

# **Supporting information**

**Marine Licence Application for a Shellfish Site.**

**Auliston Point, Loch Sunart**

**April 2020**

**Fassfern Mussels Ltd**

**Garvan Glen,**

**Garvan**

**Fort William**

**PH33 7AW**

**Figure 1** Map showing the location of the proposed site in Loch Sunart.



### Site location

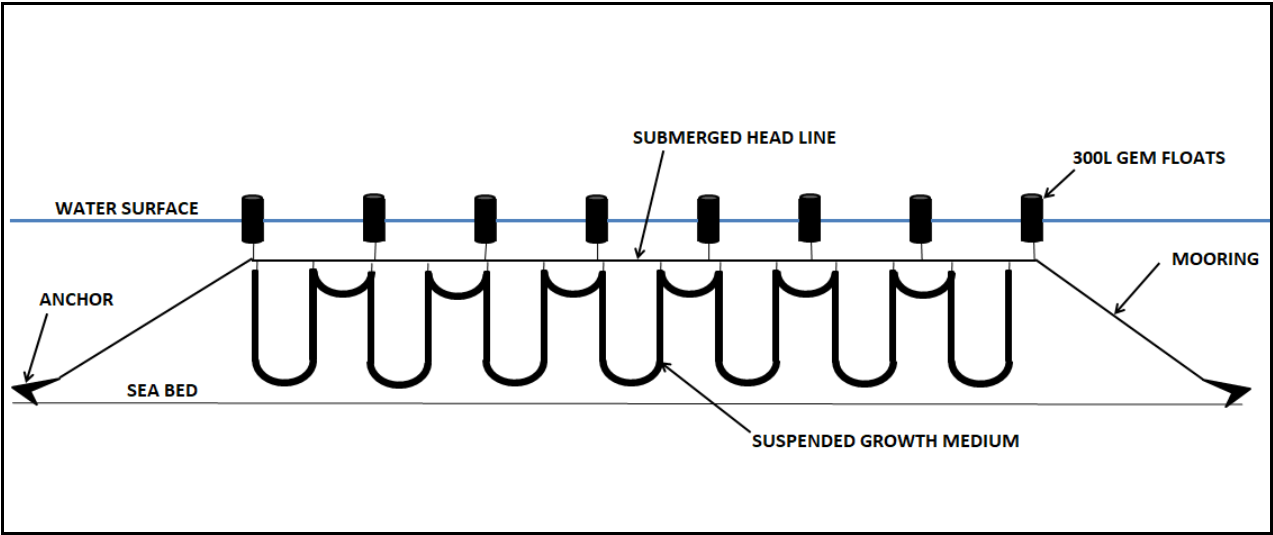
The location of the proposed development is on the south shore of Loch Sunart, to the east of Auliston Point, at the mouth of Loch Sunart as it opens up into the Sound of Mull.

### Site equipment

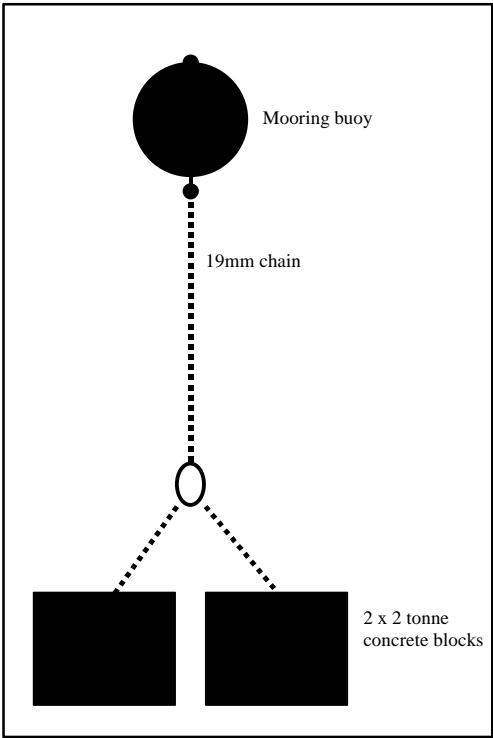
The centre of the proposed equipment is 56°39.013'N, 5°59.133'W / NM 55789 58040 / 56.65021 -5.98554.

The proposal is to install two 220m longlines. As the site is more exposed than any other site that Fassfern Mussels have operated before, it is proposed to install equipment which is utilised on offshore sites. These are 220m x 0.5m longlines, which will consist of a single 32mm submerged head-rope, with floatation in the form of Gem 300lt longline floats. The moorings will consist of 40mm rope with 2 x 6000kg concrete blocks or 500kg anchors with 27m of 32mm chain. The moorings will measure approximately 140m to the west end of the longlines and approximately 140m to the east end. The longlines will be installed approximately 30m apart. The total area of seabed within the moorings is 30m x 500m (15,000m<sup>2</sup>). Figure 2a shows the proposed longline and mooring construction. One boat mooring will be installed at NM 55640 57954 (56.649387, -5.9878923 / 56°38.962'N, 5°59.274'W). Figure 2b shows the boat mooring construction.

**Figure 2b** - Diagram of longline and mooring structure

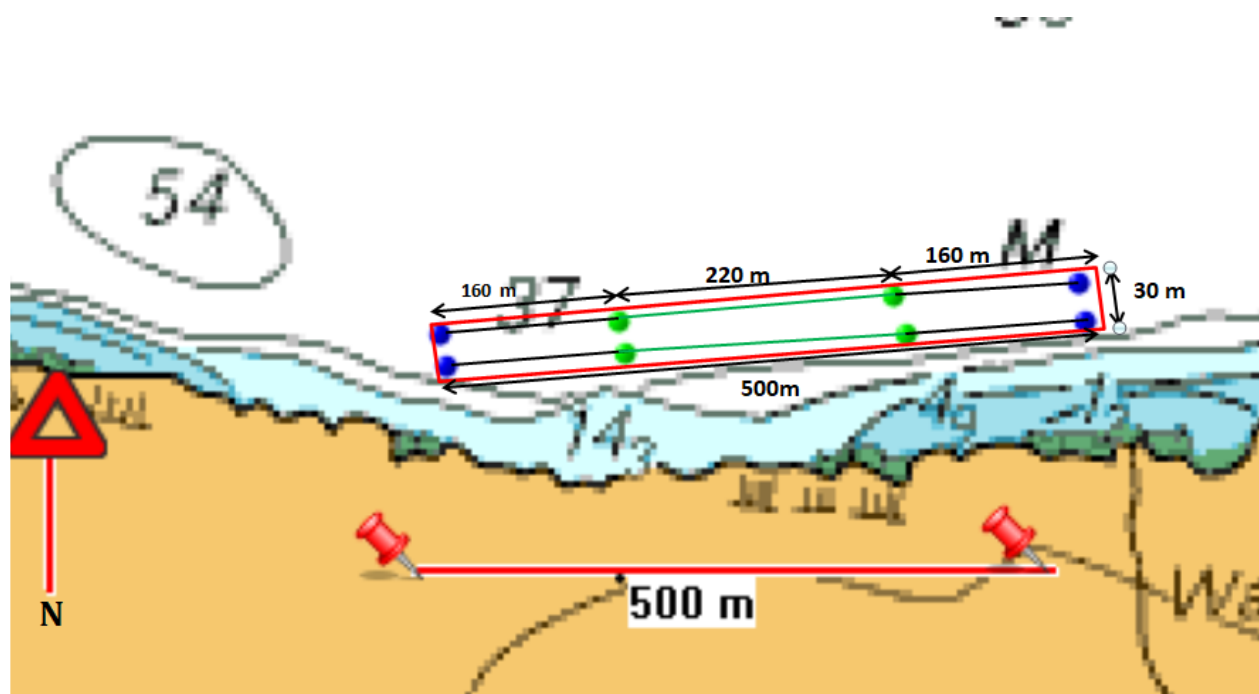


**Figure 2b** - Diagram of boat mooring structure



The diagram illustrates the mooring system for the 1000-tonne vessel. It shows two parallel horizontal lines representing the longlines. The top longline has three segments: a 140m segment from the left mooring to the first turning point, a 220m segment between the two turning points, and a 140m segment from the second turning point to the right mooring. The bottom longline is parallel to the top one, with a vertical distance of 30m between them. The moorings are represented by black dots at the ends of the lines. A legend indicates that the dashed line represents the 'Longline' and the black dot represents the 'Mooring'. The text 'NOT TO SCALE' is present in the bottom left corner.

### Figure 4 Location



## **Production Cycle**

It is proposed to install the equipment into the site in early July 2020 to facilitate the movement of spat on ropes before the spat is too large to move by August. Future spat collection will be carried out at the site by deploying spat catching rope in the April / May in time to catch the spring spat settlement which occurs naturally in the loch. The mussels will then be on-grown for 2 to 3 years with harvesting beginning in 2022. The mussels will be harvested in the following 12-month period and the cycle will be repeated with spat collectors being deployed again on the empty lines.

## **Commercial Fishing**

No dialogue has been undertaken with the fishermen directly as Fassfern Mussels believe this is one of very few suitable sites available for shellfish farming for the following reasons:

- Fassfern Mussels is not a large company and does not have a large infrastructure or range of equipment available. As a result we require a site which is reasonably close to shore access and which is not too geographically distant to the infrastructure already utilised.
- The Marine Special Area for Conservation and the Marine Protected Area designations in Loch Sunart further restrict the choice of sites which would be available for development as a shellfish farm.
- This development competes in the demand for spatial resources, and as mentioned above, there are very few locations that are available for development for shellfish aquaculture due to the constraints imposed on aquaculture sites. This site has favourable depth and shelter characteristics for a shellfish farm. It has reduced visual impact due to the secluded location away from roads and houses and in the specific case of Loch Sunart, dictates that the development can only be situated in areas where there is no reef habitat, thus, over mud habitat which is the area utilised by fishermen.

## **Navigational Issues for other loch users**

Preliminary enquiries have been made to the Northern Lighthouse Board and no issues regarding navigation have been raised. Marking requirements will be given as a result of this application process.