

Perth and Kinross LDP3 2027 - Evidence Report

TOPIC PAPER NO. 011: Coastal Development and Aquaculture

July 2024



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This topic paper sets out the key information relating to Coastal Development and Aquaculture which will be covered by the Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan (LDP) 3, as required under the provisions of Section 16B Act ¹. It will, alongside a range of other topic papers, contribute towards the preparation of the Council's Evidence Report, which is programmed to be submitted to the Scottish Government's Planning and Environmental Appeals Division during November 2024 for the 'Gatecheck' process.
- 1.2 The purpose of an Evidence Report is to provide the local authority's interpretation of the evidence it has gathered and the likely implications of that evidence for the preparation of the LDP. The Report will provide a summary of what the evidence means for the plan, rather than contain all the detail of evidence collected.
- 1.3 In line with the requirements of the Act, this paper will have regard to:
- Principal physical, and environmental characteristics of the district in relation to its coast
 - the national marine plan
 - any regional marine plan

Relevant Policies

- 1.4 This topic is covered by the following policies in National Planning Framework 4: policy 32 Aquaculture, and policy 10 coastal development.

Legal and National Policy Requirements / Expectations

- 1.5 In line with the requirement of the Act, this paper will provide important background information for the Plan area regarding:
- areas of developed and undeveloped coast
 - projected changes to the coast from erosion
 - projected sea level changes and probability of flooding
 - baseline information on existing aquaculture sites, and projected growth demand
 - key environmental constraints
- 1.6 Under these policies the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) expects LDPs to:
- consider how to adapt coastlines to the impacts of climate change recognising the impacts of sea level rises and more extreme weather events
 - recognise projected sea level changes and probability of flooding, and take a precautionary approach to flood risk

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019

- consider projected changes to the coast from erosion
- reflect the diversity of coastal areas and opportunities to use nature-based solutions to improve the resilience of coastal communities and assets
- align with national, sectoral and regional marine plans
- guide new aquaculture development in line with National and Regional Marine Planning
- and minimise adverse environmental impacts, including cumulative impacts, that arise from other existing and planned aquaculture developments while also reflecting industry needs

Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2022-2027

1.7 The Coastal Development and Aquaculture topic paper links to the following priorities from the Corporate plan: Stronger and greener economy, Tackling climate change, and Physical and mental wellbeing. There is a particular need to consider how the coastal strategy of the LDP can contribute to the following key action, from the Tackling climate change priority:

- To adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change on the way we operate

1.8 It is important that we lead by example, embedding a climate aware approach into every part of our work, minimising the impact we have and planning for a sustainable future.

2 Information analysis on Coastal Development

List of data sets, sources, and how they are relevant

This section sets out the evidence which is needed so that the Proposed Plan can address the issues raised in the Act and in NPF4.

2.1 [Perth Harbour Business Plan Update and Future Options Appraisal](#)

committee report February 2023 which presented a preferred option for its cessation as a commercial port. This was agreed subject to testing the market for interest in a potential long lease opportunity whilst the formal consultation requirements are being met. This clarifies that regeneration of the harbour should be considered through the Proposed Plan.

2.2 [SEPA medium future flood risk 2080 coastal flood risk mapping](#) is the best proxy for the at risk flood risk areas mentioned in NPF4, this is currently based on UK 2009 Climate projections but will be updated to reflect the UK 2018 climate change projections. If this updated climate change mapping is available this will be used in site assessment for the Proposed Plan. If not then should the Proposed Plan promote sites where a potential flood risk is identified, then it may be necessary to assess them using the allowances to calculate the area “at risk of flooding or in a flood risk area”.

2.3 [SEPA medium future flood risk 2080 river flood risk mapping](#) is the best proxy for the at risk flood risk areas mentioned in NPF4, this is currently based on UK 2009 Climate projections but will be updated to reflect the UK 2018 climate change projections. If this updated climate

change mapping is available this will be used in site assessment for the Proposed Plan. If not then should the Proposed Plan promote sites where a potential flood risk is identified, then it may be necessary to assess them using the allowances to calculate the area “at risk of flooding or in a flood risk area”.

2.4 [Planning information note 4 SEPA position on development protected by a flood protection scheme](#)

supports interpretation of NPF4 policy 22 Flood risk and water management. However, it is noted that this note is being updated to reflect NPF4. This note/ its replacement will be referred to when undertaking site assessments for the Proposed Plan.

2.5 [SEPA Flood Risk and Land Use Vulnerability Guidance](#)

supports interpretation of NPF4 policy 22 Flood risk and water management. However it is noted that this note is being updated to reflect NPF4. This note/ its replacement will be referred to when undertaking site assessments for the Proposed Plan.

2.6 [Strategic Environmental Assessment | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#)

provides a template for Strategic Environmental Assessment site assessment which will be used at Proposed Plan stage.

2.7 [Tay Flood Risk Management Plan](#)

published by SEPA this sets out the actions needed to reduce overall, and avoid an increase in flood risk flood risk. The Proposed plan will support its implementation.

- 2.8 [Tay Local Flood Risk Management Plan](#) published by Perth and Kinross Council this sets out in more detail how the actions of the Tay Flood Risk management plan will be achieved. The Proposed plan will support its implementation.
- 2.9 **Perth and Kinross Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** will be prepared to support the Flood Risk and Water Management topic paper. Please refer to the topic paper Flood Risk and Water Management for more information.
- 2.10 [Dynamic Coast webmaps](#) broad planning tool makes necessary assumptions about our future climate and management action. If there are areas affected this information can be used to inform site selection, and settlement summary text in the Proposed Plan.
- 2.11 [Mapping coastal erosion disadvantage in Scotland \(dynamiccoast.com\)](#) paper which couples anticipated erosion risk with consideration of the social vulnerability of Scotland’s coastal communities, to produce Coastal Erosion Disadvantage maps. This paper is not relevant to the preparation of the Proposed Plan as Perth and Kinross is considered tidal/estuarine and it does not feature in any of the maps and tables which consider coastal erosion vulnerability or disadvantage
- 2.12 [Coastal Change Adaptation Guidance](#) supports Local Authorities to develop their Coastal Change Adaption Plans (CCAP). PKC has received funds to prepare a Coastal Change Adaption Plan.

- 2.13 [Climate Change Risk and Opportunity Assessment](#) is a risk and opportunities register, in response to the increasing risks and impacts of current and future climate change considering risks to the organisation and area as a whole. The Proposed Plan will support delivery of the Flood Protection measures identified.
- 2.14 [Climate Change Master Action Plan](#) has an adaptation plan that is integrated with our mitigation plan. This can be viewed under the “Climate Resilience” Delivery Theme. The Proposed Plan will support Natural Flood Risk Management and Flood Protection measures identified to assist with the delivery of this Action Plan.
- 2.15 **TAYplan Strategic Development Plan (SDP) 2016-2036** identified the Perth and Kinross coastline as having unspoiled areas. See extract in appendix 1, as this plan is no longer available online. This may be relevant to the identification of undeveloped coastal areas in the Proposed Plan.
- 2.16 **Assessment of the coastline** carried out for the Perth and Kinross Structure Plan approved June 2003 which identifies that there are no areas of isolated/unspoiled coastline. See appendix 2, as this plan is not available online. This may be relevant to the identification of undeveloped coastal areas in the Proposed Plan.

Principal physical and environmental characteristics

This section provides information on the principal physical, and environmental characteristics of the district in relation to its coast.

2.17 The Inner Tay Estuary is a valuable resource in terms of its landscape, nature conservation, recreation and tourism and employment benefits. The influence of spring tides penetrates inland to about 4 km beyond Perth, but saline conditions occur only as far upstream as Newburgh. The reedbeds in the Tay Estuary are the largest continuous stand of this habitat anywhere in Britain.²

2.18 The coast faces a range of development pressures and future threats from sea level rise and flood risk. The current Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan (LDP) 2019 identifies appropriate opportunities for development within the settlements that lie along this coastline and its policies allow limited development outwith these settlements with additional controls applied within the Perth Greenbelt which covers areas from the edge of Perth to Inchyra/Balhepburn to the west, and within environmental designated and flood risk areas.

Summary Analysis

This section sets out a summary analysis of this evidence base and identifies any gaps or uncertainties.

2.19 Following the Council's decision in 2023 to close Perth Harbour, Transport Scotland is assessing a Revision Order for Scottish Ministers' consideration. Until the Order is confirmed, Perth and Kinross Council remains the Statutory Harbour Authority, meaning that at present, the harbour remains open for commercial traffic. If the revision order is approved and the harbour is closed for commercial traffic the

Proposed Plan will consider the regeneration and leisure opportunities, alongside the constraints, which includes flood risk. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and SEA site assessments will analyse flood risk as per NPF4 policy 22. On sites such as this where balancing of other policy objectives (brownfield, and regeneration) will be significant, a thorough understanding of flood risk will inform the Proposed Plan spatial strategy. The Proposed Plan will accord with NPF4, refer to these future flood maps, and use the SEA site assessment template to assess risk for all proposals being considered for potential LDP3 allocation.

2.20 Becoming 'sea level wise' is required of the planning system in order to adapt to future risks. A small area at Kingoodie was identified as having a coastal erosion risk in LDP2 based on the National Coastal Change Assessment at that time. However, no areas are now shown at risk in the more recent Dynamic Coast webmaps Future Erosion 2100 High emissions scenario. This mapping will not inform site selection, nor settlement summary text in the Proposed Plan, unless it is updated, and updated mapping indicates areas at risk.

2.21 Perth and Kinross Council does not have a Coastal Change Adaptation Plan in place. However, there is an adaptation plan that is integrated within the Climate Change Master Action Plan mitigation plan. This can be viewed under the "Climate Resilience" Delivery Theme. Based on the Dynamic Coast webmaps, and observing there are no areas at risk from coastal erosion, and preparing a Climate Change Master

² Tayside biodiversity partnership, [Section2Coast1.pdf \(taysidebiodiversity.co.uk\)](https://taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/Section2Coast1.pdf)

Action Plan, there does not appear to be significant concerns related to this coastline. PKC has received funding for a Coastal Change Adaption Plan, if it is available in time it will inform the Proposed plan.

2.22 There is a changing national policy context with regard for the classification of our coastline. Whilst Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 2014 referred to the developed coast, areas subject to significant constraint, and unspoiled coastline, NPF4 only refers to the undeveloped coastline. The TAYplan Strategic Development Plan (SDP) 2016-2036 identified its coastline as having unspoiled areas within it whose nature and extent would be defined through the Local Development Plans. The Reporter considering this matter during Examination of the Local Development Plan 2019 agreed with Perth and Kinross Council and considered there is no remote or unspoiled coastline.

2.23 NPF4 does not define the undeveloped coastline. It is unclear whether undeveloped means remote unspoiled coastline with wild land qualities, or if it is any area outwith a settlement boundary like the areas of significant constraint mentioned in SPP 2014. If it is remote and unspoiled areas then there is no undeveloped coastline as the Perth and Kinross coastline is close to large centres of population and is accessible and it is not a wild or remote unspoiled coastline, never being far from settlement, the road network and railway line, or other signs of human activity. However, if the undeveloped coastline is an area that is not urban/settled then the entire coastline along the Tay from Invergowrie to Perth on the north bank, and also along the

southern bank of the Tay, apart from the small settlements themselves, would be considered to be undeveloped as per the Perth and Kinross Structure Plan 2003. If it is the later definition then the Proposed Plan could identify its undeveloped coast accordingly and potentially define this as either 1km inland (to align with the outer distance used by the Dynamic Coast for mapping of assets and vulnerability) or 0.5 km inland (to align with the Perth and Kinross Structure Plan) from the mean high water mark. The coastal zone could be from Perth itself as the impact of the tides affect Perth, or alternatively it could be from where the River Earn meets the Tay.

Summary analysis of the evidence:

If the harbour is closed for commercial traffic, the Proposed Plan will consider the regeneration and leisure opportunities, alongside the constraints, which includes flood risk.

Strategic Environmental Assessment site assessment will inform the allocations for development within the Proposed Plan.

No areas are now shown at risk in the more recent Dynamic Coast webmaps, however a Coastal Change Adaption Plan will be prepared.

NPF4 does not define the undeveloped coastline. It is unclear whether undeveloped means remote unspoiled coastline with wild land qualities, or if it is any area outwith a settlement boundary.

It is also unclear how the coastal zone should be defined.

Key discussion points for feedback

How should the undeveloped coast be defined? (is remote unspoiled coastline with wild land qualities? is it any area outwith a settlement boundary? or is it alternatively defined?)

What is the coastal zone, is it 1km inland (to align with the outer distance used by the Dynamic Coast for mapping of assets and vulnerability) or 0.5 km inland (to align with the Perth and Kinross Structure Plan) from the mean high water mark, or should another definition be used?

Should the coastal zone be from Perth itself as the impact of the tides affect Perth, or alternatively it should it be from where the River Earn meets the Tay?

Implications for the Proposed Plan

The initial implications of the evidence for the Proposed Plan which have been identified so far are set out below. This will be revised and updated following consultation on this Topic Paper.

2.24 Flood risk will be considered more fully in a separate topic paper, however PKC will use the LDP site assessment and SEA checklist prepared by the key agencies to assess potential Proposed Plan allocations. On sites such as Perth Harbour where there are policy tensions between brownfield/regeneration and flood risk, there will

be close liaison with Perth and Kinross Flood team and SEPA to fully understand the nature of the risk, and the appropriate response, using the most up to date guidance available at the time. PKC will support the delivery of the actions and objectives to avoid an overall increase, reduce overall, and manage flood risk as set out within the relevant SEPA Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Local Flood Risk Management Plans.

2.25 NPF4 Policy 10 Coastal Development states that, ‘Development proposals in undeveloped coastal areas will only be supported where they: i. are necessary to support the blue economy, net zero emissions or to contribute to the economy or wellbeing of communities whose livelihood depend on marine or coastal activities.’ The implications for potential development within any undeveloped coastal areas identified would be significant in Perth and Kinross as these estuarine communities do not depend on marine or coastal activities for their livelihood.

2.26 The straightforward interpretation is that the undeveloped coastline of the SPP 2014 and the Perth and Kinross Structure Plan 2003, would have same definition as the undeveloped coastline of NPF4 in the Proposed Plan. However, whilst development in coastal areas as per the NPF4 coastal development policy should be sensitive to sea level rises/flood risk and to environmental constraints and qualities, is NPF4’s intention to propose a more restrictive precautionary approach for coastal rural areas compared to otherwise similar inland rural areas? If not, the intention would be to consider the undeveloped

coastline to be isolated/unspoiled coastline, and there would be no undeveloped coastline within Perth and Kinross.

Summary of the implications for the Proposed Plan:

PKC will use the LDP site assessment and SEA checklist prepared by the key agencies to assess potential Proposed Plan allocations.

The intention of NPF4 policy 10 coastal development with regard to the definition of the undeveloped coastline seems unclear, as there is a gap and uncertainty in the evidence for this topic (is it wild land on the coast, remote from any signs of human activity, or is it areas which are not urban/settled?)

Key discussion points for feedback

What do you think the intention of NPF4 policy 10 coastal development is with regard to the definition of the undeveloped coast?

How should the undeveloped coastal area be defined?

3 Information analysis on Aquaculture

List of data sets, sources, and how they are relevant

This section sets out the evidence which is needed so that the Proposed Plan can address the issues raised in the Act and in NPF4.

- 3.1 [Marine Scotland National Marine Plan](#) 2015 supports development and activity in Scotland's seas while incorporating environmental protection into marine decision making to achieve sustainable management of marine resources. Marine Scotland National Marine Plan 2 consultation is expected Summer 2024. This plan provides appropriate policy context for marine planning, and given the limited area and local context in LDP3 is not necessary.
- 3.2 [Scottish Coastal Observatory Data](#) holds monitoring data collected as part of the Scottish Coastal Observatory. Data will be added to the Forth and Tay section as regional marine planning is taken forward. Not relevant to the Proposed Plan at the moment and timescales for the regional marine plan are unknown.
- 3.3 Marine Scotland's [Planning & Locational Guidelines](#) is not relevant to the Proposed Plan as there is a presumption against finfish farms on east coast.
- 3.4 NatureScot's [planning and development guidance on marine aquaculture](#) and other relevant data is mostly relevant to marine proposals with landscape guidance for lochs, and shore-based

facilities. This guidance is not relevant for the Proposed Plan but it could be used at planning application stage.

- 3.5 SEPA [revised regulatory framework and sector plan](#) is mostly relevant to marine fish farming it sets out how SEPA s propose to regulate the finfish aquaculture sector. This will not be relevant to the Proposed Plan due to the presumption against any proposals on the east coast.
- 3.6 GIS data from Marine Scotland on [Shellfish water protected areas](#). This is not relevant to the Proposed Plan as there are no Shellfish waters protected areas within PKC.
- 3.7 **Information on sea lice from any risk assessment framework and any relevant mitigation measures** will not be relevant to the Proposed Plan due to presumption against finfish farms on east coast.

Summary Context and Analysis

This section sets out a summary analysis of this evidence base and identifies any gaps or uncertainties.

- 3.8 There is a limited coastline, and a limited industry presence within Perth and Kinross. Therefore, there has been no need for a local aquaculture policy in the current Local Development Plan.
- 3.9 There are some freshwater finfish operators, focused on both the freshwater hatchery or freshwater adult growth stages. There have been a handful of planning applications for freshwater finfish facilities over the past 25 years, so there may continue to be some limited

growth in this sector. As of May 2024, there are 8 fish farm sites operating within Perth and Kinross: Frandy Hatchery (tanks and hatchery), St Mungo's Trout Farm (tanks and hatchery,) College Mill Almondbank (tanks and raceways), Sundial Cottage, Guildtown (hatchery and tanks), Kindrochet Fish Farm (hatchery, ponds and raceways), Loch Earn (fish cages); Loch Tay (fish cages); Blairgowrie West Mill (freshwater tanks and hatchery). There are also two terrestrial marine aquaculture sites at, Braelin Water, on the North Queich. There is also the SOAFD Salmon Research Unit Cromwell Park, Almondbank. The SOAFD Board is made up of salmon fishery owners or their representatives. The Board has offices and a hatchery and employs water fisheries officers and biologist. Their work includes enforcement, river management, conservation and scientific research.

3.10 In terms of key environmental constraints, abstraction will need to be carefully managed in the context of climate change to protect water levels and in 2018 the River Erich in Blairgowrie saw some of its lowest ever water levels. Following discussions, SEPA worked to minimise the amount of water taken from the river via the lade by working with fish farms in the area. Applications for new finfish facilities, and SEPA abstraction applications, will need to be carefully managed in the context of climate change, to protect water levels.

Summary analysis of the evidence:

There is a limited coastline, and a limited industry presence within Perth and Kinross.

There has been no need for a local aquaculture policy in the current Local Development Plan

Implications for Proposed Plan

The initial implications of the evidence for the Proposed Plan which have been identified so far are set out below. This will be revised and updated following consultation on this Topic Paper.

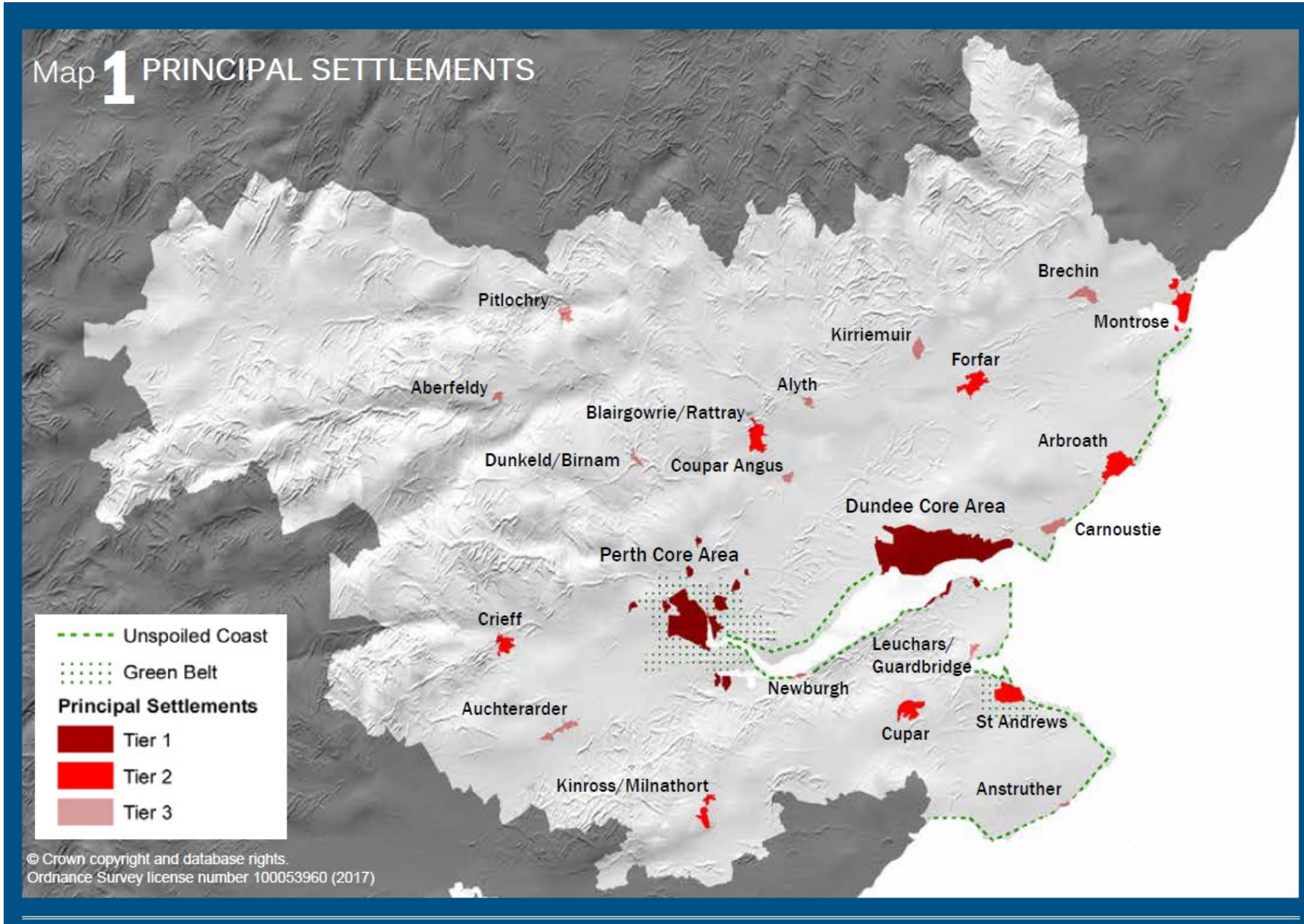
3.11 There is a continuing presumption against further marine finfish farm developments on the north and east coasts to safeguard migratory fish species. It is anticipated that there could be some limited growth of the aquaculture industry, but there is not much existing activity and there is limited potential, so a light touch, relying on national policy and guidance is appropriate. The NPF4 policy framework, and SNH landscape and visual guidance are likely to be sufficient for the consideration of future planning applications for shellfish farms, for finfish hatcheries and freshwater adult growth stage facilities.

Summary of the implications for the Proposed Plan:

A light touch, relying on national policy and guidance is appropriate.

Key discussion points for feedback

Do you think that the national policy framework will be sufficient, or is there a need for local policy?



The unspoiled coast is illustrated on Map 1 and considered further in Policy 9. Local Development Plans will define the nature and extent of these areas, as appropriate, and the types and scale of appropriate development where necessary.

Policy 9 MANAGING TAYPLAN'S ASSETS

'D. Safeguarding the qualities of unspoiled coast identifying and safeguarding parts of the unspoiled coastline along the River Tay Estuary and in Angus and North Fife, that are unsuitable for development. Local Development Plans should also set out policies for their management; identifying areas at risk from flooding and sea level rise and develop policies to manage retreat and realignment, as appropriate. Local Development Plans should have regard to the National Marine Plan, and Regional Marine Plans, where appropriate.'

Appendix 2: The Perth and Kinross Structure Plan approved June 2003

6.18 National guidance requires general protection policies to be set out within Structure Plans on “isolated”, “undeveloped” and “developed” (population greater than 2,000) areas of the coastline. Perth and Kinross contains a significant amount of undeveloped coastline along the Tay Estuary, from Invergowrie to Perth. Consequently, the Carse of Gowrie communities form part of the coast that is defined as undeveloped. This part of the estuary has significant nature conservation interests. In addition, there is an element of developed coast - Perth Harbour and that part of Perth adjacent to the river. Therefore, the coastal area will be safeguarded from inappropriate development through the designation and protection of the Undeveloped Coastline identified in the Key Diagram. It will be the policy of the Structure Plan that:

Environment and Resources Policy 11

The Local Plan will define the ‘developed’ and ‘undeveloped’ coast in detail using the following criteria:

- *Land up to 0.5 km inland from the mean high water mark.*
- *The ‘Firth Lowlands’ corridor in the Tayside Landscape Capacity Study.*
- *Coastal habitats.*

The Local Plan will develop policies for their management and identify areas at risk from flooding and sea level rise and develop policies to manage retreat where appropriate.

Key Diagram

