid Corner Coordinates

E179781	N810116	57° 7.740'	-5° 38.415'
E179725	N810033	57° 7.694'	-5° 38.466'
E180444	N809668	57° 7.518'	-5° 37.736'
E180388	N809586	57° 7.472'	-5° 37.787'

Pen Centre Coordinates

E179794	N810046	57° 7.703'	- 5° 38.398'
E179877	N809991	57° 7.676'	- 5° 38.313'
E179960	N809935	57° 7.648'	- 5° 38.228'
E180043	N809879	57° 7.620'	- 5° 38.143'
E180126	N809823	57° 7.592'	- 5° 38.058'
E180208	N809767	57° 7.565'	- 5° 37.974'
E180291	N809711	57° 7.537'	- 5° 37.889'
E180374	N809655	57° 7.509'	- 5° 37.804'

Feed Barge Coordinates

E 180015	N 809747	57° 7.548'N	-5° 38.164'W

Raft Coordinates **(no change)**

E 180154	N 809650	57° 7.500'N	-5° 38.021'W

Single point mooring Coordinates **(no change)**

E 179921	N 809571	57° 7.451'N	-5° 38.248'W
E 180028	N 809526	57° 7.430'N	-5° 38.140'W
E 180347	N 809420	57° 7.382'N	-5° 37.818'W