

## Additional Notes for Marine Licence Application.

### Supporting Information

The proposed oyster farm is located inside Lochcarron's Marine Protected Area. However as I live locally (in Plockton) and am aware of the many issues surrounding the use of the loch, the environment, tourism and amenity I will take every care to minimise the impact of this development. This farm should not impact the Lochcarron Marine Protected Area. The site is over 1km from the flame shell reef at Strome. There is no maerl or sea grass at the farm site.

The farm will use the Oystergro system for the farm as I believe it suits the local environment. The cages are suspended under floats visually similar to mussel farm equipment. The floats are low in the water so will blend into the background/shore and forest when viewed from the seaside. The location means they should not be viewed from the shore. The cages are attached to lines which are secured using screw anchors. These can be sited exactly to avoid damaging the seabed. The anchors will be the only part of the farm touching the seabed so there should be no impact on seabed life.

As the farm is subtidal it will always be accessible. This means it can be worked within normal hours during the day preventing noise, disturbance (unlike a traditional foreshore oyster farm). As Plockton has a busy harbour with 7-8 fishing boats coming and going and many pleasure craft etc another small working boat will make no difference to the perception of use of the loch/harbour.

### Environmental Impact

Oysters are filter feeders and can each filter up to 150L of seawater per day. As they filter sea water they remove and consume Phytoplankton and other matter, effectively cleaning the sea water as they feed. Unlike finfish farms, oysters do not require any chemical treatment for diseases. There is also some evidence to suggest that oysters in large numbers remove carbon dioxide from sea water. As the farmed native oysters mature they will start to produce spat which will disperse around Lochcarron and beyond and enhance the local wild stock. The pacific oysters will not be able to spat as the water temperature is too low for this species.

### Visual Impact

The only part of the proposed farm equipment above water are black or grey floats which sit around 40-50cm high. These should blend into the background shore/rocks and be virtually invisible when viewed from the sea side. South and West of the site (around 900m) are the houses at Craig. The site might be visible from some of the houses near the shore at Craig with a view to the East. The site is over 2km from Plockton and should not be visible. The site is around 1.6km directly across the loch from the village of Ardaneaskan. It will be partly hidden by the Strome islands. From this distance the floats should be virtually invisible to the naked eye.

### Production Plan

Native and Pacific oyster spat will be purchased from UK, disease free hatcheries. The spat will be placed in the farm equipment and will on-grow from there. The oysters will need to be regularly taken out, graded for size and put back in the cages. The pacific oysters are expected to reach market size within 2 years. The native oysters may take 4 years.

## Financial Resources

I have received a quote from Oystergro for the farm equipment. I will fund the purchase of this equipment personally. I already have a boat which I can use to service the farm. I have use of a raft which, with modifications, could also be used to service the farm.

## Decommissioning

At the end of the project or if the business comes to an end all of the equipment will be removed from the site.

Alexander Mackenzie

