



Clarification Note 3 – Public Access and Recreation in Glen Falloch

1 Introduction

Four Hydroelectric schemes in Glen Falloch, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park (the Park), are in the planning stages. As part of the planning process Hydroplan have been asked to clarify the effect of the schemes on the existing public access and recreation resource and to assess and demonstrate suitably minimal detrimental effects on recreational experience within the area affected.

This document does not produce any new data but aims to clarify the information already presented in the Environmental Statements and re-package it such that potential effects of the proposed hydro schemes on public access and recreation activity can be assessed more readily.

2 The Park's Recreational Uses

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park is a world famous national park and is just 40 minutes from Glasgow and 90 minutes from Edinburgh. It is therefore a popular tourist destination and is highly valued by a large number of visitors. Many visits to the Glen Falloch area of the Park are made in order to undertake outdoor recreation activities and it has been established that this area is therefore an important resource for such activities.

Recreational activities enjoyed by visitors to the Park include:

- Walking / Mountaineering
- Boating
- Cycling
- Wildlife Watching
- Events
- Canoeing and Kayaking
- Horse Riding
- Enjoying views
- Camping

All of these activities are made more enjoyable by the surroundings of the Park and the views that it affords. The range of these characteristics is documented as Special Qualities.

3 Special Qualities of the Park

The Special Qualities represented in the Glen Falloch area are detailed in the Special Qualities of Ben Lui, Glen Falloch and Glen Dochart, a technical appendix to the National Park Plan submitted to Scottish Ministers in 2006. These special qualities are summarised in Table 1:



Table 1 - Summary of special qualities

Category	Special Quality
Sense of Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long glens • Open upland hills • Fast flowing burns and waterfalls • Remote and unspoilt upland areas • Flat glen floor • Farmland - Attractive patchwork of upland fields and hay meadows • Isolated traditional farm steadings • Predominantly rural in character • Open glen sides
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of prehistoric use • Boundaries of kingdom of Dalriada (Stone known as Clach Na Briton) • Medieval religious and military sites • Pre-improvement Period landscape • 18th and 19th century rectilinear fields from Improvement Period. • Evidence of industrial activity • General Caulfield's military road • Railway and associated structures
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetland habitats on the flat strath floors • Open upland hills – important for upland plants, invertebrates and nationally rare and scarce plants • Designated SSSIs • Significant areas of remnant Caledonian Pinewood • Areas of ancient deciduous woodland
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geology • Historical and cultural associations
Qualities valued by local communities (Source: Park Plan Workshop on Special Qualities, April 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cultural and historical associations are a special part of Breadalbane. • Railway history and the West Highland Line • The 'Highlands' feeling of the area • The mountain wilderness areas tucked away from the glens • Living and working farmed landscape • The diversity and accessibility of the scenery • The wildlife • Recreational benefits of landscape – walking in particular mentioned • Long history of families (mentioned by Killin group)

4 Hydro Scheme Effects on the Recreational Experience of Visitors

4.1 Physical Access for Walkers

In the Environmental Risk Assessment and Mitigation chapter of each of the Environmental Statements the following statement is included under the Access and Traffic heading:

During the construction period, walkers will be temporarily diverted using localised diversions around hazards such as deep excavations. Such diversions will be localised and short-term. Signs warning walkers of the construction traffic and giving details of the scheme will be provided at the start and middle sections of each track/path and appropriate passing places will be created at tight bends or pinch points.

Once operational, the scheme will place no restriction on access for the public.



Drawing P509 111 shows the areas where construction will have an impact on Walkers and it can be seen that the areas affected are relatively small. It is worth noting that consultation with the MC of S has resulted in the following clarification:-

1. It is assumed that Walkers are responsible people and that they are able to avoid the slow moving construction traffic provided that there are notices advising them of the work in progress. In this respect, fencing would only be used where:-
 - i. There was a localised deep excavation or potentially hazardous area
 - ii. SNH or the Archaeologist recommend a short term localised fence to protect specific sites of importance
2. Diversions will only be used around the immediate area of working (i.e. 10's of metres and not 100's)

In this respect, none of the construction or operational activities will contravene the Land Reform Act (Scotland) 2003.

4.2 Sense of Place

Many of the activities listed in section 2 are enhanced by the scenic beauty of the Park's Landscape. Therefore any impact upon the landscape or visual amenity would affect visitors' enjoyment of these activities. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, included as Appendix J in the Environmental Statements, detail the potential effects of the hydro schemes on the surrounding landscape and visual amenity. The following excerpts from the reports are those directly related to recreational activities within the Park.

4.2.1 Ben Glas

Baseline Assessment

Table 2 identifies local visitor attractions and the importance in this context is a relative assessment of the feature and the type and number of visitors. It is based on a professional judgement and not on empirical or documented survey.

Table 2: Ben Glas Local recreational resources

Local feature	Description	Importance	Assessment
Inverarnan	Pub and guest house and chalets on the A82, 2km south of the site.	local	+ve impact see CIA Section 2.7.2
Beinglas Farm	Camp site, chalets, pub, 2km to the south of the site Popular summer destination for variety of passive and active recreational users.	local	+ve impact see CIA Section 2.7.2
Beinglas Falls	Waterfalls, 2km to south. Visually accessible from the A82 and Inverarnan. A strongly local feature in the landscape and iconic feature of this area.	local	CIA section 3.5.2 discusses the visual impact. However, summer daytime turbine operation is designed to maintain the visual qualities
West Coast Rail line	Scenic rail route; tourist route to the Highlands	regional / national	Negligible – see CIA
A82	Scenic and infrastructure route; heavily used and an importance gateway to Loch Lomond and the Highlands.	regional / national	Negligible – see CIA



WHW	Long Distance Footpath; overall used by in excess of 50 000 walkers pa (source; WHW website); first long distance path; national importance and important to local tourism.	national	Photos 4 & 38 show visual impact and this is discussed in CIA section 3.5.1
Munros, Hill Walks and Arrochar Alps	Beinn Chabhair, Ben Oss, Beinn Dubhchraig; local peaks important to hill walkers though not iconic climbs	regional	Photo 50 shows visual impact and this is discussed in CIA section 3.5.3

Conclusion

Referring to photos 4, 38 and 50, it has been established that the scheme will cause localised significant impact on the landscape character of areas of exposed hillside and upland plateau during construction. These are largely reversible impacts and the long term impacts on the character of the landscape, once restoration of pipeline routes and temporary construction impacts is successfully established, will in nearly all instances, be low. Indeed in most areas the presence of the scheme will be barely perceptible within 5-10 years, with good restoration.

4.2.2 Allt Fionn

Baseline Assessment

Table 3 identifies local visitor attractions and the importance in this context is a relative assessment of the feature and the type and number of visitors. It is based on a professional judgement and not on empirical or documented survey.

Table 3: Allt Fionn Local recreational resources

Local feature	Description	Importance	Assessment
Inverarnan	Pub and guest house and chalets on the A82, 2km south of the site.	local	+ve impact see CIA Section 2.7.2
Beinglas Farm	Camp site, chalets, pub, 2km to the south of the site Popular summer destination for variety of passive and active recreational users.	local	+ve impact see CIA Section 2.7.2
Beinglas Falls	Waterfalls, 2km to south. Visually accessible from the A82 and Inverarnan. A strongly local feature in the landscape and iconic feature of this area.	local	CIA section 3.5.2 discusses the visual impact. However, summer daytime turbine operation is designed to maintain the visual qualities
Falls of Falloch	Waterfalls on River Falloch, 500m east of PH and easily accessible from A82. Public carpark and woodland walks	regional	None – no views of scheme from falls or vice versa
West Coast Rail line	Scenic rail route; tourist route to the Highlands	regional / national	Negligible – see CIA
A82	Scenic and infrastructure route; heavily used and an importance gateway to Loch Lomond and the Highlands.	regional / national	Negligible – see CIA



WHW	Long Distance Footpath; overall used by in excess of 50 000 walkers pa (source; WHW website); first long distance path; national importance and important to local tourism.	national	Photos 26, 27 & 28 show visual impact and this is discussed in CIA section 3.5.1
Munros, Hill Walks and Arrochar Alps	Beinn Chabhair, An Caisteal, Ben Oss, Beinn Dubhchraig; local peaks important to hill walkers though not iconic climbs	regional	Photo 14 shows visual impact and this is discussed in CIA section 3.5.3

Conclusion

Referring to photos 26, 27, 28 and 14, it has been established that the scheme will cause localised significant impact on the landscape character of areas of exposed hillside and upland glen during construction. These are largely reversible impacts and the long term impacts on the character of the landscape, once restoration of pipeline routes and temporary construction impacts are successfully established, will in nearly all instances, be low. Indeed in most areas the presence of the scheme will be barely perceptible within 5-10 years, with good restoration.

4.2.3 Derrydarroch

Baseline Assessment

Table 4 identifies local visitor attractions and the importance in this context is a relative assessment of the feature and the type and number of visitors. It is based on a professional judgement and not on empirical or documented survey.

Table 4: Derrydarroch Local recreational resources

Local feature	Description	Importance	Assessment
Falls of Falloch	Waterfalls on River Falloch, 500m east of PH and easily accessible from A82. Public carpark and woodland walks	regional	None – no views of scheme from falls or vice versa
West Coast Rail line	Scenic rail route; tourist route to the Highlands	regional / national	Negligible – see CIA
A82	Scenic and infrastructure route; heavily used and an importance gateway to Loch Lomond and the Highlands.	regional / national	Negligible – see CIA
WHW	Long Distance Footpath; overall used by in excess of 50 000 walkers pa (source; WHW website); first long distance path; national importance and important to local tourism.	national	Photos 4, 5 & 6 show visual impact and this is discussed in CIA section 3.5.1
Munros, Hill Walks and Arrochar Alps	Beinn Chabhair, An Caisteal; local peaks important to hill walker.	regional	This is discussed in CIA section 3.5.3



Conclusion

Referring to photos 4, 5 and 6, it has been established that the scheme will cause localised significant impact on the landscape character of areas of exposed hillside and upland glen during construction. These are largely reversible and the long term impacts on the character of the landscape, once restoration of pipeline routes and temporary construction impacts is successfully established, will in nearly all instances, be low. Indeed in most areas the presence of the scheme will be barely perceptible within 5-10 years, with good restoration.

There are significant adverse impacts on a section of West Highland Way during construction but these are short term and reversible.

4.2.4 Upper Falloch

Baseline Assessment

Table 5 identifies local visitor attractions and the importance in this context is a relative assessment of the feature and the type and number of visitors. It is based on a professional judgement and not on empirical or documented survey.

Table 5: Upper Falloch Local recreational resources

Local feature	Description	Importance	Assessment
West Coast Rail line	Scenic rail route; tourist route to the Highlands	regional / national	Negligible – see CIA
A82	Scenic and infrastructure route; heavily used and an importance gateway to Loch Lomond and the Highlands.	regional / national	Negligible – see CIA
WHW	Long Distance Footpath; overall used by in excess of 50 000 walkers pa (source; WHW website); first long distance path; national importance and important to local tourism.	national	Photo 30 shows visual impact and this is discussed in CIA section 3.5.1
Munros, Hill Walks and Arrochar Alps	Cruach Ardrain, Beinn a'Chroin, An Caisteal; local peaks important to hill walkers though not iconic climbs	regional	Photos 8a, 10, 34 & 35 show visual impact and this is discussed in CIA section 3.5.3

Conclusion

Referring to photos 8a, 10, 30, 34 and 35, it has been established that the scheme will cause localised significant impact on the landscape character of areas of exposed hillside and upland glen during construction. These are largely reversible and the long term impacts on the character of the landscape, once restoration of pipeline routes and temporary construction impacts is successfully established, will in nearly all instances, be low. Indeed in most areas the presence of the scheme will be barely perceptible within 5-10 years, with good restoration.



4.2.5 Cumulative Impact

Summary of Effects

The purpose of the cumulative landscape and visual assessment is to identify the effects that the proposed development, consisting of all four of the individual hydroelectric schemes, may have on the landscape and visual resource of the study area, and assess which of these are likely to be significant.

The assessment covers three categories of potential effects; physical effects, which covers landscape elements; effects on landscape character, which includes landscape character types and designated areas; and effects on views, which covers a series of principal visual receptors.

The assessment concludes that the development will have significant cumulative effects on:

- Open upland hillside and crag local LCT during the construction period
- Open upland glen local LCT during the construction period
- Open upland strath local LCT during the construction period
- Views from Ben Glas hill during the construction period
- Views from Sron Gharbh hill during the construction period
- Views from the West Highland Way between October 2011 and January 2012
- Views from the West Highland Way between July and September 2012

It is further concluded that the development will not have any significant cumulative effects on:

- Any landscape elements
- Any landscape character or visual receptors effects after the construction period is finished
- The landscape character of Loch Lomond NSA
- Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park
- The Wild Land attributes found in Glen Falloch
- Views from the A82 (T)
- Views from the West Highland Line railway
- Views from the Drovers Inn
- Views from the Falls of Falloch
- Views from Beinglas Falls
- Views from Beinglas Farm campsite
- Views from An Caisteal
- Views from Beinn a' Chroin
- Views from Beinn Chabhair
- Views from Beinn Dubhchraig
- Views from Ben Oss
- Views from Cruach Ardrain
- Views from Arrochar Alps
- Views from any residential properties



4.3 Cultural Heritage – Archaeology

The Environmental Statements for each scheme contain an archaeology report which details the sites of archaeological interest on the site and recommends mitigation measures to protect the sites of importance.

The individual reports, and the Clarification work (Clarification Note 2) carried out by Firat Archaeological Services (Firat) gives site-specific mitigation methods. However, Firat made the following general recommendations:

- All archaeological sites must be fenced and flagged to indicate their presence before any ground disturbance takes place (including test pits).
- A buffer zone of at least 5m should surround all archaeological sites.
- All archaeological sites are photographed in advance of any construction works.
- All archaeological sites are photographed on completion of the project and following reinstatement.
- A watching brief is required if excavation is within 5m of an archaeological site for which a watching brief is required.
- Excavation and ground disturbance or storage of materials or spoil may not proceed without an archaeological watching brief at any site or location where the requirement for an archaeological watching brief has been indicated.
- The Military Road will be disturbed at two locations on the Derrydaroch scheme. It will be cut through at one location and used for access at one other location. Archaeological excavation under watching brief conditions and detailed recording is required where it will be cut through. The Military Road should be avoided wherever possible and fenced off to protect it from the development.
- Tracks and dykes should be cut in the narrowest working corridor available and preferably at right angles to minimise damage. Tracks and dykes should be reinstated on completion of the development works.

4.4 Biodiversity – Fish and Aquatic, Fresh Water Pearl Mussels, Habitat (Flora), Bryophytes, Mammals and Birds

The Environmental Statements for the four schemes contain separate reports on Fish and the Aquatic Environment, Fresh Water Pearl Mussels, Habitat (Flora), Bryophytes, Mammals and Birds. Each of these reports details what is present on the site and what should be avoided. Where sensitive sites cannot be avoided mitigation measures are recommended in order to reduce the potential impact to a low or negligible level. General mitigation measures are also included in the Habitat and Mammals reports to protect all aspects of the environment. These mitigation recommendations will be followed stringently to minimise any impact on the biodiversity of the Glen.

4.5 Other Special Qualities

Each of the Special Qualities identified in table 1 have been considered within various parts of the Environmental Statements. The majority have been described in this Clarification Note and those which have not been mentioned specifically are deemed not applicable to the purpose of this Note. .



5 Summary & Conclusion

This Clarification note has drawn information from various sections of the 4 Environmental Statements and the Cumulative Impact Assessment and has considered the Special Qualities of the Park and in particular the ***Sense of Place***.

In the respect of impacts upon the existing public access and recreation resource and detrimental effects on recreational experience, these can be summarised by a matrix as presented in table 6. This shows the Physical (Diversion and fencing) and Visual impacts over the short-term construction and the long-term operation of the schemes.

Table 6: Summary of Impacts

	Physical	Visual
Construction	Low	Low / Moderate
Long Term	Negligible	Negligible / Low

The enjoyment of access and recreation in Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park and the Glen Falloch area is inextricably linked with many aspects of the Park's environment, including landscape character, remoteness and solitude, the cultural heritage and biodiversity. All of these aspects have been assessed in detail as part of the planning process and through design considerations and appropriate mitigation every effort has been made to ensure that the Long Term impacts are kept to low or negligible levels. It is therefore proposed that impacts upon the existing public access and recreation resource and detrimental effects on recreational experience arising from the scheme are satisfactorily minimal and that this has been shown.

6 Attachments

The attachments are taken directly from the Environmental Statements as follows:-

- Extract from the Photo Sets as described in Section 4 of this Note
- Drawing P509 111 which shows the short term construction pedestrian management areas.