

**Earra Gael, Harbour Street, Tarbert
Proposed installation of Viewing
Platform & Extension to Public Realm**

Design & Access Statement

To be read as part of the Full Planning Application | May 2024



1. Background Information

Tarbert is a bustling fishing village with a strong maritime history. The village is surrounded by areas of natural beauty and the village centre itself is a designated conservation area. Tarbert village centre is located around the west end of the inner harbour and includes numerous restaurants, cafés, pubs, and accommodation, as well as a variety of shops and specialty artisan stores selling and exhibiting work from local artists and crafts-people. The village centre and harbour area is very picturesque, maintaining a traditional Scottish feel with rural architecture, brightly painted houses and storefronts, and a variety of boats moored on the water.

Tarbert's natural harbour, located in the good sailing waters of the Clyde Estuary, also makes it a popular leisure sailing port, attracting approximately 3,600 visiting yachts per year. The harbour is also an ideal location for the Scottish Series Yacht Race, hosted in the village for the past 30 years.

The Harbour provides a home for a small fishing fleet, Caledonian MacBrayne ferry terminal and an anchored pontoons system providing over 200 berths for sailing and motor yachts.

This design statement accompanies the planning permission for Earra Gael, Tarbert Harbour, Loch Fyne and has been prepared by Mott MacDonald & John Renshaw Architects for Tarbert Harbour Authority. Tarbert (Loch Fyne) Harbour Authority (THA) is a not-for-profit Trust Port, established in 1912 and recognised as a social enterprise. THA has a deep interest in promoting and delivering projects that aim to transform and rejuvenate Tarbert and its environs.



(Fig 1.1 Aerial view of Tarbert © Author unknown)

2. Site Details

2.1 Site Location

Tarbert lies on the Western side of Loch Fyne, which is situated to the North of the Isle of Arran. The village of Tarbert is located on the northern tip of Kintyre and sits on the eastern side of an Isthmus dividing East and West Loch Tarbert. The A83, or Campbeltown road, leads Harbour Street south into the peninsula of Kintyre and links the two body's of water between which Tarbert is anchored.

Earra Gael is situated on the south of the inner harbour and is accessed via the A8015, Harbour Street, Tarbert, Argyll & Bute. The site faces north onto the views of the harbour.

The proposed development site is owned by the Tarbert (Loch Fyne) Harbour Authority.

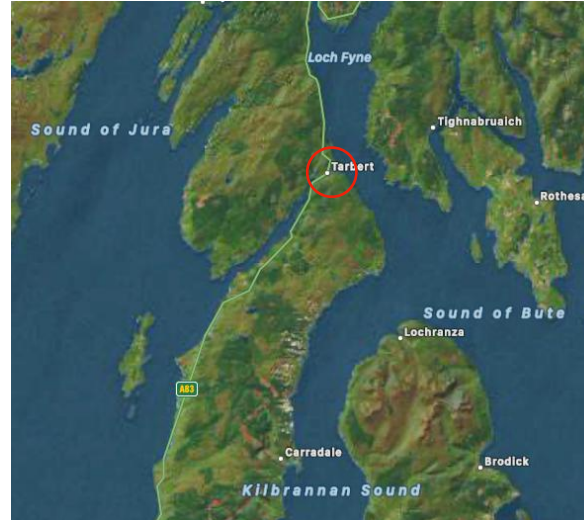


Fig 2.1.1 Aerial view of the site © Apple Maps



Fig 2.1.2 Aerial view of the site © Apple Maps



Fig 2.1.3 Aerial view of the site © Apple Maps

2.2 Historic analysis

Fishing and related maritime activities such as boat building have been undertaken from the inner harbour at Tarbert for centuries, with Tarbert a centre of the herring fishing industry in Loch Fyne by the 18th century. The construction of the Telford Harbour Walls in 1813 proved to be a catalyst for the further expansion and growth of Tarbert through the 19th and 20th centuries.

The development of the current fish quay layout has been constructed in a staged manner over a number of centuries, progressively being built further into the harbour as time has progressed (with the historic Telford masonry harbour walls still being present in certain locations within the site). The exact date of construction of the current fish quay civil infrastructure is not known precisely, however, based on available record information, construction form and materials, the structures are likely constructed in the second half of the 20th century.

The historic fish quay layout has been obtained from historical maps and is presented in Figures 2.2.1 and 2.2.2. All maps are reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

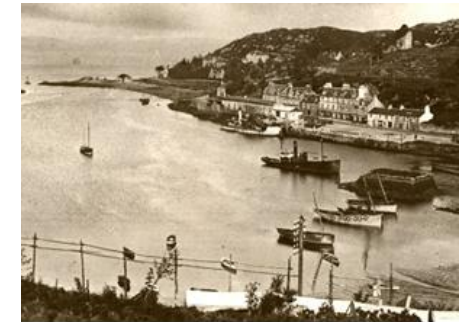


Fig 2.2.1 OS 6 Inch Map (1843 to 1882)

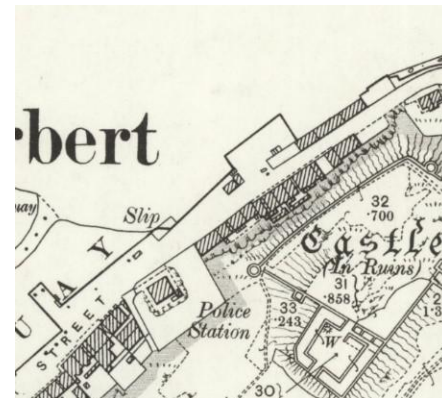


Fig 2.2.2 OS 25 Inch Map (1892 to 1914)

Major works have over the last few decades brought the fish landing and market facilities to modern standards. Despite the decline in the fortunes of the fishing industry, Tarbert still provides a base for a modest fishing fleet, carrying on the tradition of previous centuries.

2.3 Site Photographs



Fig 2.3.1 View of site from east @ John Renshaw Architects



Fig 2.3.2 Existing historic slipway & viewing platform @ John Renshaw Architects



Fig 2.3.3 View of Earra Gael from harbour wall @ John Renshaw Architects



Fig 2.3.4 Existing picnic area on site @ John Renshaw Architects



Fig 2.3.5 View showing harbour wall edge, slipway, seating viewing platform and parking on site @ John Renshaw Architects



Fig 2.3.6 Existing parking on site @ John Renshaw Architects

2.4 Site Appraisal

The proposed development site is located adjacent to Earra Gael and a historic stone slipway and is situated immediately next to the seating area, created in 2010. Its stone walls, planters, picnic tables and benches overlook Tarbert harbour & Marina. Within the site boundary there are existing amenities such as public seating, picnic benches, litter bins and vehicular parking, all placed in parallel to the harbour wall.

The harbour wall is Category B listed and forms part of the harbour improvements carried out by Thomas Telford in the early 19th century which comprises the 300 metres of dry stone rubble wall around the inner harbour fronting onto Barmore Road and Harbour Street. The historic stone fabrics of both the harbour wall and slipway are intact and are core to the sites character.

The proposed site area incorporates the area to the east of the existing stone planter & timber picnic benches and includes two car parking spaces parallel with Harbour Street. A small platform stands immediately adjacent to the harbour wall. This originally formed the bridge landing of a harbour berthing pontoon for commercial vessels, no longer extant, and has been re-purposed as a viewing platform with interpretation board. In this location it masks the historic stone slipway.



Fig 2.1.3 Laser survey of site showing existing viewing platform © Richard Ayling



Fig 2.1.4 Laser survey of site © Richard Ayling

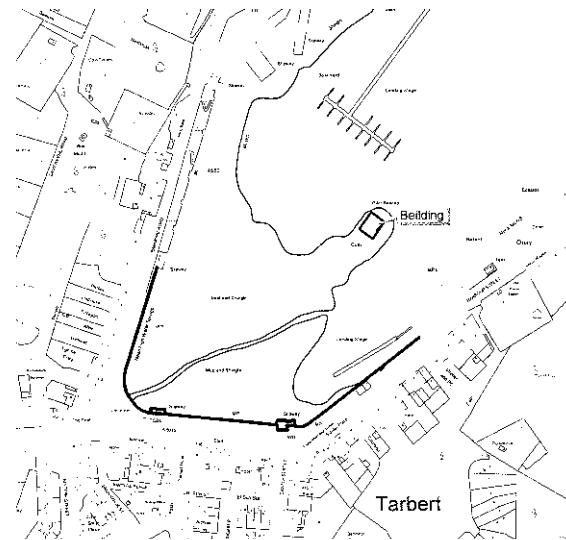


Fig 2.4.1 Tarbert harbour listing map © Argyll & Bute Council

3. Design Brief

The brief for the development project is to enhance the public realm and extend the area available for sitting. Additionally, a viewing platform will create a community node and seek to celebrate the historic fabric of the slipway, the harbour wall and the marina itself. Ultimately this proposal is driven to increase usability, safety and to extend the life of the Tarbert's public realm.

4. Planning Policy and Context

4.1 Site designations

B Listing of Tarbert harbour walls, weighbridge building, slipways & building granted on 2nd September 2002 LB48935—

The site is located within the Tarbert Conservation Area, the Main Town Area, the Key Settlement Area, Area for Action (AFA) 13/1 and the Loch Fyne Coastal Area.

4.2 Planning history

- Planning application for the formation of new path, steps & seating, land opposite filling station, Barmore Road, Tarbert, Argyll (Ref: 98/01552/DET) Application approved on wed 16th December 1998.
- Planning application for the change of use of former boat yard site and associated land to form amenity area and other associated works (retrospective) (Ref :11/00857/PP) Application approved on 23rd February 2012.

4.3 Planning policies, settlement strategy and assessment

- The Local Development Plan policies and settlement strategy encourage sustainable development on appropriate sites and aims to protect, conserve and where possible enhance the built, human and natural environment.
- The site is located with the Tarbert conservation area and any development must preserve and enhance the character or appearance of the harbour and village setting, must be of the highest quality, respect and enhance the architectural and other special qualities that give rise to the reasons for its designation. Particular attention to massing, form and design details are required and energy efficient design and sustainable building practice is strongly encouraged. Measures taken to preserve and enhance the special interest of the harbour and its townscape setting measures may include enhanced physical access, interpretation and the provision of open space or landscape buffer zones as appropriate.

- It is also acknowledged that piers, ports and harbours support the leisure and tourism sectors such as sailing and pleasure trips through the provision of berthing and operational facilities. It is clearly important to protect these key infrastructure facilities from uses and development that might compromise their operational and commercial viability whilst also supporting proposals that can enhance, upgrade or support the existing facilities and the sectors that utilise them.

4.4 Consultees for full planning application

- Scottish Water
- Argyll and Bute Council Roads

5. Design Proposals

5.1 Proposal summary

The proposal consists of a viewing platform, additional picnic seating & bicycle parking and public work of art.

The proposed site layout has been developed to achieve a series of objectives;

- To create a safe environment for the community to rest & picnic on the harbour wall, protected from passing vehicles > This objective is achieved through the addition of timber bollards, placed between parking/ road and pedestrian space.
- To create a node point on the harbour wall, where the community frequently walk > archived through expanding the area for pedestrian footfall, the addition of a community artwork & the addition of a new timber lookout platform & interpretation board.
- To enrich the sense of community> archived through the commissioning of a public artwork. The completed work will be placed within the extended picnic area to promote the space.
- To extend amenities available in the space > additional seating, additional waist disposal, cycle parking & additional space.
- To allow further exploration of the Tarbert harbour to visitors and celebrate its historic fabric > deliberate placement of the proposed viewing platform helps frame the historic harbour cope and slipway, allowing visitors to cross the barrier of the wall to create visibility of the site. Keeping a timber material pallet to the proposed infrastructure such as furnishings, balustrades and decking allows the historic stone to be instantly recognisable as core to Tarbert's heritage.
- Increase the provision of cycle parking and provide new facilities for bicycle repairs

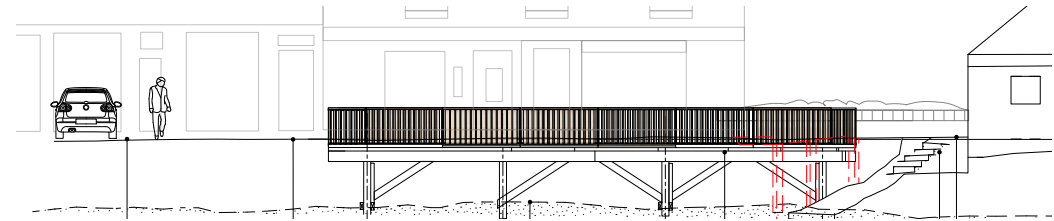


Fig 5.1.1 View of proposal from North of harbour wall @ John Renshaw Architects

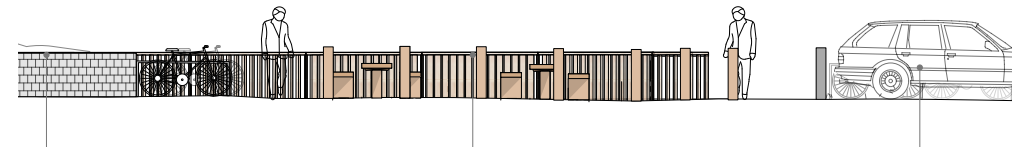


Fig 5.1.2 View of proposal from South on Barmore Road, facing water @ John Renshaw Architects

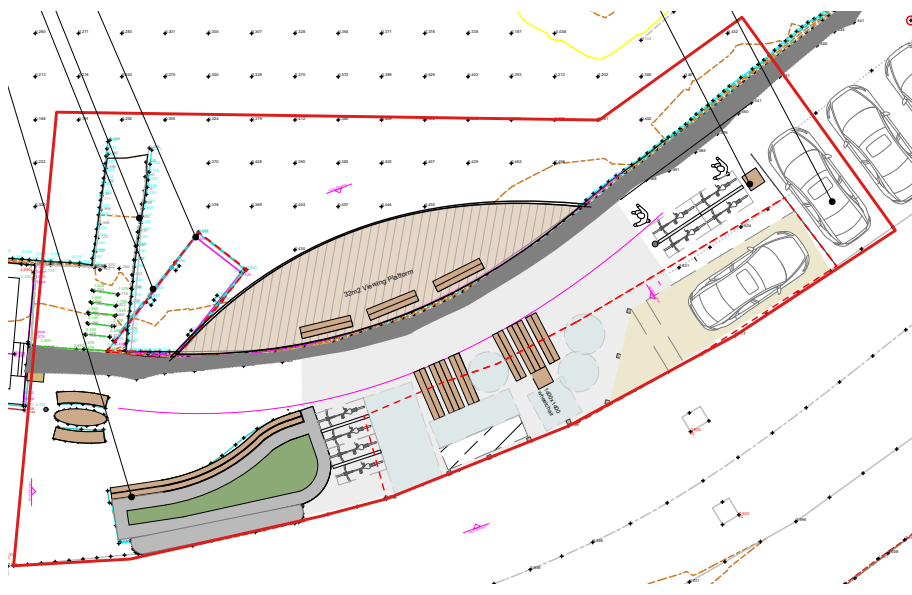


Fig 5.1.3 Proposed Plan of Site -extension to the public realm by replacing the existing viewing platform, which hides the historic slipway, with a proposal that that extenuates the historic harbour wall and celebrates the historic slipway by allowing visitors to view it from beyond the boundary of the wall. @ John Renshaw Architects

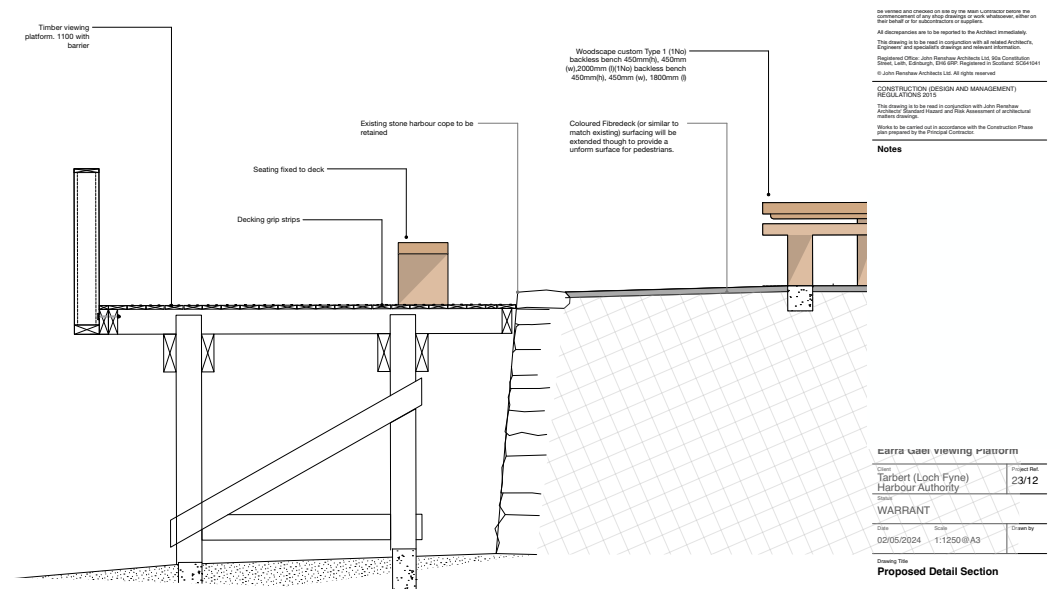


Fig 5.1.4 Proposed site section facing west @ John Renshaw Architects

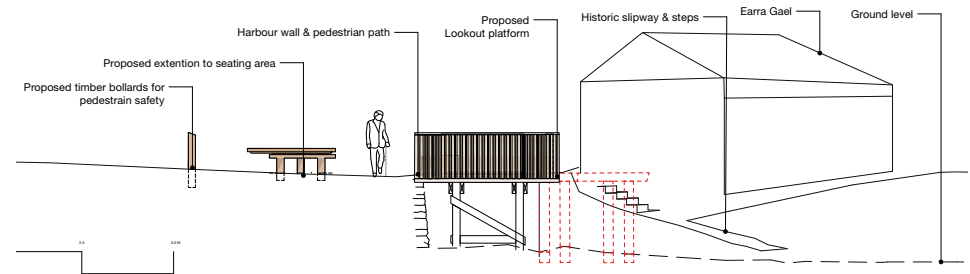


Fig 5.1.5 Tarbert harbour listing map @ Argyll & Bute Council

5.2 Accessibility

It has been central to the design approach that accessible spaces are provided for the proposals users. A width of approximately 1.50m around the harbour wall line is maintained throughout to provide ample space for wheelchair users to pass. Bicycles are spaces to allow a 1500mm entry path to the roadside, if pedestrians may need to cross through. Cycle spaces are set back from the roadside to allow space to dismount and lock. Road markings and signage will be in line with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 (TS RGD). Anti-slip coating will be provided on viewing platform along with appropriate edge protections to enhance pedestrian safety. Coloured Fibredeck (or similar to match existing) surfacing will be extended though to provide a uniform surface for pedestrians.

5.3 Materials

It is proposed at all timber street furniture will be made from “FSC naturally very durable hardwood” and will match the existing street furniture. All fixings to be 316 stainless steel.

Viewing platform to be design and constructed from high quality timber materials.

Coloured Fibredeck surfacing currently covers the pedestrian walkway & car parking areas on the site. New Coloured Fibredeck surfacing will be applied to the site to match existing and provide a uniform surface for pedestrians throughout. No material is proposed to cover the historic harbour wall cope.

5.4 Environment & sustainability

The design will aim to minimise waste and enable deconstruction/reuse/recycling of the structure/building components at the end of its life cycle.

5.5 Sustainable Drainage & Floor Risk

Surface Water Drainage

Surface water will drain through the proposed timber deck.

A flood risk assessment for the site has been undertaken which has determined a 1 in 200 year maximum flood level (including wave climate) of +4.53m AOD. This level includes a climate change allowance to the year 2100.

Although the site is located in a potentially vulnerable area (01/39) in Argyll and Bute Council Local Plan District Report by SEPA and is at risk of flooding the materials used for the proposed development will be flood resilient and the development, essentially an extension to the public footpath will not increase the safety of the public.

5.7 Vehicular Access and Parking

2 parallel spaces are to be replaced with additional cycle parking and to enhance the pedestrian area and facilities in order to provide an extended picnic area and essential cycle parking to the site.

5.8 Waste and Recycling

The site is currently occupied by a public seating area with relevant waste disposal bins.

6. Conclusion

The proposals adjacent to Earra Gael are to increase usability, safety and public pride of place for the Tarbert harbour through core fabric additions; Extension to picnic area to provide necessary additional seating for pedestrians.

Cycle parking to create a physical barrier to pedestrian walkway, allow safe storage of bikes and encourage pedestrian movement along the harbour wall.

Viewing platform & public art space celebrate and promote Tarbert harbour.



(Fig 6.1 Photos showing examples of projects completed by Tarbert Harbour Authority © John Renshaw Architects)