

Design Proposals

Proposed Hotel, Leisure and Lodges Development
Tom Liath / Tom Ard, Dunbeg, nr. Oban



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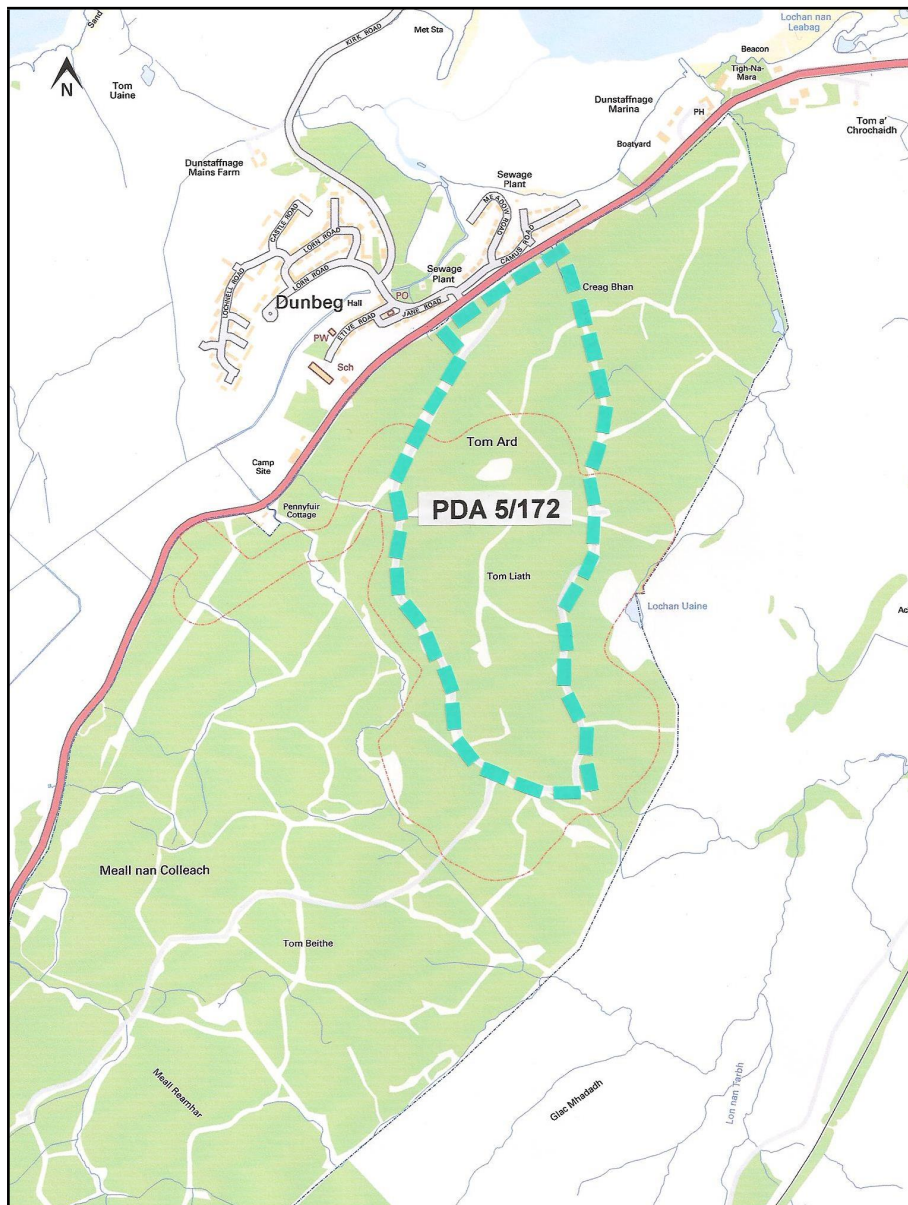
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1 Design and Access Statement

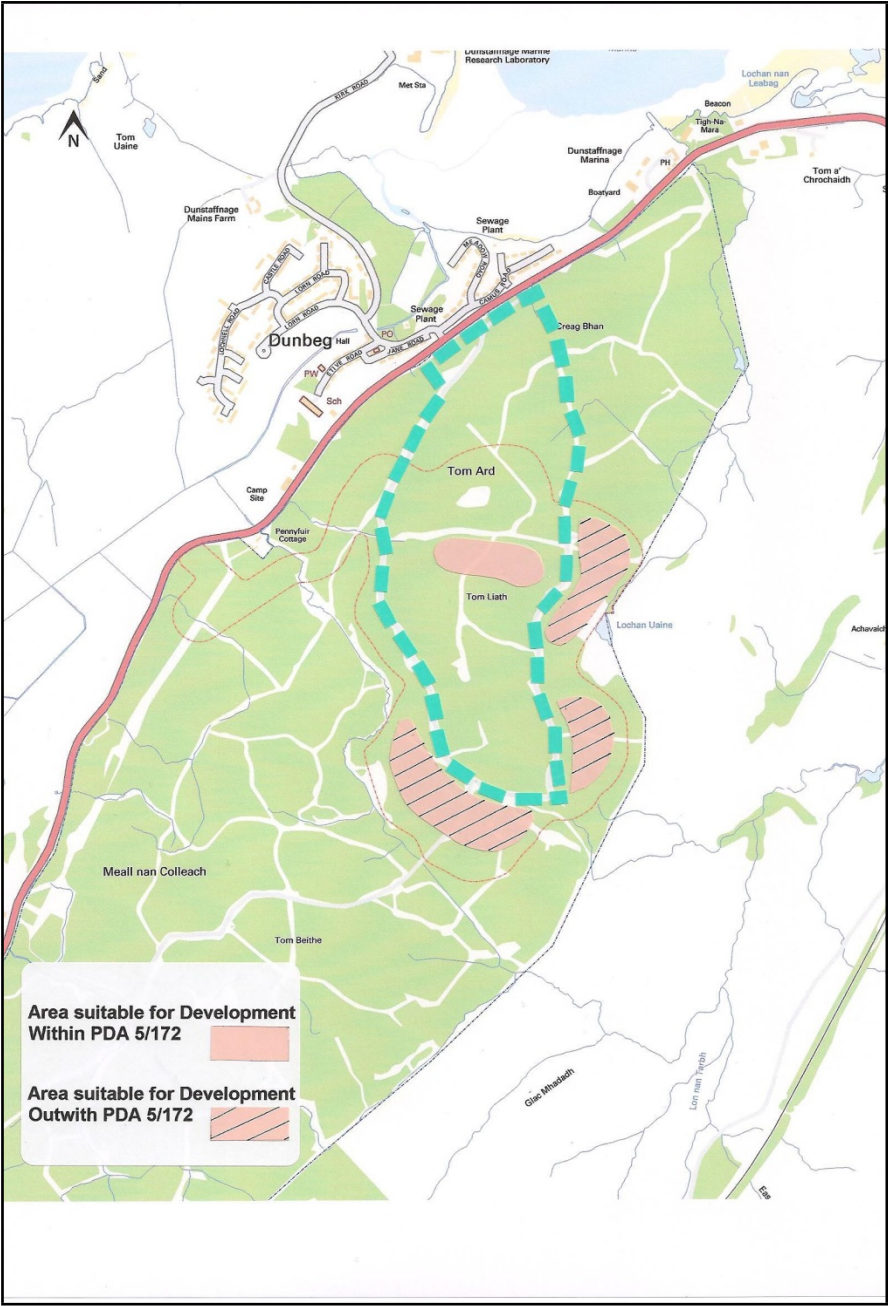
LOCATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The site is elevated and located in a forested hillside. It is bounded on all sides by a landscape of similar characteristics. To the northwest the land slopes steeply towards the A85 Trunk Road, beyond which lies the village of Dunbeg. The site is designated as 'Countryside Around Settlements' and PDA 5/172 in the current 'Argyll and Bute Local Plan' (adopted 2009). The site is not located within any important landscape designations. The town of Oban lies approximately two and a half miles to the south west and the village of Connel lies just over two miles to the east.



SITE APPRAISAL

The site is located in a steeply sloping forested hillside on the south side of the A85 trunk road at the village of Dunbeg. Examination of the site contours both on the ground and by way of contour mapping reveal steep gradients within the PDA boundaries and as such has a limiting effect on the areas suitable for built development. The saddle between Tom Ard and Tom Liath offers the only opportunity for built development however three other areas immediately adjacent the PDA boundaries where ground levels are relatively flatter have been identified. Two of these lie to the east and one to the south. Early discussions with Argyll & Bute Council confirmed that development of these areas out with the PDA boundary was a possibility given the limiting development opportunities which the PDA site offered. It was confirmed that these areas would be classed as a minor departure from the current local plan in the event of a planning application being submitted.



ACCESS

Prior to considering development proposals for site PDA 5/172 early discussions took place with Argyll & Bute Council and Transport Scotland to consider locations where access might be located which would serve the development proposals by the West Highland Housing Association for the expansion of the village of Dunbeg on the north side of the A85 and the Tom Liath / Tom Ard development proposals on the south side. After considerable investigation and consultation a joint application by the West Highland Housing Association and Arcade Building Services Ltd was submitted for the construction of a roundabout at a location known as Halfway House which lies approximately 800 metres west of the existing access to the village. The Masterplan proposals for the Tom Liath / Tom Ard development formed part of the submission. Detailed planning approval for the roundabout was obtained on the 19th April 2013.

A 6 metre wide forest haul road circumnavigates almost the entire outer edge of the PDA site. Levels are such that it is possible to provide a new link route between Tom Liath and Tom Ard thus making access within the site much more easily accessible. This existing route is accessed from the A85 approximately 200 metres east of the T- junction access to Dunbeg and has been in existence for many years. This will be closed off to vehicular traffic upon completion of the development and used solely as a combined pedestrian and cycling route. The main access route for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians will be from the proposed new roundabout at Halfway House. Part of this route already exists due to the necessity to construct a forest haul road early February 2012 in order to retrieve a considerable area of windfall after storm winds during the previous month.

SITE CONSTRAINTS

The site topography has an overwhelming influence in relation to the final Masterplan solution due to the steep contours of the hillside. As before described this does limit the areas for built development within the PDA site resulting in areas immediately adjacent being considered in order to achieve a meaningful overall development and one which can justify the considerable costs involved in forming appropriate access from the A85.

The road level at the proposed roundabout is approximately 10.00 metres Ordnance Survey Datum. The level at which the proposed new access route intersects with the upgraded forest haul road is 75.00 Ordnance Survey Datum, this representing a difference in height of approximately 65 metres.

Due to its location within a forest hillside there will be the requirement for all built properties to be at a suitable distance from the edge of the tree belt to avoid any damage due to windfall.

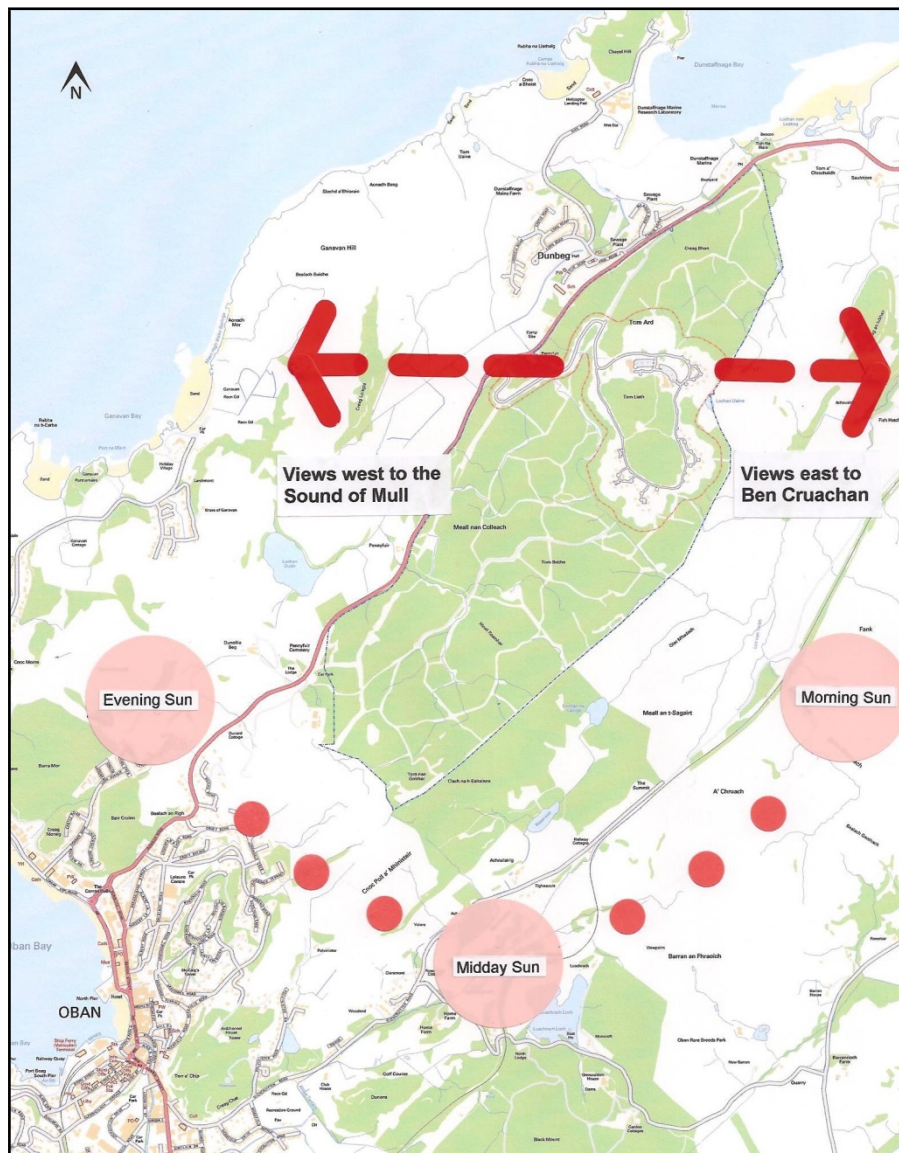
The ruins of an ancient chapel and burial ground, **Cladh Uaine**, are located within the PDA site towards the western edge of the site.

ASPECT

The site is located on the west coast of Scotland amid spectacular coastal and mountain scenery. The sea lochs of Loch Etive, Loch Linnhe, the Sound of Mull which provides the ferry routes to the Western Isles, the mountains of Mull and Morven to the west and Ben Cruachan to the east all combine to provide tourist and locals alike with breath taking scenery.

The elevated location of site PDA 5/172 offers the opportunity to provide panoramic viewing from various locations. To this extent it is appropriate to consider the location of the hotel within the area of land suitable for development in the saddle between Tom Liath and Tom Ard with the bedrooms facing either due west with views over the Sound of Mull or east with views to Loch Etive and Ben Cruachan. At this location the Hotel will benefit from the sun over a large percentage of the day and especially throughout the summer months. The leisure section of buildings by nature of their activity and the lodges can be more inward looking.

At some point in the past it has been established that Tom Ard, O. S. Datum 127.00, did offer the locals a viewing point. This has since disappeared when the forest hillside was planted out and it would therefore seem appropriate for this to be restored by felling an area of trees at the summit.



DEVELOPER'S REQUIREMENTS

Oban, a harbour town situated on the northwest coast of the Argyll mainland, is also the main ferry terminal and Gateway to the Western Isles. Tourism is the main industry which supports the local economy however over the last few years Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratory at Dunbeg has experienced considerable expansion and now is one of the UK's leading research and educational Institutes.

At present Oban and the surrounding area have few hotels at the upper end of the market. Indeed the only hotels with 5 star rating are located over towards the Appin Peninsula at Isle of Eriska and Airds at Appin. However none of these hotels have the ability to host conferences. Currently the Corran Halls on the Esplanade at Oban is the only venue for such events but lacks the additional facilities which an hotel can provide.

In order to meet this demand it is the Developer's intention to construct a high quality Hotel at Tom Liath/ Tom Ard complete with Spa, Leisure and Conference facilities.

The development site would also incorporate upmarket tourist lodges and would appear and operate in a similar manner to those at Cameron House on Loch Lomond. Administration offices would allow these to be managed separately from the hotel if necessary.

The developer wishes to encourage both tourists and locals to enjoy walking and cycling within the forest area. New woodland walkways would be created, complete with picnic areas at certain locations.

A small toilet will be constructed for the use of walkers and cyclists.

The developer is aware of the proposed golf course development at Saulmore and in the event that this project is completed a footpath link to this facility could be created.

THE DESIGN PROCESS

THE AIM

The aim is to create an innovative **re-interpretation of traditional Scottish architecture by developing high quality modern designs** which complement the character of the locality. The Developer's brief seeks to encourage designs which are "distinctive and responsive to their setting", whilst the overall development requires to be sympathetic in terms of topography, scale, proportion and materials.

SCALE

The Hotel and Leisure facilities offer the opportunity to have a variable height of roof ridges both by design and by variations in topography. The brief allows for the bedrooms to be contained in two floors above entrance level with perhaps a smaller third floor of bedrooms to create additional interest in the overall roof scape. It is also a requirement that the ridge of the Hotel should be below the summits of both Tom Liath and Tom Ard.

The lodges would be a combination of one and one and a half storey.

The objective is to create a low density development where the dominant feature is the landscape. The developer's brief requires the buildings to be designed to respond to the topography of their location, orientation and views.

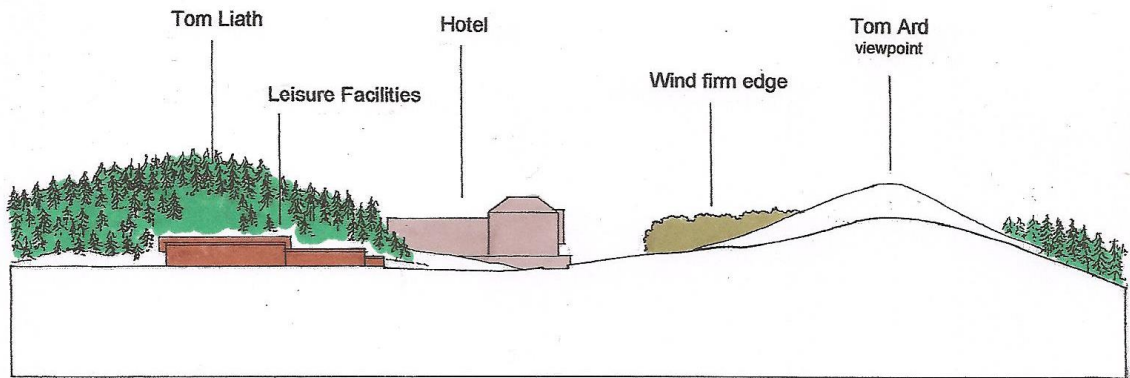
THE MASTERPLAN

The foregoing studies provide the background to the resultant Masterplan for the successful development of the site PDA 5/172 located in the forest hillside at Dunbeg. The Hotel, nestling between the summits of Tom Liath and Tom Ard, affords spectacular views westwards to the Sound of Mull and eastwards to Ben Cruachan and Loch Etive. The Leisure building hugs the eastern shoulder of Tom Liath and the tourist lodges formed in 3 separate clusters around the forest area. A single storey administration centre has been incorporated for the management of the estate.

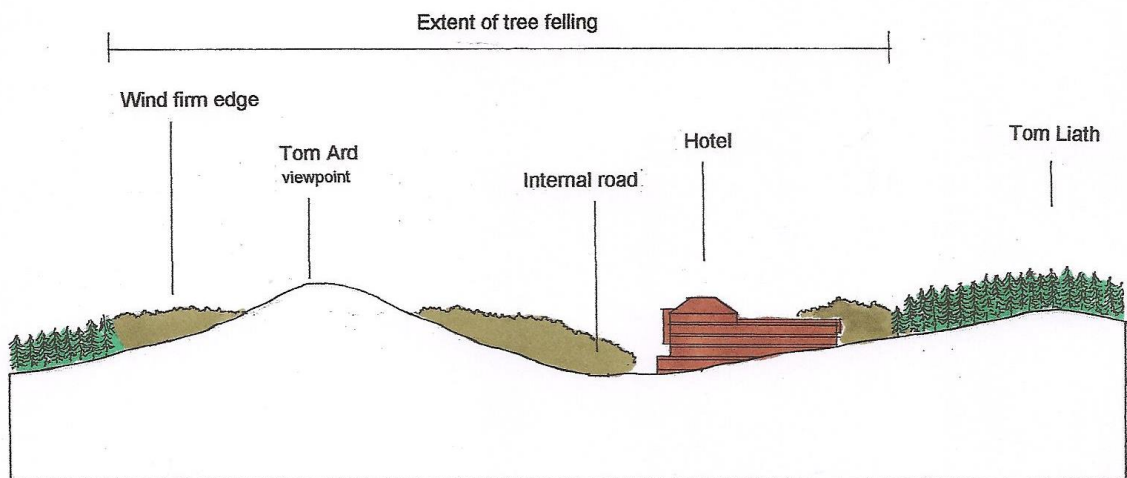
Access to the development is from a roundabout on the A85 up through the forest to a roadway which forms a loop around the development. Car parking for the various building uses has been provided to the appropriate Council requirements.

Forest footpaths have been created to the chapel remains to the south of Tom Liath all of which is supported by Historic Scotland. Footpath links have also been formed to a restored viewpoint at Tom Ard all as agreed with Scottish Natural Heritage. Toilets for walkers and cyclists have also been incorporated together with a small area for visitor parking.



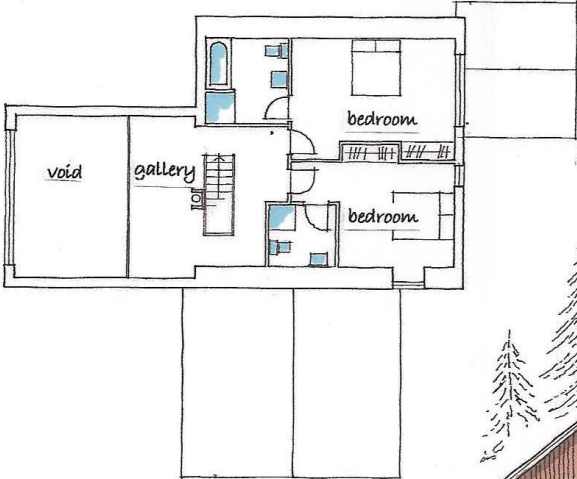


SECTION LOOKING WEST

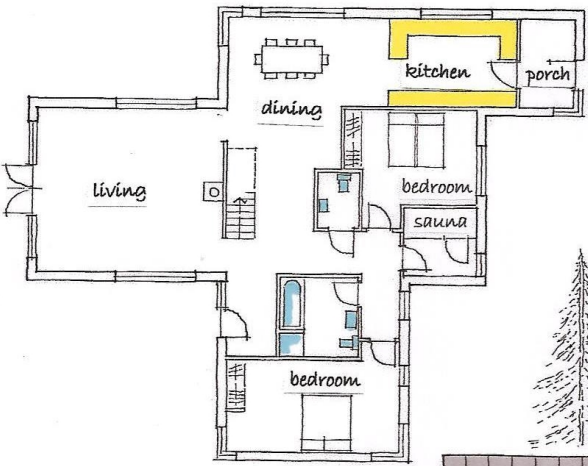
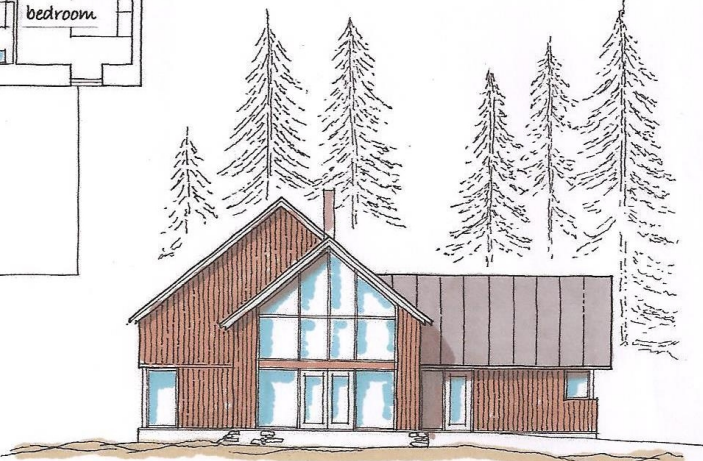


SECTION LOOKING EAST

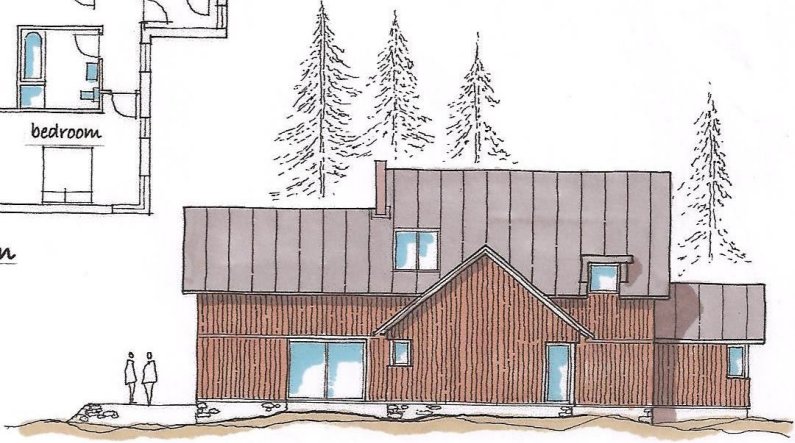
NOTIONAL TYPICAL LODGE



First Floor Plan



Ground Floor Plan



MATERIALS SELECTION

The materials for the various buildings will be selected from a traditional palette. Walls will be predominantly clad in render or timber. Natural stone will also be used and in particular for the stone base of the lodges. Roofs will be finished either in slate with lead detailing or an appropriate metal roofing material.

SUSTAINABILITY, ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND ENVIRONMENT

All buildings will be designed to have high levels of thermal insulation that achieves the current best practice. All windows will be double glazed with low emissivity glazing. Where possible, the location and orientation of the buildings will be considered with a view to optimizing south facing glazing and creating sun spaces. North facing glazed areas to be kept to a minimum where possible.

As part of the design process, systems of passive and active solar energy and micro power generation will be assessed and investigated to establish feasibility.

Where possible, materials and labour to be used in the construction will be sourced locally thus minimising transportation impacts and reducing the total embodied energy of the project.

Select materials which have low embodied energy and are from sustainable sources.

Select materials on the basis of durability and low maintenance to reduce future maintenance impacts.

The use of recycled building materials will be considered e.g. insulation materials, hardcore etc.

Off-site production techniques should be employed to minimise the impact of construction on site where possible. This will be balanced against the likely costs and impacts of transporting bulk assemblies.

The use of mass concrete will be restricted to foundations and floor slabs and its batching and placement controlled under a waste minimisation and control of pollution strategy.

In addition to these measures, waste products from the construction and from the completed development will be carefully considered to ensure that these are minimised and properly managed.

ACCESS STATEMENT

There are no barriers to movement around the site. The loop road follows a gentle gradient throughout with all access surfaces being of a smooth finish to aid mobility.

Car parks at both the Hotel and Leisure facilities will be gently graded to allow ease of movement between vehicle and buildings. All footpaths will be designed to achieve shallow gradients throughout.

No steps will be located at the entrance to the ground floor of the Hotel and Leisure buildings. Vertical circulation to the various floor levels within the Hotel will be supplemented by the installation of passenger lifts.

The floor plan layouts of the Hotel and Leisure facilities will explore an innovative approach to design for the elderly and infirm.

Similarly no steps will be located at the entrance to the lodges. Accommodation within will be designed to comply with current Building Standards incorporating a bedroom and toilet facilities on the ground floor for the use of the disabled.

Throughout a minimal difference between external ground level and the internal floor level will reduce any threshold ramping.

2

Built Heritage and Archaeological Assessment

LOCATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The site is elevated, located in a forested hillside on the south side of the A85 which has an average road level datum of 10.00 metres. There are two summits within the site, namely Tom Ard and Tom Liath at approximately 127.00 metres. The ground falls in all directions from these hill tops with a small saddle between both at a level of approximately 100.00 metres. The site is designated as 'Countryside Around Settlements' and is designated as site PDA 5/172 in the Argyll and Bute Local Plan (2009). The site is not located within any important landscape designations nor is it designated for nature conservation purposes. There is a scheduled ancient monument within the site and is located towards the western boundary of this area.

The village of Dunbeg lies immediately to the north of the A85 trunk road and at a level generally some 80 metres below the proposed development.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The development proposals comprise a Hotel and Leisure Facilities and associated car parking, Lodges for tourists, administration building, and external toilets for use of walkers and cyclists. These uses are compatible with those designated for the PDA 5/172 site contained in the current adopted Argyll and Bute Local Plan. It is also intended that the extended forest area will be available to tourists, walkers and cyclists and to this extent the creation of forest paths, through time, will form part of the overall project. Furthermore it is anticipated that footpath links to the ruins of Cladh Uhaine Chapel will also be formed.

SETTING OF CLADH UHAINE CHAPEL RUINS

The setting of the chapel remains is largely defined by its location in a clearing within a dense modern forest towards the western sector of the PDA site at a level datum of approximately 115.00 metres. The current forest haul road, which will ultimately be the basis for the formation of the internal access route, is at a level some 15 metres or so below. It is known that many people have been unable to locate these ruins largely due to the dense nature of the forest.

IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The chapel ruins as described above are located within a dense forest and as such are totally hidden from view. The proposed siting of the Hotel and Leisure facilities is such that, even without forestation, these buildings would not be visible from the chapel ruins due to the hill top of Tom Liath. Similarly, the cluster of Lodges to the north-east cannot be viewed. The two separate clusters at the southern end are at a level some 18 metres below separated by dense forest.

As such it is considered that the proposals would have no significant impact in the setting of the monument.



Nothing is known of the history of this chapel, but gravestones were still visible in 1868-9, when officers of the Ordnance Survey were informed that interments had taken place within recent years.⁴ It has been suggested that this is the site of a chapel dedicated to St

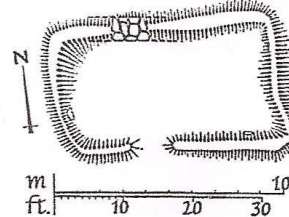


Fig. 109. Chapel and burial-ground, Cladh Uaine (No. 235); plan

Maclrubha of which the name appears to be preserved in a late 16th-century document. In this document the Pennyland of 'Kilmorrie alias (alias) Clazemorrie (Cladhmorrie)' is included in a list of properties lying in the vicinity of Dunstaffnage Castle (No. 287), but the precise location of the land in question has not been established.⁵

Chapel and Burial – ground

Cladh Uaine

CONSULTATION – HISTORIC SCOTLAND

A site visit took place with Historic Scotland to review and assess the impact of the development proposals on the setting of the ancient monument. The monument as it exists appears as a raised overgrown mound, approximately one metre wide which forms the rectangular form of the original chapel. The western edge is relatively close to the edge of the forest clearing.

After discussion it was concluded by the officers that the principle of development of the Tom Liath/Tom Ard site as set out in the masterplan proposals would have little impact on the setting of the chapel ruins. The officers concluded that “**even if or when** this forestry is cleared, it appears unlikely that the views to the north, south and east would be significant elements in the setting of the monument. Views westwards towards Dunbeg and the sea appear to be the dominant elements in this setting. It is probable that views towards the chapel site from the west are limited by the steeply sloping topography.”

It is proposed to retain much of the extant forestry as part of the development.

In order to limit risk to the monument it is proposed to undertake some limited felling out with the schedule area in the clearing. The monitoring and management of the bracken growth and tree regeneration in this area will also be carried out (these works will require Schedule Monument Consent).

The formation of forest footpaths to the chapel ruins is welcomed and the provision of an interpretation panel for the chapel site could potentially be located on the small knoll to the north of the monument. This location is considered appropriate as it would allow a full view of the remains.

CONSULTATION – ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Very little is known of the history of this chapel however gravestones were apparently still visible in 1868-89.

Later cultivation has obliterated all traces of the burial ground. It is known that the west of Argyll is very rich with archaeological finds and given that the chapel and burial ground were located at the top of a hill, it would be reasonable to assume that other buildings may have existed in the general area. The area of marsh ground adjacent to where the proposed new roundabout is to be formed is the location where the sea inlet at Dunstaffnage Bay used to extend to, many years ago.

The masterplan proposals were presented to West of Scotland Archaeology Society and it was considered that the site layout in itself did not present any problems. However it was agreed that at the detailed planning application stage it would be necessary for an archaeologist to undertake a walkover site survey of the areas to be used for development. In the event that any finds were discovered i.e. remains of a house block – there would be a requirement for the area to be re-planned to retain them or work halted in order that a full survey be recorded.

West of Scotland Archaeology Society confirms that the introduction of woodland footpaths and interpretation panels would be welcome.

3

Transport Assessment

TRAVEL CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed development is located on the south side of the A85 trunk road immediately adjacent the village of Dunbeg. The town of Oban lies some 3 miles to the west and the village of Connel 2 miles to the east. The site is in an elevated location approximately 90 metres above road level.

THE TOURIST

The proposals are for a tourist related development which includes a hotel, leisure complex and lodges. Whilst the facilities will be available to local people the majority of users are likely to travel from afar. As a result of its rural location it must be anticipated that a large proportion of visitors will travel by means of the private car. There is however a railway station at Connel and terminal at Oban and it is understood that from the Spring of 2014 the train service between Glasgow and Oban will be greatly increased. It is accepted that a connection from these stations to the development will be required however this could be by courtesy bus, public bus service or by taxi.

A regular bus service between Glasgow and Oban operates on a daily basis and has the additional advantage of passing in close proximity to the development.

Oban airport is hopeful of being able to operate in the near future a daily service to Glasgow airport which in terms of tourists from further afield is an attractive proposition with likely private hired car option for completion of the journey.

LOCAL VISITORS

Local visitors from the surrounding area are more than likely to travel by car. A cycle track from Oban to Connel and beyond is planned alongside the A85 and when completed will provide the opportunity to link into the development site. A pedestrian route would follow the same route. Regular public transport buses operate between Oban, Connel and beyond.

STAFF

Staff servicing the development will have similar travel choices available as detailed above for the local visitor.

INFLUENCING TRAVEL MODES

The development site at Tom Liath/Tom Ard is being proposed as a holiday destination where accommodation will be provided either in the hotel or in the lodges which surround the site. It is highly likely that a large percentage of the clientele will elect to travel by car simply as a result of its rural location. It can reasonably be assumed that the majority of hotel guests will therefore normally have 2 persons minimum sharing the car journey. An exception to this may be those attending a conference where it is possible that there could be a higher percentage of single occupancy rooms and cars. The lodges, on the other hand, will all provide 4 bedroom accommodation and as such it is likely that the car journey is likely to have a 4 person occupancy.

The entire development philosophy is focused on 'living in and enjoying' the countryside together with all the recreational activities such as walking and cycling.

The quality of public transport must be high if motorists are to be enticed out of their cars. As noted above, Scotrail have announced their intention to increase the train service from Glasgow to Oban from 3 trains per day in each direction to 5 trains. This will increase the capacity immensely on a daily basis. Currently City Link operates a 3 times daily bus service from Glasgow to Oban however there is a requirement for various interested parties to work together to increase the capacity on this route.

It would be appropriate for the Hotel and Lodge operator, through their sales literature, to promote travel by public transport to the destination by offering as part of the overall package free courtesy coach transfer from railway station or bus stop. This could be further extended to provide free courtesy coach travel from the development to Oban at regular intervals throughout the day whilst also offering guests the opportunity to hire bicycles at the facilities.

The development as proposed will, when fully operational, require a large number of staff to service both the Hotel and Lodges. Although the surrounding area over time will be supported by a network of pedestrian routes it is not anticipated that many staff would be encouraged to walk to their place of work given its rural location and elevation. It may however be a more viable proposition for those whose residence is in the village of Dunbeg.

Argyll and Bute Council are in the process of implementing a proposed cycle path as part of the National Cycle Network from Oban to Fort William. When completed, the opportunity would therefore exist for a link to be formed to the development. The provision of secure and well located cycle parking together with changing facilities would inevitably encourage members of staff to choose cycling as an option for travel to place of employment.

A frequent local bus service operates between Oban and Connel. There is the need to ensure that sheltered bus stops are provided.



TRANSPORT IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The Tom Liath /Tom Ard site, while designated as PDA 5/172 in the Argyll and Bute Local Plan (2009), required that a satisfactory solution be agreed in terms of vehicular access to and from the A85 trunk road. This was further complicated by the need for an additional access point to Dunbeg to serve the major expansion proposed for the village. After much discussion with Transport Scotland a suitable location for a roundabout was agreed and subsequently granted detailed planning consent in April 2013. The location of the roundabout at Halfway House, whilst providing access to both development areas, also has the additional benefit of eliminating a dangerous bend on the trunk road and also will have the effect of slowing down traffic in both directions. The Tom Liath/Tom Ard development will undoubtedly increase the traffic movements on the A85, particularly during the busy summer tourist months however the roundabout as designed will ensure safe and easy access to both developments.

The roundabout also takes account of the National Cycle Network and provision has been made to accommodate that section of the route. The cycle routes within the leisure and tourism proposals will link into this route and together with those proposed within the Dunbeg expansion will provide the area with a wide variety of options.

Similarly the network of pathways will offer the same opportunities for walkers.

Currently the public bus operator provides a fairly frequent timetable on this route however it is unlikely that any further increase in this service will have any major impact on the resultant traffic on the A85 trunk road.

TRAVEL PLAN

Whilst acknowledging that this submission relates to a Planning Permission in Principle application it would be the intention that the project operators would have in place a travel plan which minimises the negative impacts of travel and transport.

TARGETS FOR THE TOURIST

Marketing which promotes the development and which encourages use of public transport for arrival and departure with the benefit of courtesy coach travel to and from station or bus halt.

Regular courtesy coach service to Oban

Ability to lease bicycle

TARGETS FOR SITE OPERATIVES

Car-pooling for staff and cycle leasing. Changing and shower facilities for staff.

Staff working hours to coincide with public transport timetables.

Courtesy coach for staff

4 Drainage Assessment

SITE LOCATION

The site is elevated and located in a forested hillside immediately south of the village of Dunbeg and the A85. There are two hill tops, namely Tom Liath and Tom Ard at an O.S. datum level of 127.00. The general road level of the trunk road below is 10.00. The forest, which is for commercial purposes, comprises mainly conifers with some smaller areas of broadleaf.

There is no pre-development foul or surface water drainage provision. All surface water at present is channelled naturally into several water courses which largely flow in an easterly and westerly direction.

WASTE WATER DRAINAGE

The proposed development is to be served on a separate basis with the foul drainage system being connected to the existing public sewerage network currently running along the A85 and ultimately discharging into Scottish Water's Treatment Plant. It is acknowledged that investment at the treatment plant to accommodate both the Tom Liath/Tom Ard development and the much larger Dunbeg expansion will be required. It is the intention that the foul drainage will be vested in Scottish Water and will thereafter become part of the public sewerage network.

SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

It is proposed to introduce a Sustainable Drainage System (SUDs) for this development. It should be noted that in order to satisfy the requirements of Oban Airport, there are to be no new permanent bodies of open water within the development.

The development comprises two main aspects: hotel and leisure development and forest lodges. Each lodge will be a self-contained unit set into the forested areas. Runoff from each lodge roof is to receive a single 'at source' level of treatment in the form of swales around each property, these swales overflowing in a controlled manner onto the adjacent land.

Roof runoff from the hotel and leisure centre is to be collected and directed towards conveyance swales which will lead to dry pond areas. These dry ponds will only fill during, and for a short period after any rainfall event. They will provide some treatment and will be used to attenuate the runoff and allow it to discharge into the existing natural watercourses in a controlled manner.

Rainfall on car parking areas is to receive two levels of treatment. The first 'at source' treatment is to be achieved by constructing all parking bays with a porous or permeable surface finish. The roads between the bays are to be constructed using conventional impermeable surfacing, but they are to discharge onto the adjacent permeable parking bays.

The site is not expected to be free draining but it is anticipated that some runoff, particularly the first flush rainfall, will be treated in the porous areas before discharging to the ground. In order to achieve a further level of treatment, water overflowing from the porous surfaced areas will be directed down roadside conveyance swales to dry pond areas where it will be attenuated before being discharged to the natural water courses. The roadside swales will also collect from the access roads and again direct it to the dry ponds prior to discharge.

Any culverting of several small watercourses will be sized appropriately to accommodate design storm.

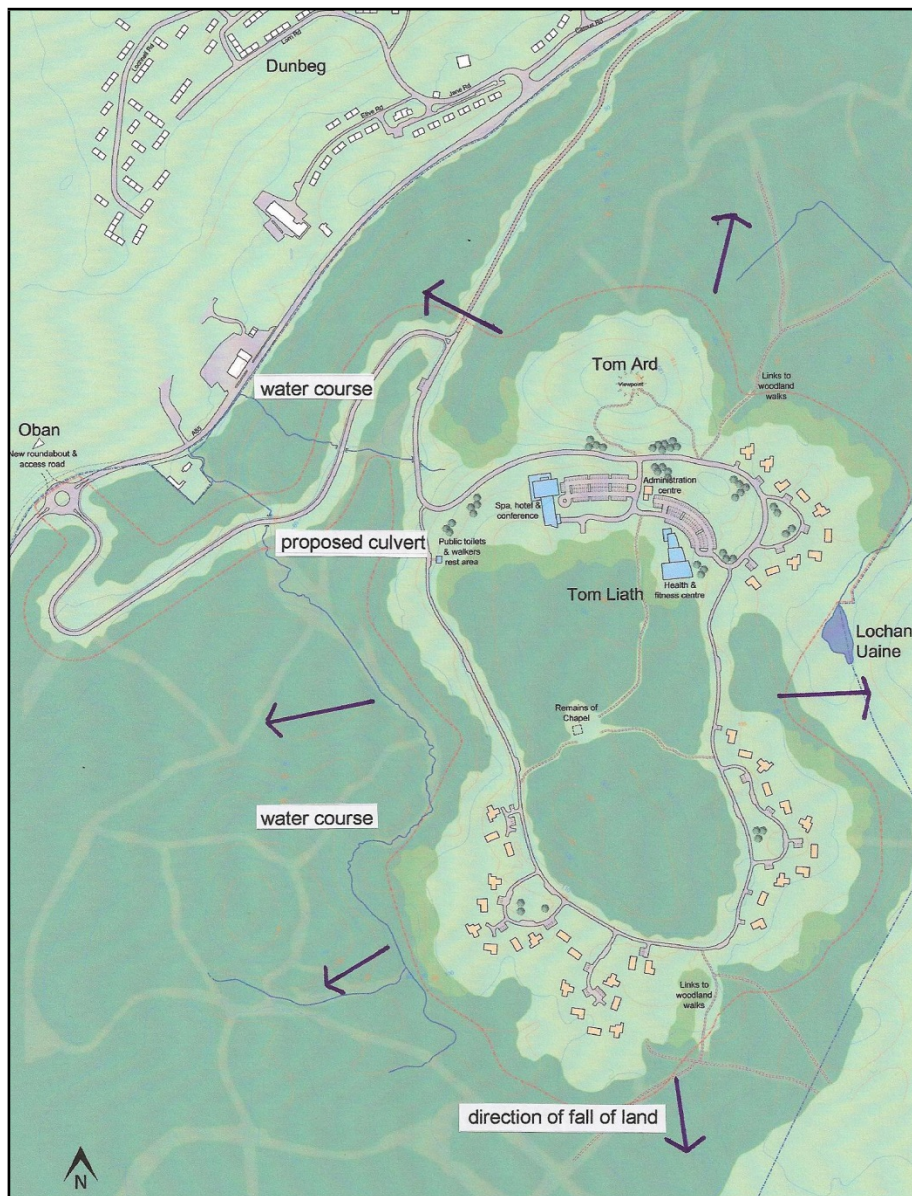
FLOOD RISK

The site is located on a forested hillside some 90 metres above the surrounding landscape. The current proposals include driving the access roads across several small water courses. It is the intention to design any such road crossing culverts for a 1:200 year storm event.

The location at which the internal access road links to the proposed new roundabout will be designed to ensure that there will be no runoff onto the A85 trunk road.

It is also confirmed that with this being a large site with widespread development areas, there is no intention of constructing any buildings or other permanent structures in the vicinity of any bodies of water. Details of any water engineering works will be provided at the Detailed Planning Stage.

Consultation has taken place with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency who have confirmed that they have **“no concerns regarding the principle of this development”** all as outlined above.



5 Waste Management

HOTEL

The hotel will be provided with a large service area at the rear of the hotel whereby all waste will be stored in the relevant wheelie bins for food waste, general rubbish, recycle and glass. Discussions have taken place with the Local Environmental Health Officer who has advised that the frequency of collection will be arranged between the Hotel operators and the local council.

The service yard will be designed to allow for ease of movement of the refuse vehicles together with an appropriate provision for the turning of vehicles. The courtyard will be screened from every aspect.

LEISURE FACILITIES

The leisure facilities will also be provided with a suitably screened service yard and will operate similarly but separately from the hotel.

LODGES

The lodges have been planned in groups of three separate clusters. Each cluster will be provided with a small screened communal storage area, each containing food waste, recycle, general waste and glass bins. These will be collected by the management on a daily basis and taken to a screen service yard area for collection by the local council.

FOREST

The development is contained within a commercial forest and there will be forestry activities taking place from time to time. It would be the intention that all trees felled would be sold as lumber, firewood or wood chips. All of these are a saleable commodity and will not therefore be treated as waste.

6

Tree Felling and Landscaping

OVERVIEW

The main issue of concern to the Forestry Commission Scotland regarding the proposed development would be the potential for loss of woodland cover, associated plans for compensatory planting and any implications for the remaining standing forest areas out with the forest areas affected by the proposal.

LONG TERM FOREST PLAN

The Forestry Commission would require that a standard Long Term Forest Plan (LTFP) format be prepared for the remaining woodland and form part of the detailed planning application when submitted. The Forest Plan would follow the scoping process and content described in the FCS booklet 'Strategic Forest Plans – applicant's guidance'. The LTFP approval process can take approximately 9-12 months a process which the developer proposes to undertake upon receipt of Planning Permission in Principle if granted. This plan should also take account of the 'working' forest in terms of working access, felling of trees and removal of felled timbers.

COMPENSATORY PLANTING

It is understood that the Compensatory Planting area should be approved by FCS in parallel to the detailed planning decision. The CP proposals should clearly define how the compensation can be delivered and advise on the following:

- . The person who will survey, describe, assess specify and deliver the CP
- . The location of the compensatory planting including nature of sub-soil
- . Ensure appropriate landowner agreements are in place if developer does not own the land
- . A statement outlining why the CP proposals are required
- . A description and specification will be provided supported by maps and method statement
- . The timescale for Compensatory Planting

It is anticipated that a chartered forester would be appointed to carry out this work.

WIND FIRM EDGE

Where areas of trees are required to be removed it will be likely that a 'wind Firm Edge' will be necessary which will be achieved by planting natives species such as oak, ash, rowan. The resultant solution will be based on the advice of a chartered forester.

7 Access and Rights of Way

EXISTING FOOTPATHS

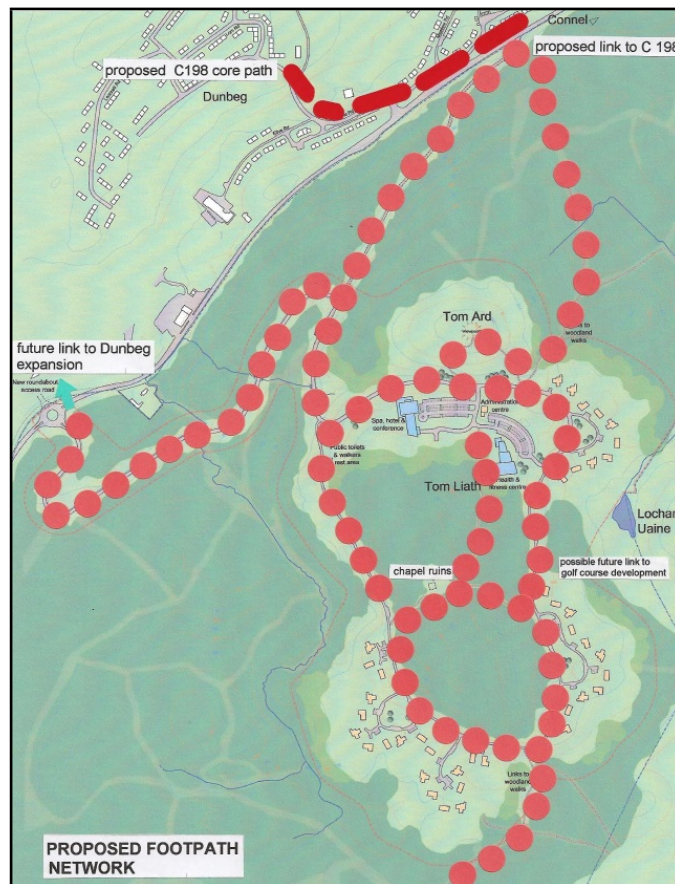
Currently the existing forest haul road which is accessed from the A85 towards the eastern edge of the village of Dunbeg provides a popular walk for locals and tourists to the area. It is also used by many dog walkers although the notice at the point of entry in relation to dog fouling seems to be ignored by many. The haul road almost circumnavigates the development site.

FOOTPATH PROPOSAL

The diagram below sets out the network of pathways which are proposed for the development site and the surrounding forestry. Included are footpath links to the ruins of Cladh Uaine Chapel and Burial Ground together with other additional forest walks. Discussions with Scottish Natural Heritage have resulted in a footpath link to a viewing point on the top of Tom Ard which will afford panoramic views in all directions. The footpath network provided within the development has the potential to enhance public access in this area of woodland and which also has the possibility to be connected to the proposed golf course at Saulmore.

Proposals also include the introduction of interpretation panels throughout the network of pathways which will make reference to the local habitat such as the Red Squirrel, Roe Deer and possibly even Otters. A survey of the habitat will be undertaken at the detailed planning stage. Picnic areas and public toilets for walkers and cyclists are contained in the proposals. This clearly demonstrates the developer's aim to encourage locals and tourists alike to enjoy the outdoor forest experience.

The development footpaths will link to the C198 core path at the eastern edge of Dunbeg whilst also connected to the proposed Dunbeg expansion to the west of the village.



8

Short Term Impacts

CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

This site is currently a commercial forest and there will be forestry activities running concurrently with the construction operation. It is the intention to fell the trees and sell as lumber, firewood or wood chips. Each of these is a saleable commodity and therefore will not be treated as waste. This will be defined in the full Forest Management Plan. A similar plan will be prepared for the construction operations which will detail the various measures to be taken to protect the several water courses on site and also to protect any filtration into Lochan Uaine which it is understood provides the private water supply to Achavaich private house to the east of the development site. Waste construction products will be kept in skips within a compound and taken off site immediately when full. As far as is practical the mixing of concrete on site will be limited with preference given to on-site delivery from a suitable source if available.

SUSTAINABILITY

Where possible, materials and labour to be used in construction will be sourced locally thus minimising transportation impacts and reducing the total embodied energy of the project.

The use of re-cycled building materials will be considered such as insulation materials, hardcore, aggregates and roof slates.

Off-site production techniques will be considered to minimise the impact of construction on site where possible. However this will be balanced against the likely cost and impacts of transporting bulk assemblies.

9

Amenity Issues

PUBLIC SAFETY

During the construction period on site of the hotel, leisure building, lodges and administration unit it will be essential to ensure public safety. The developer recognises that the existing forest footpath network is enjoyed by many of the local people however it may be necessary, in the interests of safety, to close certain sections for a short period of time until construction work is completed.

NOISE

CONSTRUCTION

The initial noise generated will be the felling of trees for the construction of the various buildings and access road. Given that the site is currently a working forest then these initial activities should not present any significant noise concerns. The area of felling represents no more than 5% of the total forest area.

The hotel and leisure buildings are located in a saddle between the Tom Liath/Tom Ard hill tops. It is therefore likely that construction noise generated by plant machinery will be reduced by the location in the saddle together with ability of the remaining dense forest to further contain noise levels. The lodges on the other hand are in more isolated locations and therefore their construction operations should have little impact.

A forest haul road was formed in early 2012 to gain access to an area of woodland which had suffered storm damage. This route was formed above Halfway House (incorrectly known as Pennyfuir Cottage). This forest haul route will now form the basis of the main access route to the development site. Only a small section remains to be formed to connect to the proposed roundabout on the A85 and therefore the period of time to complete should be limited. Construction of this section and completion of the access road in total will take place only during reasonable normal working hours adopted by the construction industry.

COMPLETED DEVELOPMENT

The development project as envisaged will be unlikely to generate any significant noise issues in relation to building use.

Noise generated by vehicular movement at the upper levels of the development will be contained by the woodland area through which the traffic is routed. Similarly the main access route passes through woodland with the exception of an area above Halfway House where it has been agreed with the owners that the two metre high embankment which was formed during the construction of the haul road will be retained and planted with some native tree species.

LIGHT POLLUTION

There are no proposals to use high level lighting at any location throughout the development. Minimal lighting will be installed to the access routes using low level lighting columns with the illumination directed downwards. Car parking at the Hotel and leisure buildings will adopt the same principle.

There will be no upward light pollution which might affect the safe operation of Oban Airport.

10 Technical Issue – Oban Airport

MAIN ISSUES

Consultation has taken place with Oban Airport in relation to the proposed development at Tom Liath/Tom Ard. As a result of this consultation it appears that there are three main issues for consideration;

- Lighting near airports
- Potential Bird Hazards from Amenity Landscaping and Building Design
- Cranes and Construction issues.

Advice Notes 2, 3 and 4 relating to these specific subjects were provided by the Airport to assist the design process. Given that this submission is for Planning Permission in Principle these issues will require to be addressed at the detailed stage of the planning process. However a brief summary of each of the issues is noted below.

LIGHTING NEAR AIRPORTS

- . At night, pilots rely on a particular pattern of aeronautical ground lights, therefore other lights should not distract or confuse
- . Intensity of lights, whether constant or flashing can cause glare on approach or take-off
- . The overall amount of illumination detracts from the effectiveness of approach

To avoid confusion it is necessary to have low level lighting with downward illumination.

POTENTIAL BIRD HAZARDS from AMENITY LANDSCAPING and BUILDING DESIGN

Landscaping may attract birds by providing feeding, nesting and roosting habitat. Water features, including creating ponds, enhancement of existing wet areas create a wide range of habitats for birds. Hazards associated landscaping have the potential to provide nesting habits for birds as well as a winter food supply.

Water features will not be created as part of the overall project. Detailed consideration has also been given to the SUDS design to avoid areas of standing water. Landscaping will be discussed and agreed with Oban Airport at the time of a Detailed Planning submission.

CRANES & OTHER CONSTRUCTION ISSUES

The developer is required to contact the airport at least one month before the crane or any other tall construction equipment is expected on site in order to:

- Define exact location as an OS Grid Reference.
- Type of crane, including maximum height, operating radius etc.
- Where it is deemed necessary the airport may require obstacle lights to be fitted to an agreed specification. Construction Management Plan may be required.

All of the above will be considered at the detailed stage by making reference to the relevant Advice Notes and consultation with the airport operators.

11 Summary

Prior to commencing any design work in relation to this Planning Permission in Principle application the developer and their professional representatives have carried out extensive consultation with various consultees over a period of approximately two years in order that their views and comments could be given serious consideration at the masterplan design stage. During this period extensive discussion also took place with Transport Scotland to ensure that a satisfactory solution could be achieved in relation to access to both the Tom Liath/Tom Ard Development and the proposed Dunbeg Expansion. A Joint Detailed Planning Application on behalf of Arcade Building Services Ltd and West Highland Housing Association was prepared and submitted for a proposed roundabout at Halfway House, Dunbeg. This was subsequently approved by Argyll and Bute Council in April 2013.

A Pre-Application Consultation Notice was formally sent out on the 9th July which allowed those previously contacted to engage in further discussion.

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CONSULTANT ARCHITECT
October 2013