KPL Mooring Marine License Extension Environmental Considerations Report

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Document Control

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Contents

1 Introduction

This report supports Kishorn Port Ltd.'s (KPL) application for moorings, which are currently permitted under Marine Mooring Licence number 07111/20/0 (which expires on the 31st May 2026). The proposed retention of mooring areas will provide a dedicated safe location for vessels and marine structures to be held in position by a system of moorings connected to the seabed. This will increase the commercial attractiveness of the area by establishing a site useful for a range of marine activities, complementing the Dry Dock facilities on offer.

The report lays out the planned works, the associated environmental implications of the works and how the proposal meets the objectives and policies required for sustainability under the Scottish National Marine Plan.

2 Mooring Details

2.1 Location

The currently consented mooring areas (Drawing 55-02-01, Drawing 55-02-02 and Figure 2.1) are located 3.3 kilometres (km) (Area 6) and 6.5 km (Area 7) from the Kishorn Dry Dock and are to be retained for use. A variety of vessels and marine structures, supporting multiple industrial sectors, are expected to utilise the moorings.

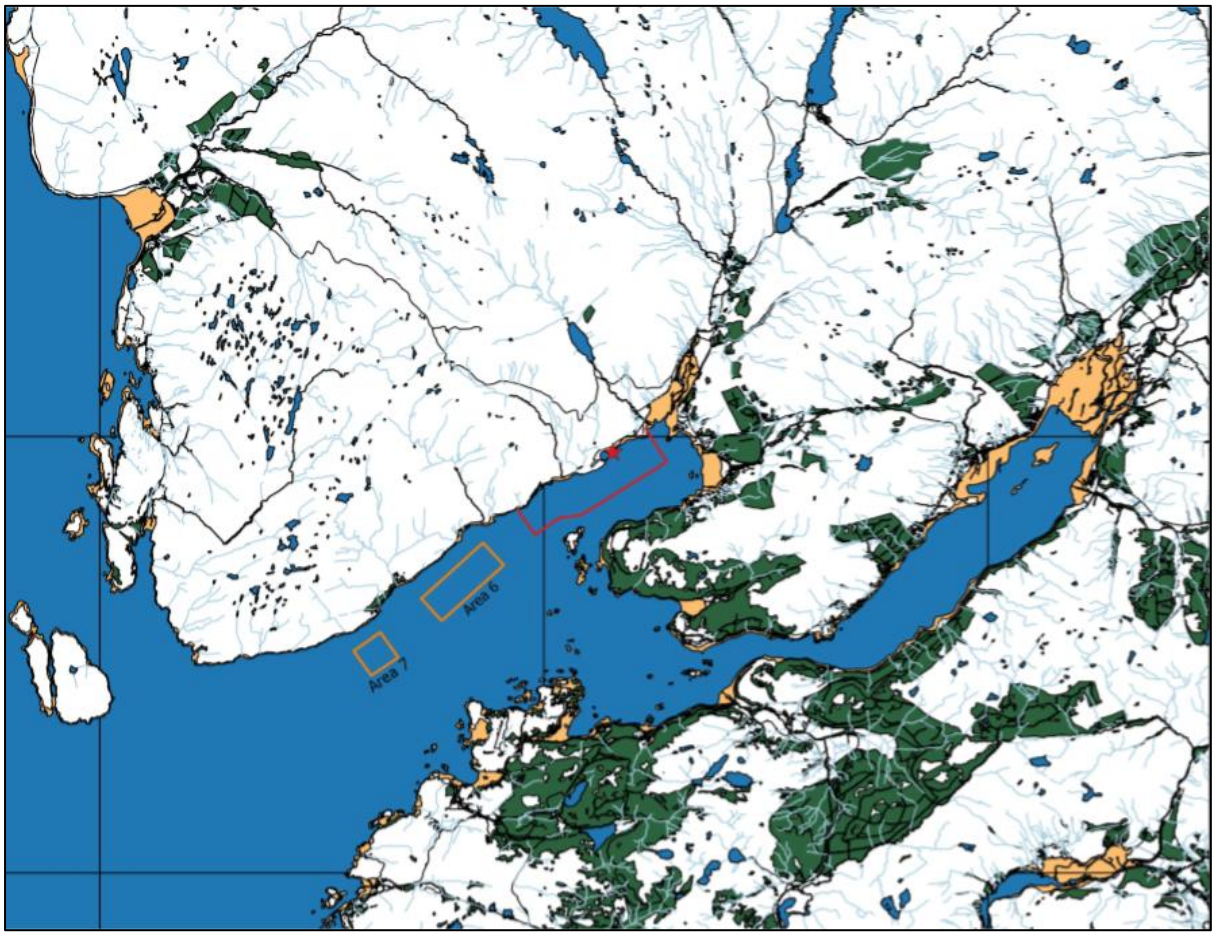

Figure 2.1: Location of Mooring Areas 6 & 7 (orange) Relative to Kishorn Dry Dock (red star)

2.2 Mooring Design and Installation

The mooring design will depend on the specific requirement of users. Moorings will be appropriately sized and located to ensure the safe mooring of the vessel or marine structure being accommodated. It is anticipated that there will be no more than 16 moorings installed in each of the two mooring areas, 32 in total. Typical mooring arrangements likely to be employed are depicted within the Marine User Liaison & Mitigation Action Plan (MULMAP; KPL, 2026), although each asset or vessel will have its own mooring analysis and specification.

The equipment will be installed using an Anchor Handling Vessel or Work Boat with a crane on the deck. The installation is also likely to require winches and the assets of a diving team.

3 Environmental Assessment and Considerations

Environmental topics have been considered in turn with regard to potential mooring installation and operational effects in Table 3.1.1. Any topics that warrant additional consideration to inform the characterisation of changes to baseline conditions are detailed in Section 3.2 to 3.4.

Table 3.1.1: Potential Environmental Effects from Installation and Operations

Topic	Potential Effects	
	Installation	Operation
In Air Noise	Minimal marine plant is required for a short period of time; the mooring areas are away from human receptors (>4 km to nearest residential property) hence no nuisance effects are predicted.	The majority of moored vessels/marine structures will not require engines to be running. If vessels/marine structures moored are manned, then they may require some electrical generation with associated noise source. It is however, noted that the mooring areas are away from human receptors. Furthermore, the anchoring of oil rigs in Loch Kishorn is not an abnormal activity. As such no additional nuisance effects are predicted.
Underwater Noise	Noise generated from marine plant will primarily be engine noise which is consistent with vessels normally operating in the area; no noticeable changes in soundscape are expected.	Moored vessels/ marine structures will give rise to very little underwater noise; no noticeable changes in soundscape are expected.
Air Quality	Greenhouse gas emissions will be produced by marine plant. However, the installation period will be short term; no changes to air quality are anticipated.	Moored vessels and structures do not require engines to hold position. If vessels/marine structures moored are manned then they may require some electrical generation giving rise to low levels of greenhouse gas emissions, no changes to air quality are anticipated.
Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	No historical sites lie within the area of the proposed works (Historic Environment Scotland, 2026); no environmental effects expected.	No historical sites lie within the area of the proposed works (Historic Environment Scotland, 2026); no environmental effects expected.
Biodiversity	Potential impacts to biodiversity are considered in Section 3.2.	

Topic	Potential Effects	
	Installation	Operation
Contamination and Ground Conditions	Installation will create minimal disturbance of the seabed, and this area is unlikely to be contaminated due to a lack of historical activity; risk of contamination release is very low.	No effects predicted due to lack of interaction with the seabed.
Landscape, Seascape and Visual	Any visual effects of marine vessel presence to install moorings will be temporary and not affect the overall landscape/ seascape.	The presence of vessels/marine structures in the area is not unusual and is in keeping with the current use of the area. The backdrop to the location is such that moored items will not stand out on the skyline, hence will not be a dominant feature in the landscape.
Local Community and Economy	The installation of moorings will require the hire of an appropriate workboat with winch capabilities. The contract would be short-term with minor impact on the local economy.	Any proposal for development at Kishorn could be a significant contributor to the economy of the area. Developments could provide new opportunities for work experience and those wishing to extend their skill sets. A continuation of the mooring licence would help to maintain these opportunities.
Water Quality	Potential impacts to Water Quality are considered in Section 3.3.	
Onshore Traffic	Heavy vehicle traffic is common at Kishorn Port and Dry Dock. The installation of moorings will not involve any substantial increase in onshore traffic.	Operation of moorings will not require onshore vehicle activity and thus will create no change to onshore vehicle presence.
Navigation and Marine Users	Potential impacts to Navigation and Marine Users are considered in Section 3.4.	

3.1 Designated Sites

There are several designated sites in the Inner and Outer Hebrides and Loch Kishorn Area which may be relevant to the proposed development area including include Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Designated sites and their qualifying features identified within a 10 km buffer zone of Kishorn Port are shown in Table 3.1.2 (National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi), 2026; NatureScot, 2026a-m). Drawing 55-03 provides a map showing the locations and the designated sites relative to the proposed works. A description of each of the sites and the reasoning on whether they were taken forward for further assessment are also provided in Table 3.1.2.

Table 3.1.2: Designated Features Relevant to the Proposed Works

Site	Qualifying Features	Taken Forward for Assessment?
Loch Carron MPA	Flame shell beds; Maerl beds	Yes
Lochs Duich, Long and Alsh MPA	Flame shell beds; Burrowed muds	Yes

Site	Qualifying Features	Taken Forward for Assessment?
Inner Hebrides and Minches SAC	Harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena)*	Yes
Beinn Bhan SAC/SSSI	Alpine and subalpine heaths; Dry heaths; Tall herb communities; Wet heathland and cross-leaved heath, Montane acidic grasslands; Acidic scree; Siliceous rocky slopes	No – All terrestrial features which will not be affected by the proposed marine works.
Coille Mhor SAC/SSSI	Western acidic oak woodland; Dragonfly assemblage; Oligotrophic loch	No – All terrestrial features which will not be affected by the proposed marine works.
Carn a' Bhealaich Mhoir SSSI	Moine	No – Terrestrial feature which will not be affected by the proposed marine works.
Rassal SAC/SSSI	Alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands; Base-rich fens; Hard-water springs depositing lime; Limestone pavements; Mountain willow scrub; Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks; Mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes; Bryophyte assemblage; Lichen assemblage; Flies; Moine; Wood pasture and parkland; Upland assemblage; Upland mixed ash woodland	No – All terrestrial features which will not be affected by the proposed marine works.
Slumbay Island SSSI	Moine	No – Terrestrial feature which will not be affected by the proposed marine works.
Attadale SSSI	Moine	No – Terrestrial feature which will not be affected by the proposed marine works.
Allt nan Carnan SSSI	Upland birch woodland	No – Terrestrial feature which will not be affected by the proposed marine works.

3.2 Biodiversity

3.2.1 Benthic Ecology

The Loch Carron MPA and the Lochs Duich, Long and Alsh MPA are designated for their immobile benthic features (NatureScot, 2026a, b). The Loch Carron MPA is designated for its high density of flame shell and maerl beds, whilst the Lochs Duich, Long and Alsh MPA are designated for flame shell beds and burrowed muds.

In May 2017, Loch Carron was designated as an MPA on an urgent basis in order to aid the recovery of flame shell beds, signifying their sensitivity to disruption (NatureScot, 2026a). Drawing 55-03 displays the mooring areas relative to the Loch Carron MPA. The Loch Carron MPA is located approximately 0.7 km (Area 6) and 1.4 km (Area 7) from the site of proposed works, with the designated features of flame shell and maerl beds lying approximately 1.2 -

3.6 km and 1.8 - 2.2 km from the site, respectively. Thus, these habitats will not be directly affected by the proposed mooring installations. As well, the distance is such that indirect effects due to sedimentation caused by seabed disturbance during mooring installation and operation are highly unlikely.

The Loch Duich, Long and Alsh MPA is located further from the site of proposed works (~8.9 km) and is therefore unlikely to be affected by mooring installation and operation for the same reasons as the Loch Carron MPA.

The sublittoral habitats present in the approach to Loch Kishorn, including the seabed proximal to mooring areas, were surveyed by Dalgleish Associates Ltd (2013). They identified the predominant benthic habitat in this area as burrowed mud, a Priority Marine Feature (PMF) habitat, supporting tall seapen (*Funiculina quadrangularis*), a PMF species. The installation of mooring anchor blocks will cause direct loss of habitat, while anchor chains can drag across the seabed potentially damaging or destroying tall seapen they contact. However, it is recognised that the installation and operation of mooring anchors are highly localised activities, and the locations likely to be affected are small enough to be considered insignificant in terms of the total burrowed mud habitat present in the area. As such, the resultant impacts are minimal on the overall tall seapen population and burrowed mud habitat in Loch Kishorn (Dalgleish Associates Ltd, 2013).

Overall, the effects on benthic ecology associated with installation and operation of the moorings are minor and non-significant.

3.2.2 Marine Mammals

Affric Limited (2025a) were commissioned to deploy acoustic monitoring equipment (F-PODs) over a 12-month period to gain an understanding of cetacean presence within Loch Kishorn. Harbour porpoise and short-beaked common dolphins (*Delphinus delphis*) were both detected to utilise the area, with more frequent detections of dolphins. Dolphin detections were higher during hours of darkness, while porpoise were detected more consistently throughout most hours of the day. Both cetacean species were detected year-round within Loch Kishorn.

The site of the proposed works lies within the Inner Hebrides and Minches SAC (see Drawing 55-03), designated for the occurrence of harbour porpoise on the west coast of Scotland. Harbour porpoise are considered a mobile feature and are granted protection under the Habitats Directive [Council Directive 92/43/EEC] regardless of their position within or outwith of the SAC.

The Inner Hebrides and Minches SAC offers conservation benefits to the wider marine region by providing protection to ~32% of Scotland's overall harbour porpoise population, the highest density in Scotland (NatureScot, 2026c). Harbour porpoise are seen to be in favourable condition within the SAC and any proposed works within this area must comply with the Conservation Objectives to maintain this condition.

Under the conditions of the Conservation Objectives set for the SAC under Regulation 33(2) of the Habitats Directive 1994 (as amended in Scotland), two main pressures relating to the proposed works exist. These may be of detriment to the protected features and are as follows:

- Underwater noise; and
- Death or injury by vessel collision.

The Inner Sound provides an important migratory corridor for harbour porpoise and is now included within the SAC around the Applecross Peninsula, close to Kishorn Port. However, no significant effects from the proposed works are expected on local harbour porpoise. The vessels in use throughout construction and during the operations of the mooring installations are likely to give rise to short-term, temporary increases in engine noise. This would not incur any significant changes to the levels of underwater noise marine mammals in this area are already habituated to and therefore will not cause any significant disturbance.

The likelihood of vessel collisions with marine mammals during the proposed works is considered unlikely. Vessels used during the installation of mooring anchorage will not be fast-moving and hence are unlikely to cause death or injury to marine mammals. Should any sightings of cetaceans occur within the immediate vicinity (<25 metres (m)) of installation, works would be halted to prevent risk of death or injury to these species. Operationally, mooring activities result in vessels being held stationary, and so will not pose a risk of collision with marine mammals.

As such, the proposed works are not anticipated to affect the favourable conservation status of harbour porpoise within the site, pose a significant risk of injury or killing to harbour porpoise, change the distribution of harbour porpoise throughout the site, or impact upon supporting habitats, the availability of prey, or the integrity of the Inner Hebrides and Minches SAC.

3.2.3 Otter

Otter (*Lutra lutra*) are a European Protected Species (EPS) and protected under the Conservation (Natural Habitats and Species) Regulations 1994 (as amended) in Scotland which transposes into Scottish law from the European Community's Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). There have been site-specific surveys carried out between 2005 to 2013 which identified otters to be present in the wider Kishorn area.

Affric Limited (2025b) recently performed a Protected Species Survey in the area surrounding the dry dock including the coastal areas (rock armour and rocky outcrops), to update the baseline knowledge of otter presence and activity near Kishorn Port. [Redacted]

Despite evidence of otter activity, the proposed works are unlikely to impact upon otter habitats, nor cause significant disturbance. The mooring areas are in sufficient water depth that otter are unlikely to forage in these habitats. The presence of vessels and marine plant in this area are a frequent occurrence and are not expected to create an unusual visual or audible disturbance to the local otter community. Similarly, anchored vessels and marine structures are also a typical occurrence near the port. As such, the installation and operation of mooring anchors is highly unlikely to negatively impact otters or their habitat.

3.3 Water Quality

3.3.1 Sedimentation

When the moorings are set onto the seabed there is a potential for disturbance of sediments, similarly the movement of anchor chains on the seabed during operations may disturb

sediments. However, mooring activities will only affect a small area of the seabed to a minor extent. Therefore, sediment disturbance will be very localised, and significant sediment transport as a result of installation or operation is highly unlikely. Furthermore, due to the water depth of this area, sediments in the water column will not reach the surface to affect turbidity or cause a visual disturbance. As such, no changes to water quality associated with sedimentation are predicted as a result of the works.

3.3.2 Pollution Prevention

Potential pollution sources will be present during the installation of moorings from the vessels and marine plant utilised, these include:

- Fuel oil/diesel; and
- Hydraulic fluids and oils.

Fuel oils and diesels will be required for the vessel and plant carrying out the installation works, there is a potential that plant will need to be refuelled during the works, hence fuel may be stored on the vessel. A loss of containment of fuel could occur if stores or fuel tanks are damaged or during refuelling operations.

Cranes or alternative plant likely to be utilised during installation works, will utilise hydraulic fluids and oils, hydraulic hoses can fail and as such there is a potential for loss of containment.

The pollution prevention hierarchy will be employed to minimise the risk of a loss of fuel or hydraulic fuel to sea, specific measures include:

- All fuels will be stored in appropriate containers, with secondary containment provided where practicable;
- The volume of fuel stored will be appropriate for the planned works;
- Vessel and plant maintenance will be kept up to date;
- Hydraulic hoses will be checked for signs of wear or damage at the start of each shift and replaced when necessary;
- Risk Assessment Method Statements will be in place for refuelling activities, and operators trained in them prior to undertaking refuelling activities;
- Appropriately sized and specified spill kit will be available on the vessel; and
- Spill procedure in place, and personnel trained in its implementation.

The Ballast Water Management Convention, MARPOL Annex IV and V will be employed by vessels at all times. As such, impacts on water quality associated with invasive species from ballast water, sewage and garbage disposal are unlikely, and risks will not be increased by the presence of the mooring area.

During operations, the pollution risks posed will be determined by the vessel or marine structure utilising the mooring. It is expected that vessels/structures utilising the moorings will employ appropriate pollution prevention plans and spill response procedures. It is noted that there is no additional risk of pollution associated with a vessel/structure being moored than when it is moving.

Taking account of the mitigation identified in line with best practice to minimise installation and operational risks the chance of a pollution incident causing a significant change in water

quality is unlikely and as such no significant environmental effect to water quality or subsequent impacts on ecological receptors are expected.

3.4 Navigation and Marine Users

In the surrounding waters there is existing vessel traffic from port and aquaculture operations, and occasionally leisure craft operated by members of the public. As such, during installation the increase in vessel traffic will be non-significant. During operation, large vessels and marine structures may occupy mooring space for long periods of time. The width of Loch Kishorn is sufficient that moored objects will not present a significant danger to marine navigation.

Despite the low risk, Notices to Mariners and local notifications to marine users will be issued, giving advance awareness of mooring installation and operation activities, including vessel/structure size and expected period of occupancy. An existing MULMAP (KPL, 2026) outlines KPL's responsibilities in ensuring that local marine users are giving notification of relevant activities by KPL. This includes established communication channels between KPL and other users, including a Fisheries Liaison Officer and Kishorn Community Liaison Group. The MULMAP also establishes mitigation covering the limitation of fishing activities, in particular creeling and bottom trawling, from within mooring areas and active towing pathways. These mitigation measures include defined safety clear zones around moorings to protect fishing gear from entanglement from mooring lines, which also protect mooring vessels and equipment.

4 Policy

This section provides a summary of the General Planning Principles (GENs) set by the Scottish National Marine Plan (Marine Scotland (now Marine Directorate), 2015) and applied to the proposed mooring installations to Kishorn Port. The GENs are set out strategic policies for the sustainable development of marine resources and will interact with other planning and consenting processes within the Scottish marine area. Table 4.1 highlights the GENs that may apply to the determination of the Marine Licence Application for Moorings.

Table 4.1: Applicable Scottish National Marine Plan GENs

General Planning Principles	Requirements	Kishorn Mooring Areas Considerations
GEN 2: Economic benefits	Sustainable development and use which provides economic benefit to Scottish communities is encouraged when consistent with the objectives and policies of this Plan.	The proposed mooring installations ensures that there is an ability to support multiple industrial sectors with the potential to deliver a significant contribution of related benefits to Scottish communities, should the site be utilised frequently.
GEN 3: Social benefits	Sustainable development and use which provides social benefits is encouraged when consistent with the objectives and policies of this Plan.	Retaining the number of moorings in turn should increase the number of supporting sites for multiple industries and therefore should provide an increase in the number of employment opportunities within the local area.
GEN 4: Co-existence	Proposals which enable coexistence with other development sectors and activities within the Scottish marine area are encouraged in planning and decision-making processes, when consistent with policies and objectives of the Plan.	The main driver of the mooring areas is to allow for multiple industries to co-exist at the port. The current development plans will not impede the present aquaculture industry and port operations in the area.
GEN: 7 Landscape/seascape	Marine planners and decision makers should ensure that development and use of the marine environment take seascape, landscape, and visual impacts into account.	Mooring installations and the associated buoys attached to moorings are common visual sights in seascapes and therefore do not pose any variable impacts on the seascape. Temporary visual impacts may be considered in the form of a moored vessel.
GEN 8: Coastal process and flooding	Developments and activities in the marine environment should be resilient to coastal change and flooding and not have unacceptable adverse impact on coastal processes or contribute to coastal flooding.	Mooring installations are being made away from the shoreline in deep water so do not pose any risk to coastal processes and/or flooding.
GEN 9: Natural Heritage	Development and use of the marine environment must: (a) Comply with legal requirements for protected areas and protected species.	The moorings do not result in any significant impacts on Priority Marine Features as stated in Section 3: Environmental Assessment and

General Planning Principles	Requirements	Kishorn Mooring Areas Considerations
	(b) Not result in significant impact on the national status of Priority Marine Features. Protect and, where appropriate, enhance the health of the marine area.	Considerations. The mooring area lies within a protected area, but no significant effects are predicted.
GEN 10: Invasive Non-Native Species	Opportunities to reduce the introduction of invasive non-native species to a minimum or proactively improve the practice of existing activity should be taken when decisions are being made.	Moorings will be installed into the landscape clean so will not introduce any invasive non-native species. Vessels used during installation will adhere to the Ballast Water Management Convention.
GEN 12: Water Quality and Resource	Developments and activities should not result in a deterioration of the quality of waters to which the Water Framework Directive, Marine Strategy Framework Directive or other related Directives apply.	Mooring installations themselves will not breach any regulations of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the resulting vessels utilising these moorings will adhere to appropriate pollution prevention best practice to avoid effects, as discussed in Section 3.3.
GEN 13 Noise	Development and use in the marine environment should avoid significant adverse effects of man-made noise and vibration, especially on species sensitive to such effects.	Mooring installation will not produce any adverse noise impacts.

Further policies outlined in the Scottish National Marine Plan Sector 13. Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries are considered below in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Applicable Scottish National Marine Plan Policy in Sector 13. Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries

Objective	Kishorn Mooring Areas Considerations
1: Safeguarded access to ports and harbours and navigational safety.	Once moored, large vessels and structures have their movement significantly limited as they are under tension from multiple points. Therefore, the operation of mooring areas at Kishorn Port will allow large vessels/structures to remain in proximity to the port for extended periods of time without any significant risk to navigation and safety of other vessels.
2: Sustainable growth and development of ports and harbours as a competitive sector, maximising their potential to facilitate cargo movement, passenger movement and support other sectors.	The availability of mooring areas proximal to Kishorn Port will provide additional facilities to port users, such as the ability to maintain large vessels/structures away from quays but close to the port. This development will aid in the scope and efficiency of port operations.

5 Conclusions

The installation and operation of moorings for use by KPL and their clients within Loch Kishorn has been assessed for their potential to impact the environment. It is determined that the use of moorings in this area presents minimal impacts on designated sites, and negligible impacts on biodiversity, water quality, traffic and navigation, and other topics considered.

The installation and operation of mooring anchors for KPL have also been evaluated for alignment with Scottish policy, particularly the National Marine Plan. Evidence is presented that demonstrates how the proposed works will benefit port operations, socially and economically, by expanding the facilities offered by the port. Such development also creates opportunity for multiple industries to function cooperatively and efficiently at KPL.

In conclusion, the proposed mooring works provide economic benefits to the local and wider community, and do not present a risk to the environment in installation or operation.

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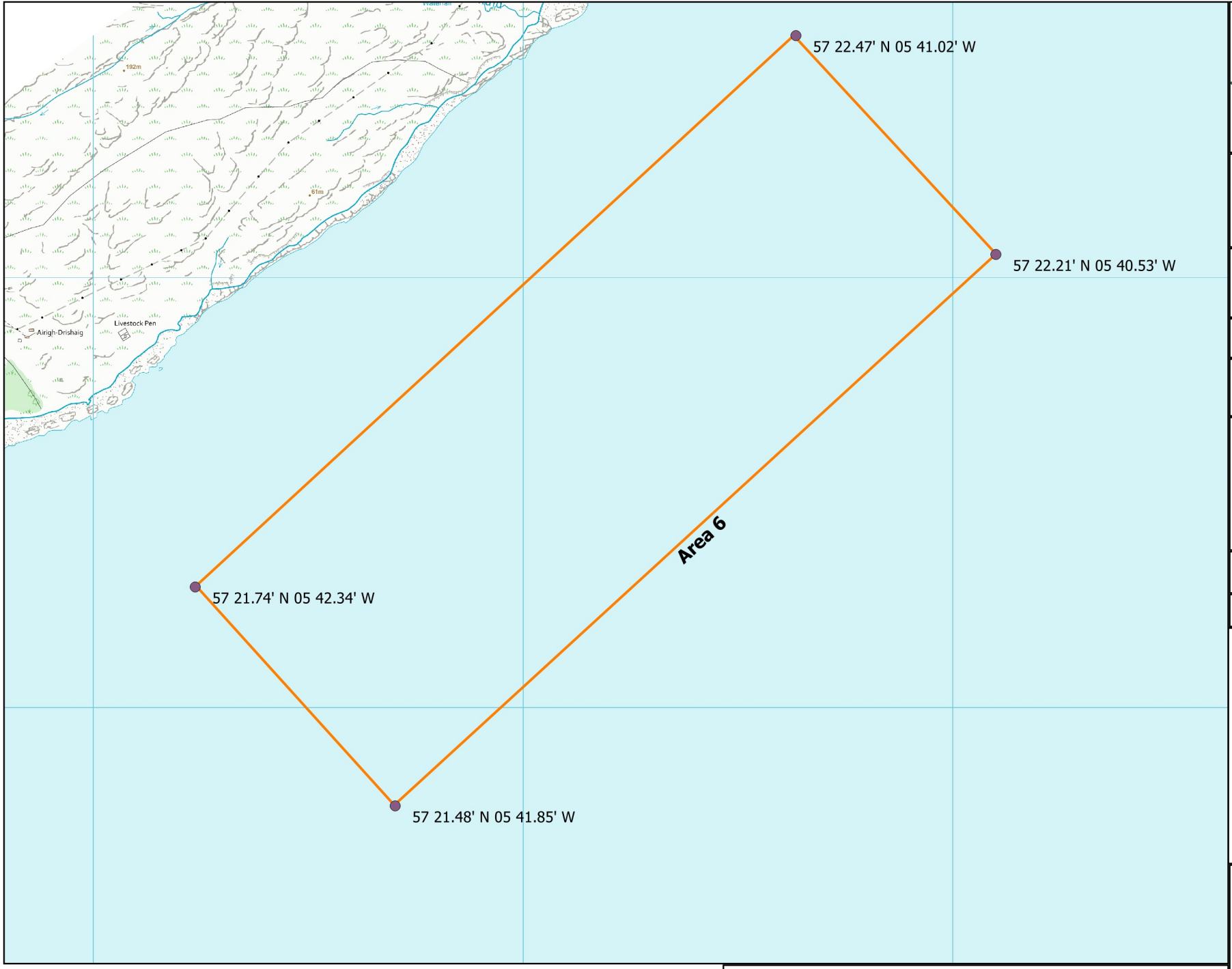
7 Glossary

Acronym	Definition
EPS	European Protected Species
GENs	General Planning Principles
km	kilometres
KPL	Kishorn Port Limited
m	metres
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MULMAP	Marine User Liaison & Mitigation Action Plan
NMPi	National Marine Plan interactive
PMF	Priority Marine Feature
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Drawings



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Title: Drawing 55-02-01 Mooring Area 6

Projection: OSGB 1936/British National Grid EPSG: 27700

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Legend

- Tidal Water
- Coordinates
- Area 6 Boundary

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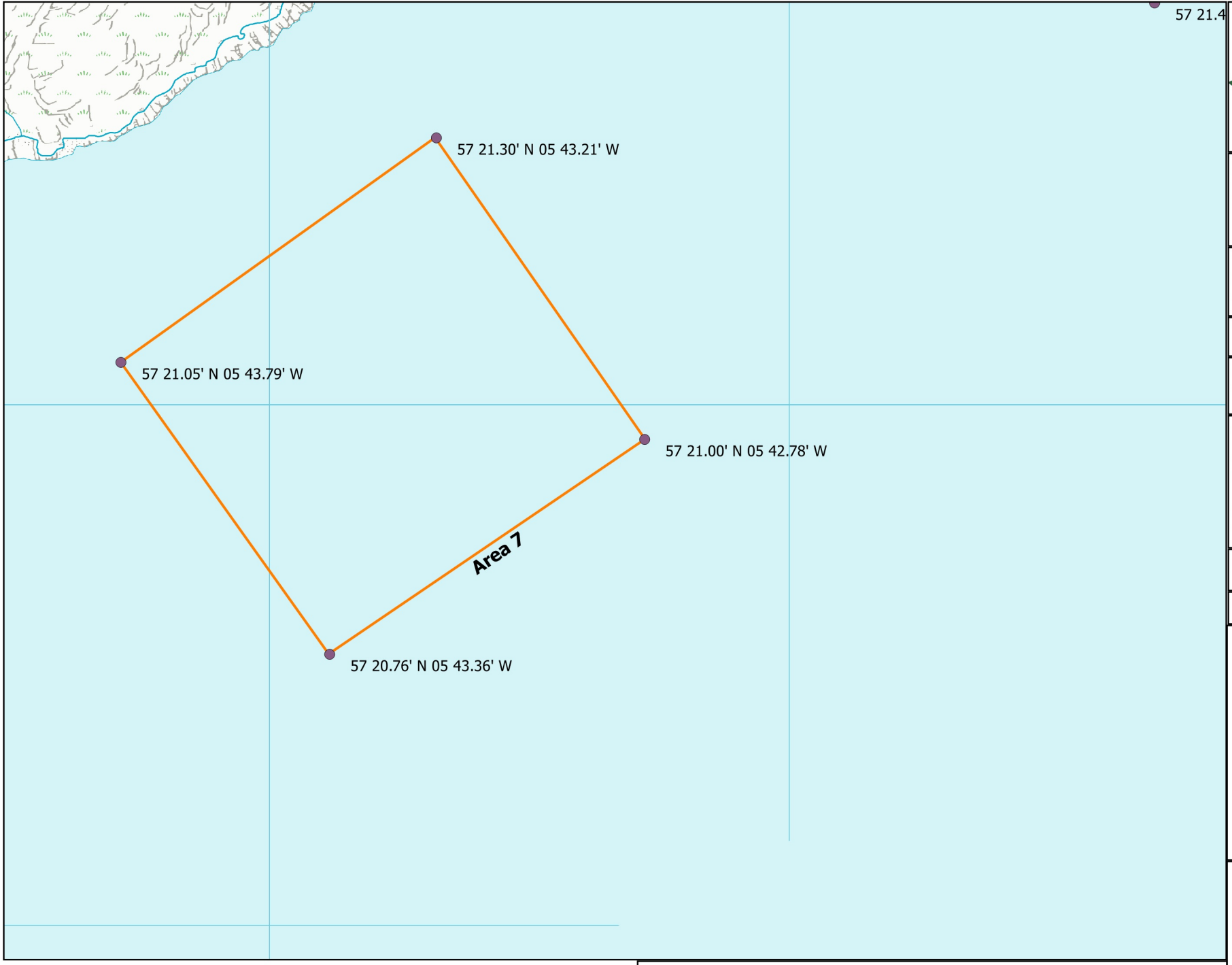

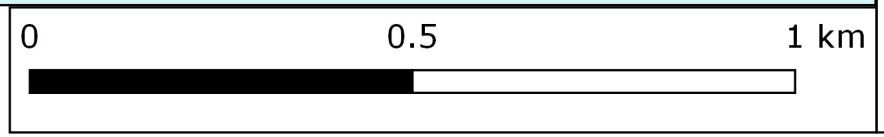

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Title: Drawing 55-02-02 Mooring Area 7

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Legend

- Tidal Water
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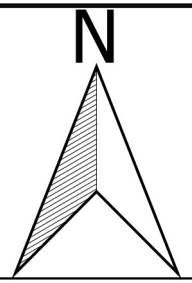

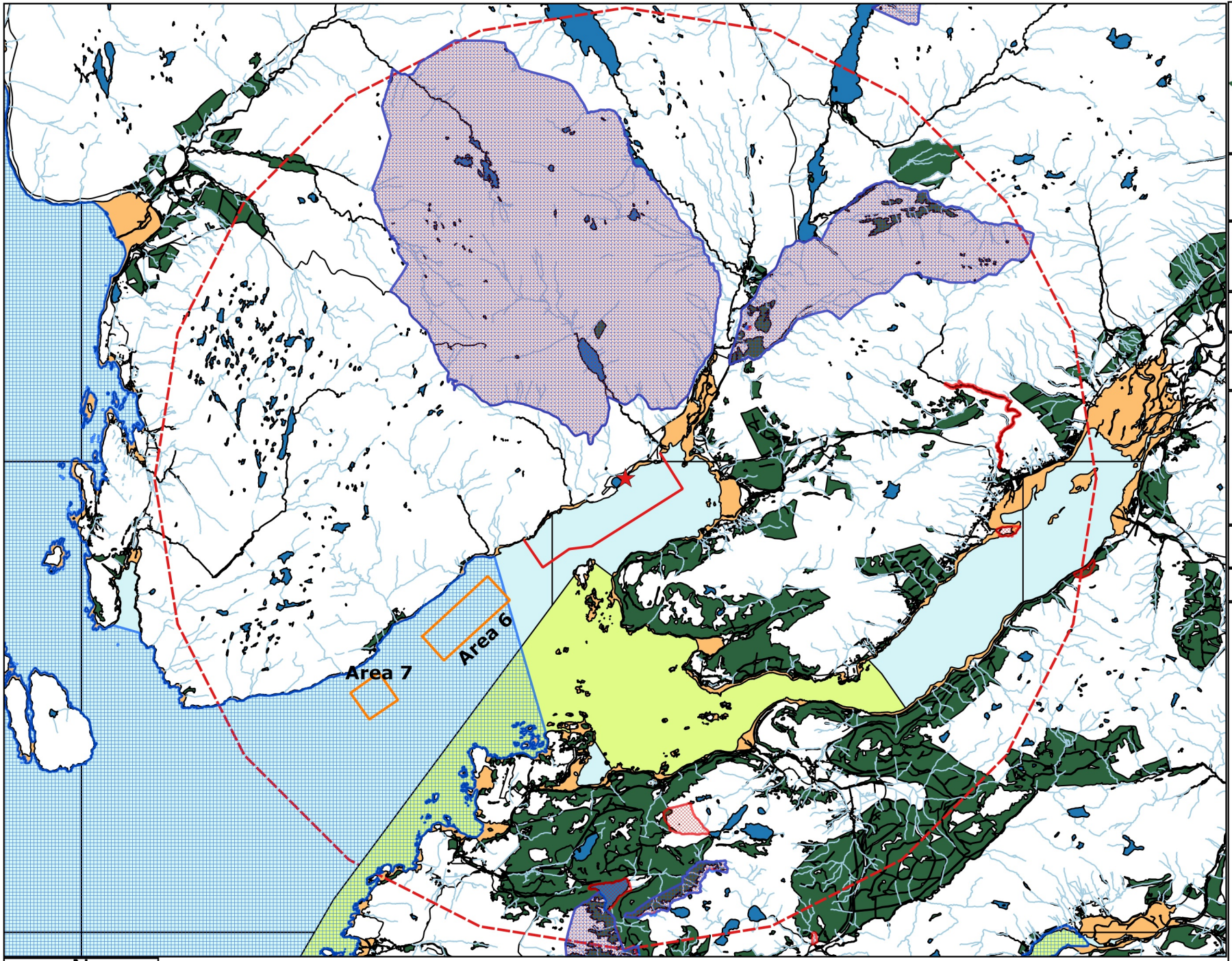

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Title: Drawing 55-03 Designated Sites

Projection: OSGB 1936/British National Grid EPSG: 27700

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Drawn by: Innes Beaton

Legend

- Kishorn Location
- KPL Crown Estate Lease 17/10/2016
- 10 Km Buffer
- Marine Protected Area (MPA)
- Special Area Conservation (SAC)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Area 6 Boundary
- Area 7 Boundary
- Foreshore
- Fresh Water
- Rivers & Streams
- Roads
- Tidal Water
- Woodland