

Your views are invited on **DRAFT** proposals for:

- the construction of a new East Quay at Nigg Energy Park including dredging and piling; and
- the formation of an adjacent laydown area over the unused area of land and buildings at Dunskeath for the handling and temporary storage of North Sea oil related and renewable energy components.

The combined site area is **11.27 hectares**, which falls into the *Major* development category under the relevant Planning legislation. This requires an application for the proposals to be the subject of a minimum of 12 weeks pre-application notice and formal public consultation with communities on both sides of the Cromarty Firth.

**Please view the exhibition boards and ask questions** of the representatives from the Global Energy Group and their consultants who are on hand to explain the proposals and answer any queries you may have.

**Questionnaire/comment sheets are available for your written views, which can either be left here today or posted or emailed to the planning consultant or the Global Energy Group by 17 April 2019.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** No planning application has been submitted to the Highland Council in relation to this proposal. Any comments made at this stage are to the applicant only and not representations to the Council and would not be considered as part of any future application. Your comments will, however, be used by the consultants to help prepare the proposals. This does not preclude your right to make formal representations to the Council once the application has been submitted.

**The anticipated date for submission of the planning application to the Highland Council is 31 May 2019.**

**An Environmental Impact Assessment is also required as part of the planning process.**

In tandem with the planning process the proposals are also being progressed through the **Marine Licence application procedures** with Marine Scotland under The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations.



## Introduction

After acquiring the Nigg fabrication yard in 2011 the Global Energy Group made significant investments in site infrastructure, general enhancement and in the establishment of the Nigg Skills Academy on-site training facility. This and Nigg's strategic location close to the Moray Firth has seen Global capture of a significant share of rig inspection, repair and maintenance (IRM) and renewable energy device manufacturing, assembly, installation and maintenance contracts.

The upgrading and extending the South Quay in 2015 also significantly enhanced Nigg's ability to attract work relating to a resurgence in the North Sea Oil sector. It also provides facilities in support of the construction and marshalling of components for off-shore wind turbine projects. This success has seen the growth in demand for further berthing and laydown space. The proposed East Quay development now aims to address this demand and help create additional employment opportunities.

Until relatively recently the potential to expand the Energy Park in this area was limited due to the lack of available land to the east. However, with the purchase of the adjacent Dunskeath House and associated land, the proposed development is now viable for expansion. This is regarded as the most practical and safe option for handling and storing renewables and North Sea oil components, which would arrive, be assembled and ultimately leave by sea. The alternative of expanding over vacant land to the east of the B9175 public road is less attractive. This would involve regular movements of large components across this road and unlike the current proposals does not provide a direct access to existing and proposed berthing facilities in the Cromarty Firth. The concept of an East Quay was also identified within the Highland Council's Nigg Masterplan.



Figure 1: Location Plan

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1. view of existing access from the north east towards graving dock



2. view from north east of land immediately east of existing access



3. view to the north of scrub and farm land



4. view from the centre of the site to the north east



5. view from below Castlecraig Quarry looking west to the site (middle ground)



6. view of existing trees and the now derelict Dunskeath Cottages



8. right — grass track along east side of site looking over the former submarine mine depot to the east

9. nearest occupied houses to the site at Nigg Ferry.



7. view of outbuildings at Dunskeath House and Cottages

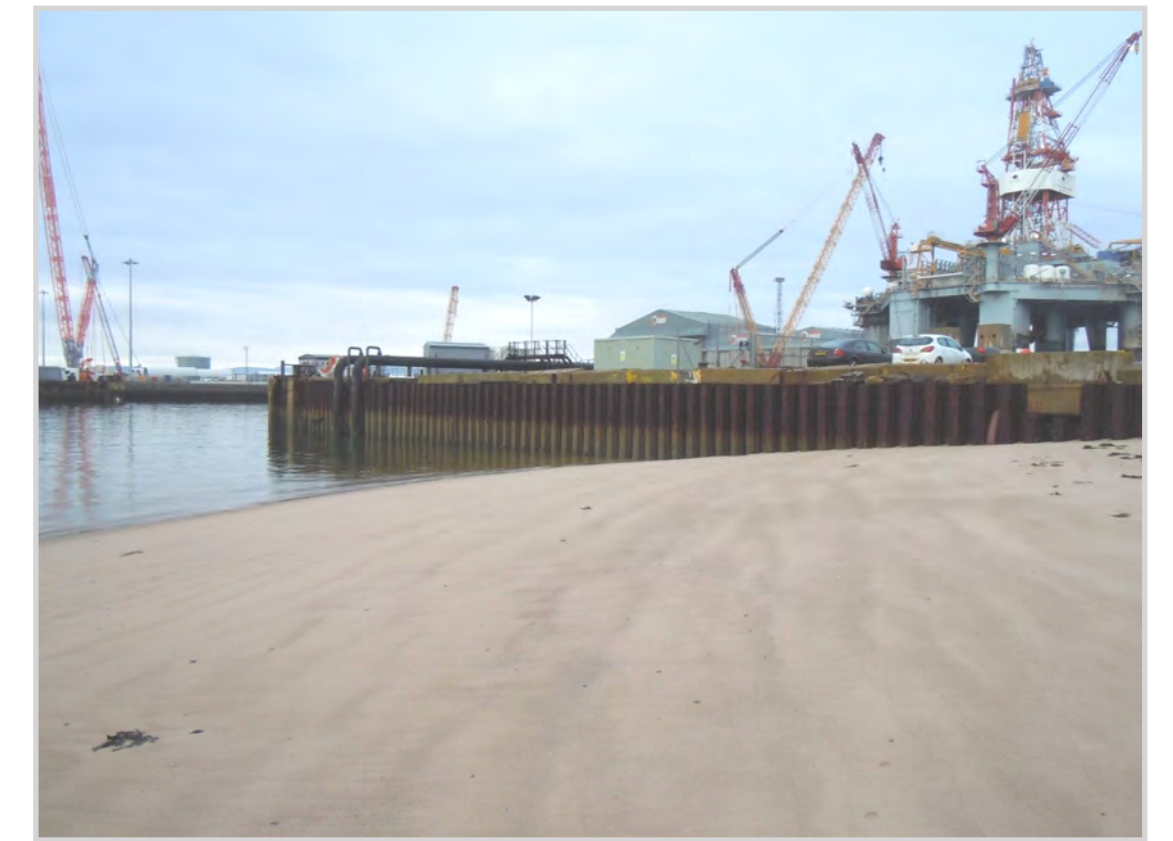




10. view of gated access from the east, to be main access to the new laydown area



11. view of existing coastal defence looking east towards the South Quay



12. view from the shore/beach looking north east towards graving dock



13. view of existing holiday cottage from the south west



14. open land on north side of Dunskeath House to be used as laydown area



15. view from Nigg Ferry looking north west towards proposed laydown area



17. view of existing beach/shore and coastal defence from the north west



18. beach/shore on south side of Dunskeath House



16. the remains of Dunskeath House from the south west



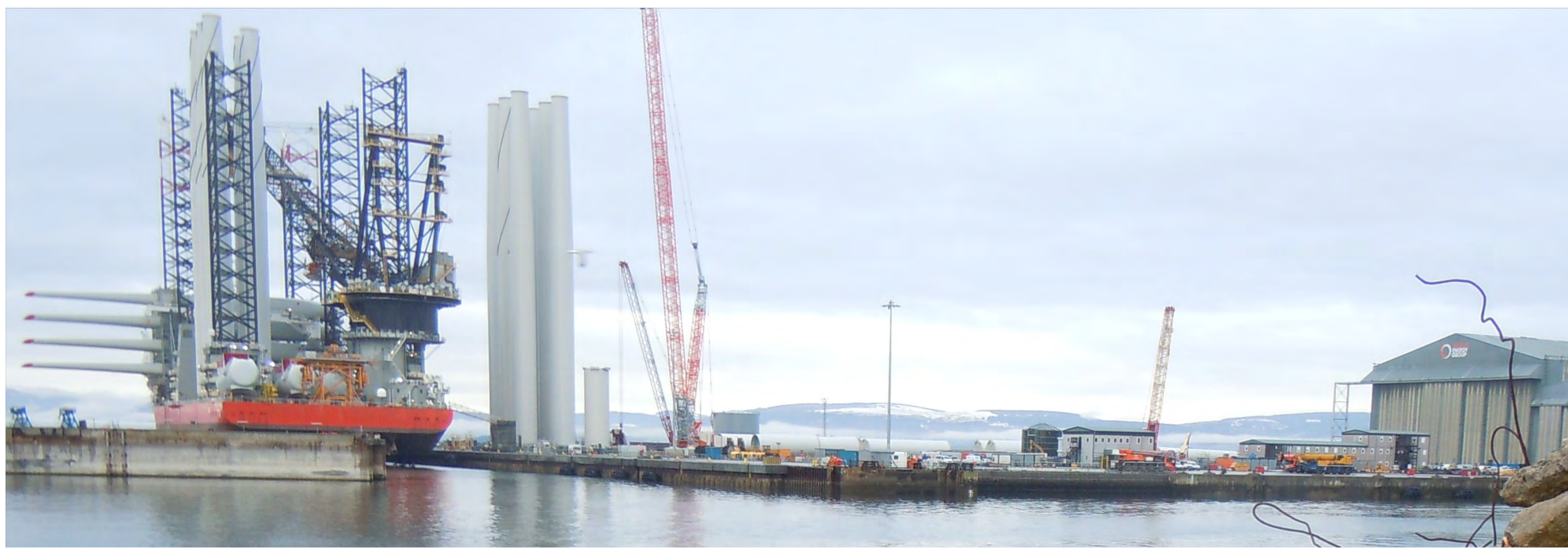
The proposals are supported by national, regional and local planning, economic development and environmental policies. These and future development opportunities offered by the Nigg Energy Park and over proximal lands to the east are identified within the following: -

- The National Planning Framework (NPF3) (June 2014)
- Scottish Planning Policy (June 2014)
- The Inner Moray Firth Ports and Sites Strategy (June 2006)
- The Nigg Development Masterplan (March 2013)
- The National Renewables Infrastructure Plan (NRIP) (2009)
- The Highland Wide Local Development Plan (April 2012)
- The Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (July 2015).

## National Planning Policy and Advice

National Planning Framework 3 sets the context for development planning and provides a framework for the spatial development and a long-term vision for development and investment across Scotland as a whole over the next 20 to 30 years. The Nigg yard is mentioned as:

- a diverse and distinctive opportunity to develop a successful, sustainable place in the context of the Inverness and the Inner Moray Firth City Region;
- a key port and industrial site well-placed to take advantage of investment in the energy sector, both renewables and oil and gas with *"its deep water is an asset of strategic importance"*; and
- part of the Low Carbon and Renewables North Enterprise Area where development will go hand in hand with continuing protection of the very special environment of the Firths.



## The Highland-wide Local Development Plan

This supports the growth of jobs and population within the Easter Ross area. Specific policy advice in Policy 23 supports the development of Nigg and proximal lands in line with the Council's approved Masterplan.

## The Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan

This identifies Nigg as a key employment site and forms part of the Plan's strategy to develop the fabrication industry in the Cromarty Firth area, particularly related to North Sea oil and the renewables industry.

The Nigg fabrication yard, oil terminal to the north and proximal lands to the east (*all labelled NG1 on Inset Map right*) are allocated for industrial use covering 210.9ha. Only the East Quay proposal forms part of this allocation. This is potentially due to the house and associated lands of Dunskeath House not being available during preparation of the Local Development Plan and Nigg Masterplan.

Developer requirements include:

- accordance with the adopted Nigg Masterplan including its Habitats Regulations Appraisal;
- consideration of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the wider area
- Contamination Assessment;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Coastline Management Plan;
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

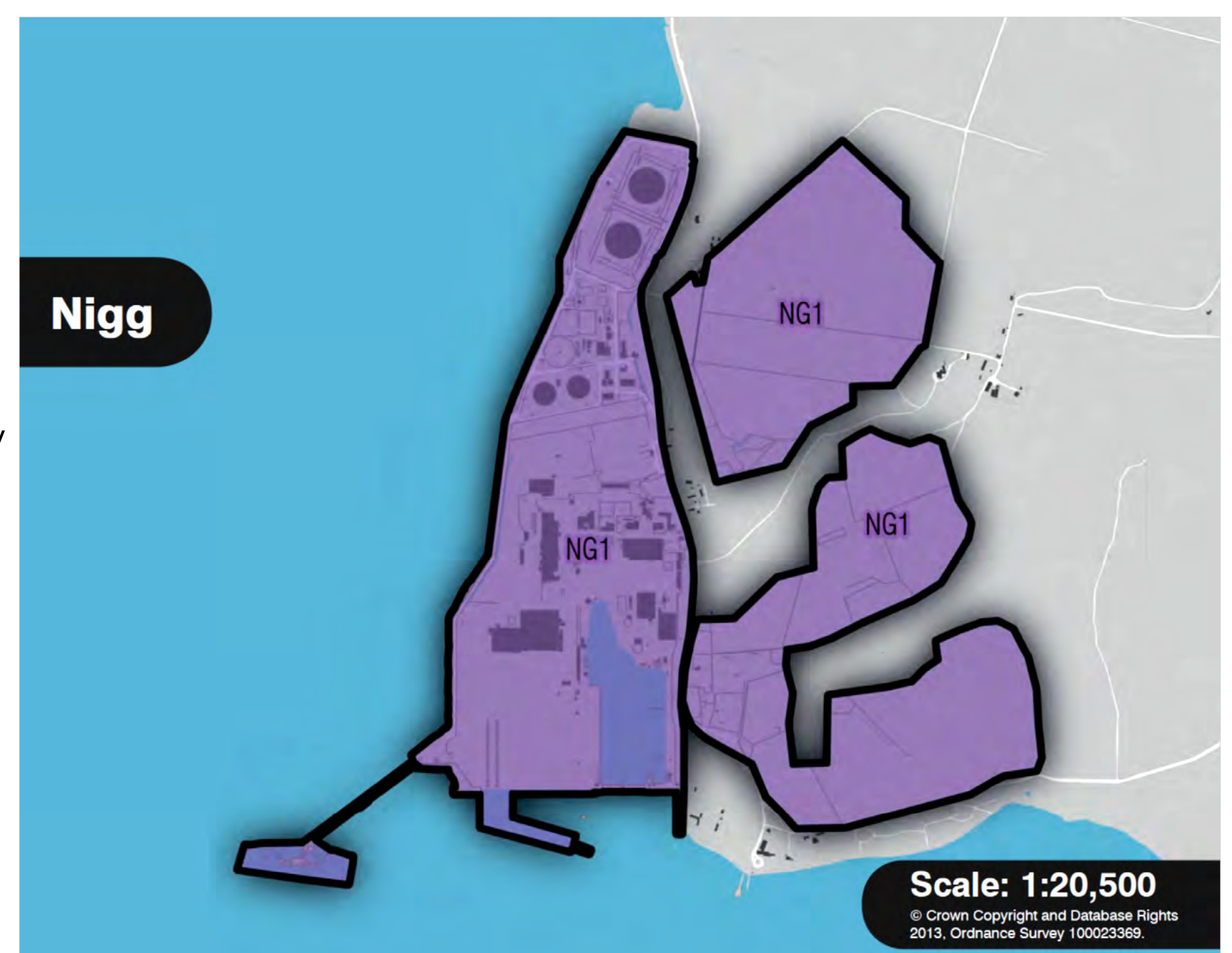


Figure 4 : Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan — Nigg Inset Map



## The Nigg Development Master Plan

This is the adopted Supplementary Guidance associated with the Nigg Fabrication Yard, Oil Terminal and proximal lands to the east, identified as industrial allocations within the Local Development Plan.

It is based on a vision of “*world-leading capability for Scotland ...and delivery of excellence in oil and gas engineering*” and directed towards “*unlocking the development potential of the site*” and specifically promotes potential uses to maximise employment opportunities.

Feasible options to bring the site back into use as a multi-user industrial facility are explored based on a market assessment and the engineering information available at the time (2009) to ensure its validity and fitness for purpose. Two principle options emerged from this:

1. **Diversify activities at Nigg whilst building on its oil and gas industry reputation and introduce a renewable energy mix.**
2. **Allocate the majority of the site for renewable energy sector activities.**

The Highland Council agreed to continue developing both Options to maintain flexibility in promoting the site as a multi-user facility. These options are illustrated in Figures 6.3 and 6.4 of the Masterplan (*see below*).

The proposed site (with the exception of some of the proposed East Quay) forms part of the red line site boundary shown on Figure 2.3 of the Masterplan (*right*).

Figure 6.4 ‘Option 2 – Renewables – “Green Energy Park”’ shows the location of the proposed East Quay but with access through to allocated land to the north of the proposed site.

While the 2013 adoption of the Supplementary Guidance is recent in planning policy terms, in 2018 pre-application advice from the Council it was acknowledged that specific detailed land use proposals have evolved since the Masterplan was drafted. The Masterplan still provides good background information and it is expected that its aims and more general principles are relevant to the current proposals.

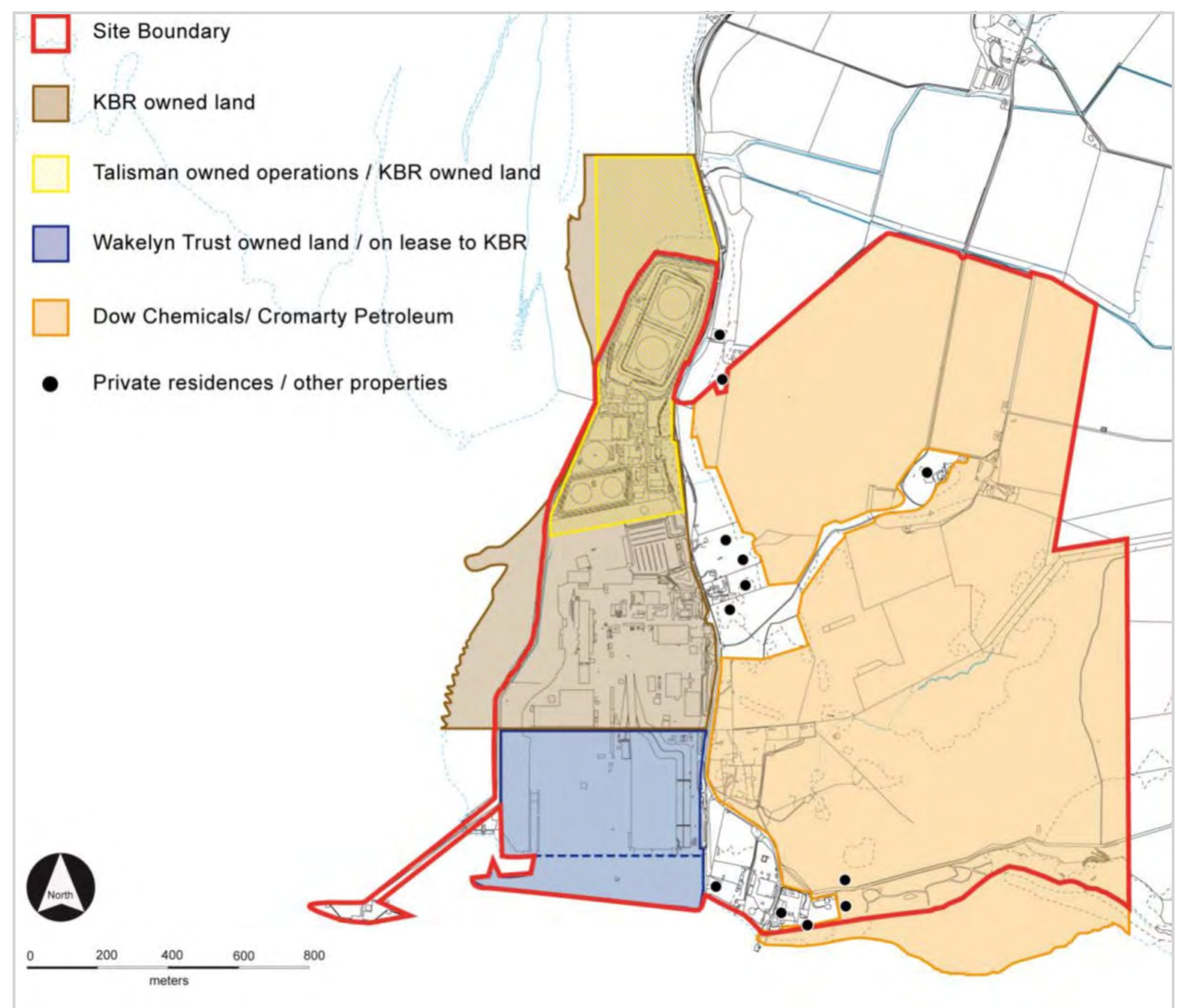


Figure 5: Figure 2.3 from Nigg Master Plan — Land Ownership ➤

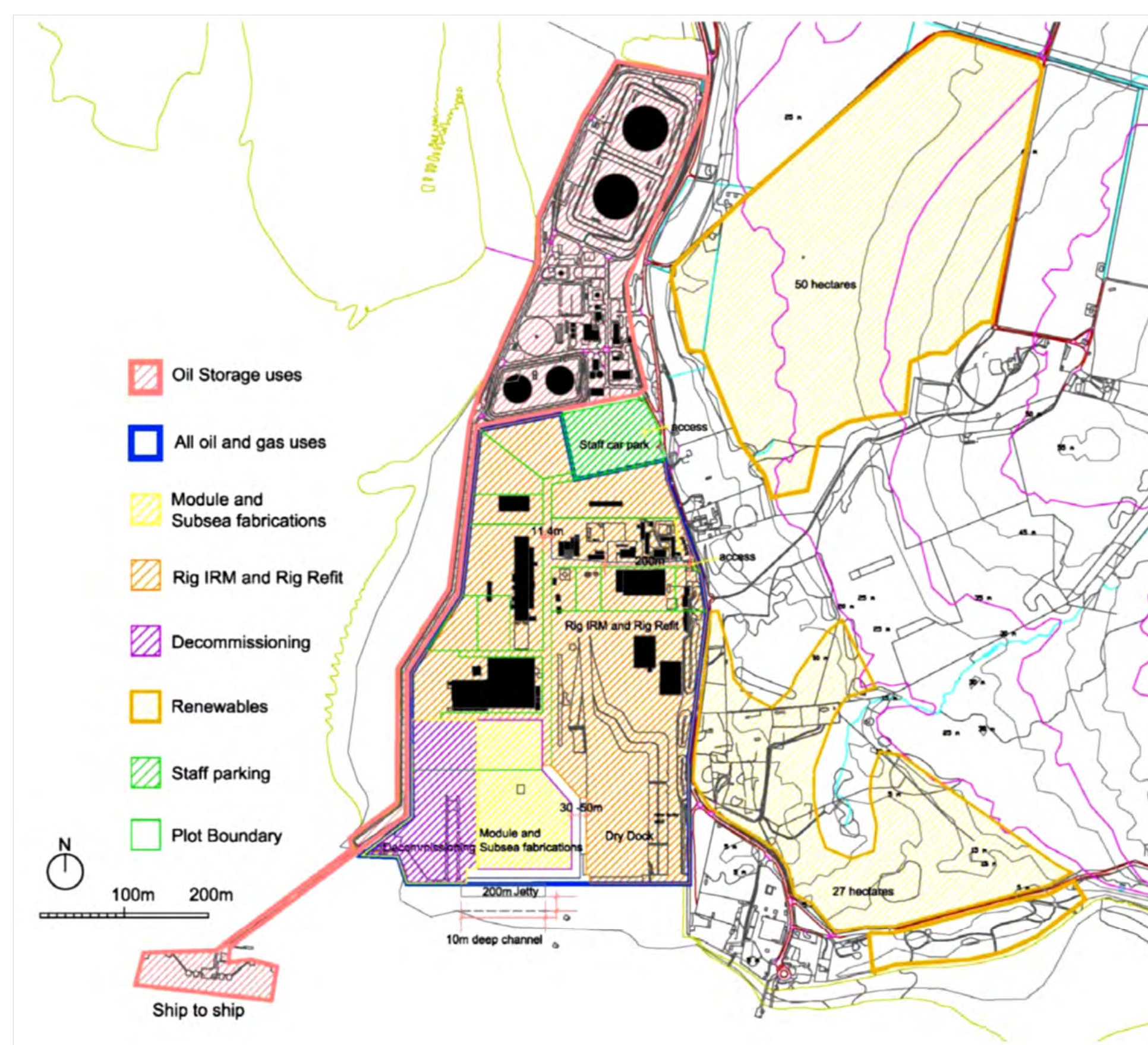


Figure 6: Figure 6.3 from Nigg Master Plan: Option 1—Oil, Gas and Renewables

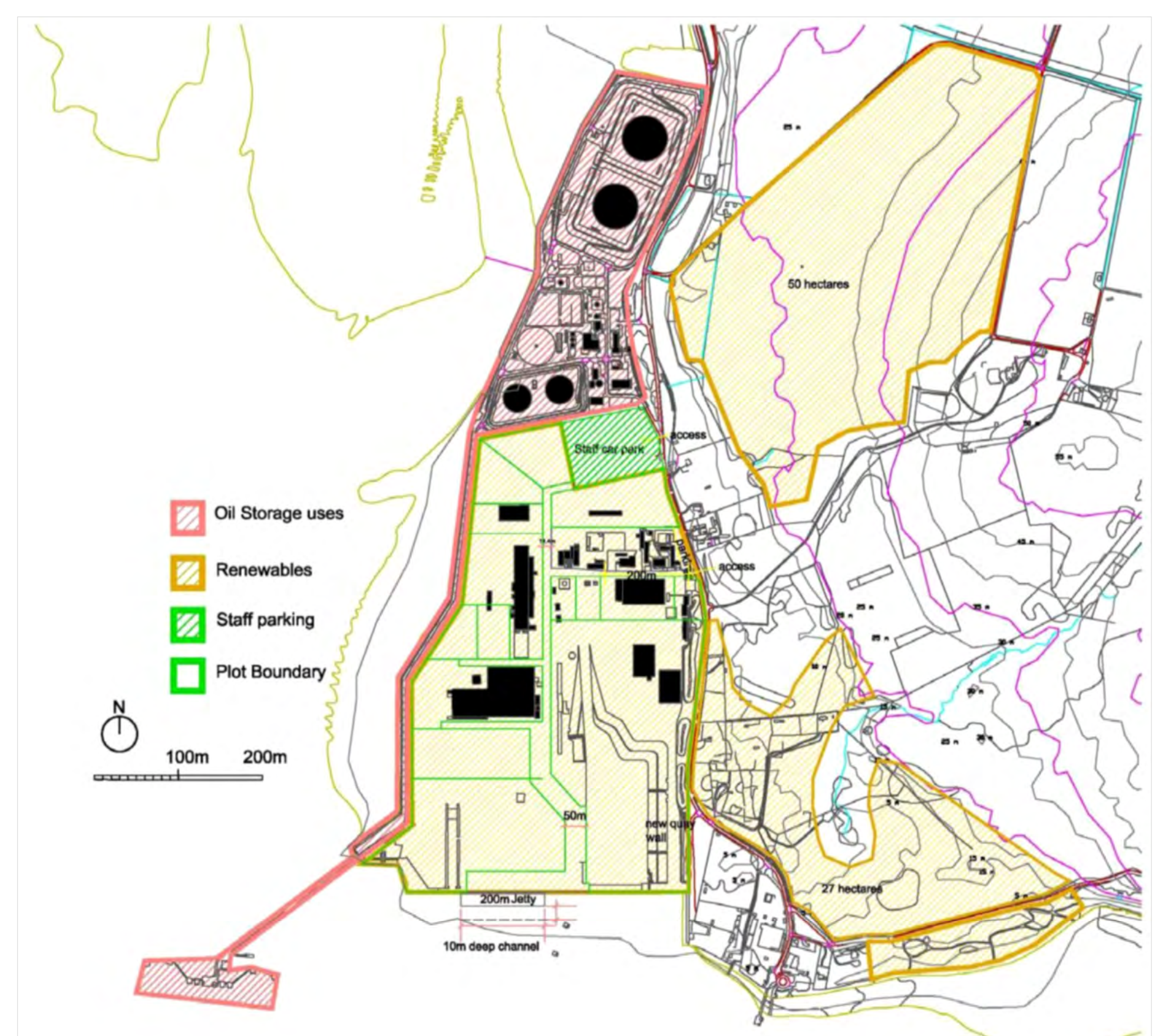


Figure 7: Figure 6.4 from Nigg Master Plan: Option 2 — Renewables/‘Green’ Energy Park’



## Context

The major industrial complex at Nigg was established within a high quality local environment, demonstrating the capability for the land to accommodate large scale industry and for any developments to be sensitive to key landscape and ecological features, cultural heritage and the historic environment. The current and historic operations at Nigg have also co-existed with the nearest local communities.

The Nigg Energy Park operates alongside environmentally sensitive habitats, many of them designated as sites of significant ecological value with international, national and local importance (see Figure 8 right).

## Pre-application Advice Summary

Pre-application advice was obtained from The Highland Council as Planning Authority in 2018. Overall this acknowledged the key role Nigg plays as a major employer in the area and the need to ensure it is well placed to expand and re-develop to take advantage of arising opportunities. The broad principle of development is considered to be acceptable when assessed against the Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance. A number of issues which should be addressed as part of any application were set out in this advice and are summarised below.

**Policy:** *Development of Nigg as multi-function/user site is supported.*

- Only a small part of the area identified forms part of the allocated land, however, the principle of the 'East Quay' was set out in the Masterplan.
- The use of Dunskeath House land to service the 'East Quay' appears to be logical and efficient.

**Natural Heritage:** *The key natural heritage issues are likely to be impacts on designated features of European importance especially bottlenose dolphins and potentially subtidal and intertidal habitats and the knock on effects for wintering birds.*

- Establishing the potential implications for the integrity of the features will depend, in particular, on the quality and outcome of further assessments of the dredging and disposal of materials, underwater noise from piling and other activities and vessel movements. It is likely that the impacts on these features can be addressed through design and mitigation.
- Further information is required on cumulative effects and how the impacts of the proposed development will be assessed in combination with other existing or proposed developments.

**Flooding & Drainage:** *To avoid delay and potential objection the following information must be submitted in support of the application: Map of proposed surface water drainage layout, Map of the layout in relation to the coastal flood level, Map of existing waste water outfalls and how these will be managed; Schedule of mitigation including pollution prevention measures.*

**Historic Environment:** *Justification would be required for the demolition of the historic assets. The site is considered to have archaeological potential.*

**Noise:** *Construction and operational noise should be considered and assessed.*

**Transport:** *The development should consider impact on the local road network, road users and adjacent communities.*

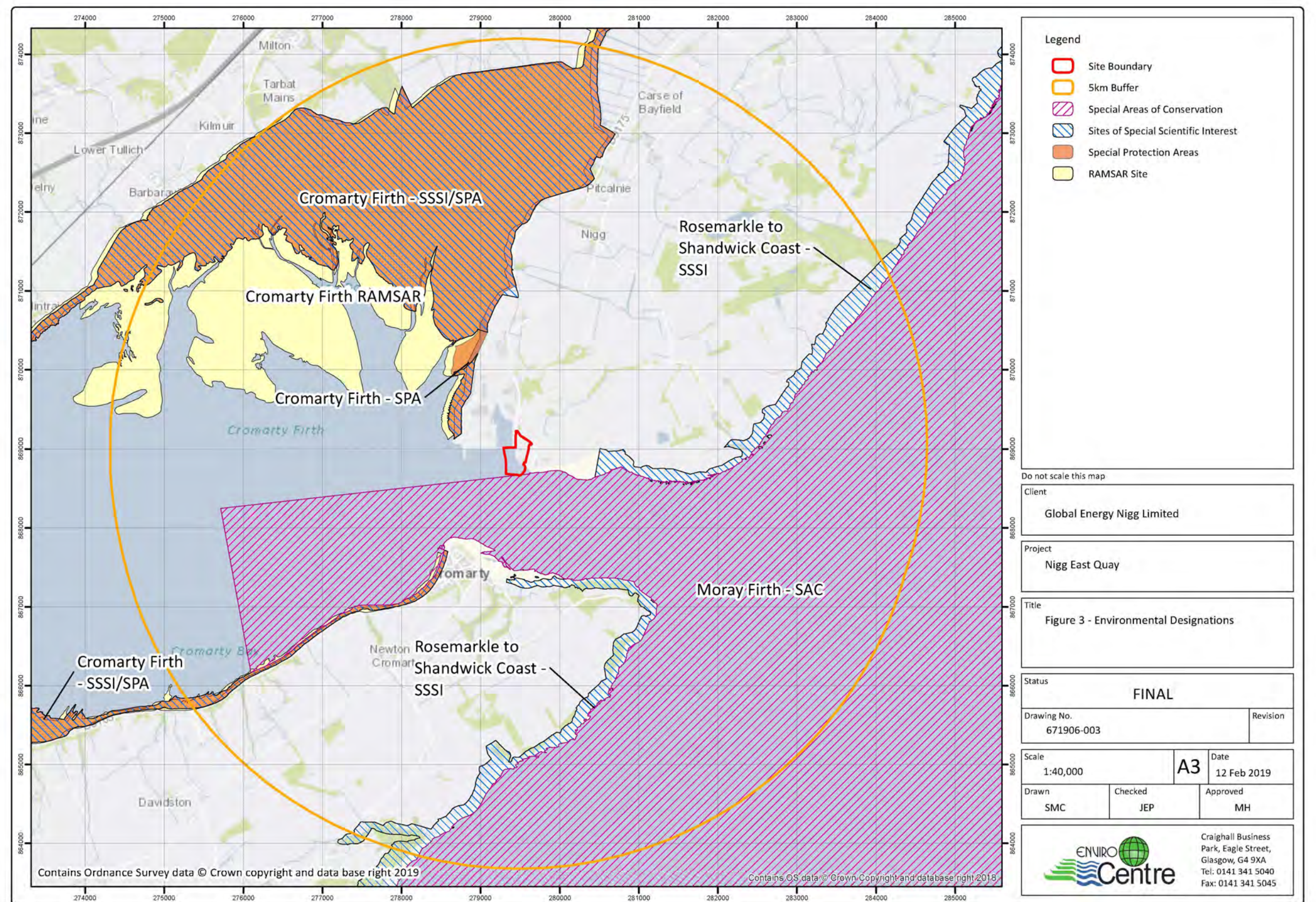


Figure 8: Environmental Designations



## Potential Impacts to be Assessed within the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

The EIA will assess predicted impacts and associated effects across both terrestrial and marine components of the proposed development. The EIA will therefore be prepared to cover requirements under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) EIA Regulations, and Marine (Scotland) EIA Regulations.

### Topics

Topics that we propose are **scoped IN** given potential for significant environmental effects (before mitigation) are:

- marine ecology including underwater noise;
- airborne noise;
- water environment and coastal processes;
- traffic and transport; and
- other issues (including air quality and navigation);

Topics we propose are **scoped OUT** of the EIA but require further standalone assessment:

- terrestrial ecology including bats;
- ornithology;
- landscape and visual; and
- cultural heritage and archaeology;

Topics that are scoped OUT of EIA and all assessment are:

- natural disasters;
- population and human health; and
- climate change.



Matters to be assessed in each topic:

- **Marine ecology** will look at the impacts of construction (e.g. dredging, piling, turbidity, sediment release) and operation (e.g. vessel movements) upon receptors such as bottlenose dolphins and harbour seal (protected by the Moray Firth Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Dornoch Firth and Morrich More SAC respectively). It will also look at effects upon Atlantic salmon, eel, and lamprey from construction and operation. It will use underwater noise projections from construction operations to assess the threshold of effects through the water. It will also assess any impacts upon the intertidal area.
- **Water environmental and coastal processes** will look at potential changes to the hydrological regime including wave patterns, sediment dispersion, water quality and drainage
- **Airborne noise** will look at the effects of construction and operation of the new quay in respect to nearby residents and businesses. It uses modelling of construction and operation against collected background monitoring to understand if any potential increases in noise are likely
- **Traffic and transport** will assess any impacts upon the road network owing to the new development, whether during construction or operation.

**Other Issues** — will summarise those assessments carried out at a less detailed level, where significant effects are not expected. These are as follows: -

- **Terrestrial ecology** discusses the results of bat surveys carried out on the remaining outbuildings associated with the former Dunskeath House lands, along with suitability of the habitat for other protected species.
- **Cultural Heritage** will look at the impacts of the proposed development upon the Dunskeath House lands and appraise the historic importance of the area and the impact associated with the loss of the remaining buildings.
- **Landscape and visual** will appraise the difference in the landscape from the new development and understand the change in visual appearance from 8 different representative chosen viewpoints (agreed with Highland Council — see separate drawing) around the site.
- **An ornithological report** will be produced, to demonstrate the number, species and patterns of use in and around the site by birds, as well as any mitigation required.
- **Air quality** will be discussed in principle (i.e. no modelling is required) upon nearby receptors.
- **Navigation** will be discussed in relation to protocols for vessel management.

The Project Team

Global Energy Nigg Ltd has appointed the following consultants to address the foregoing planning and environmental issues and prepare detailed proposals: -

Topic	Specialist
Project Management, EIA Coordination, Marine Ecology, Terrestrial Ecology, Water Environment, Airborne Noise, Other Issues, Sediment and Best Practicable Environmental Option Advice (BPEO).	EnviroCentre Ltd
Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	Headland Archaeology
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Douglas Harman Landscape Planning
Traffic and Transport	SYSTRA
Planning and Consultation	GH Johnston Building Consultants Ltd
Engineering Input	Arch Henderson LLP
Underwater Noise	Irwin Carr Consulting

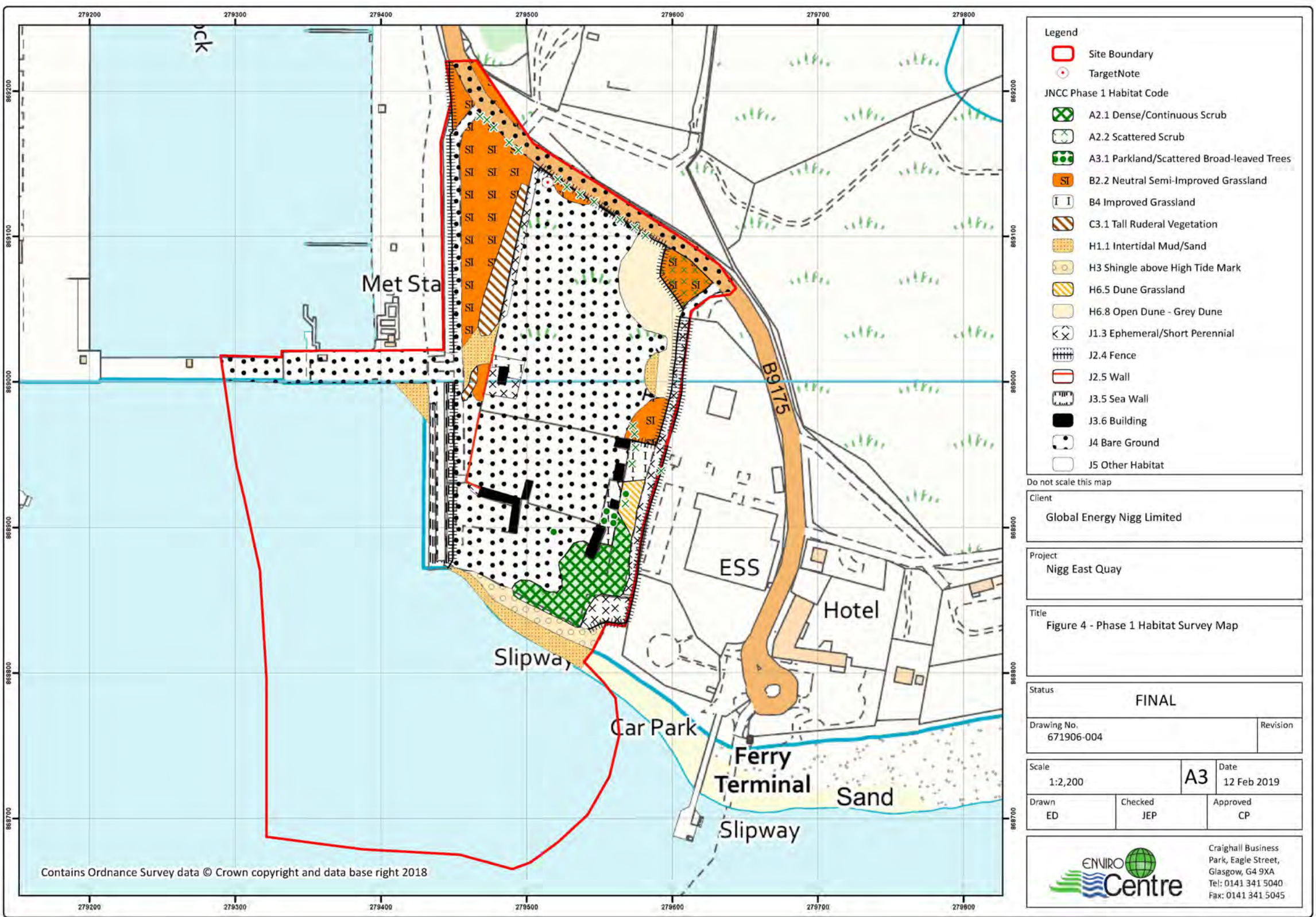


Figure 9: Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map (from EIA Scoping Report)

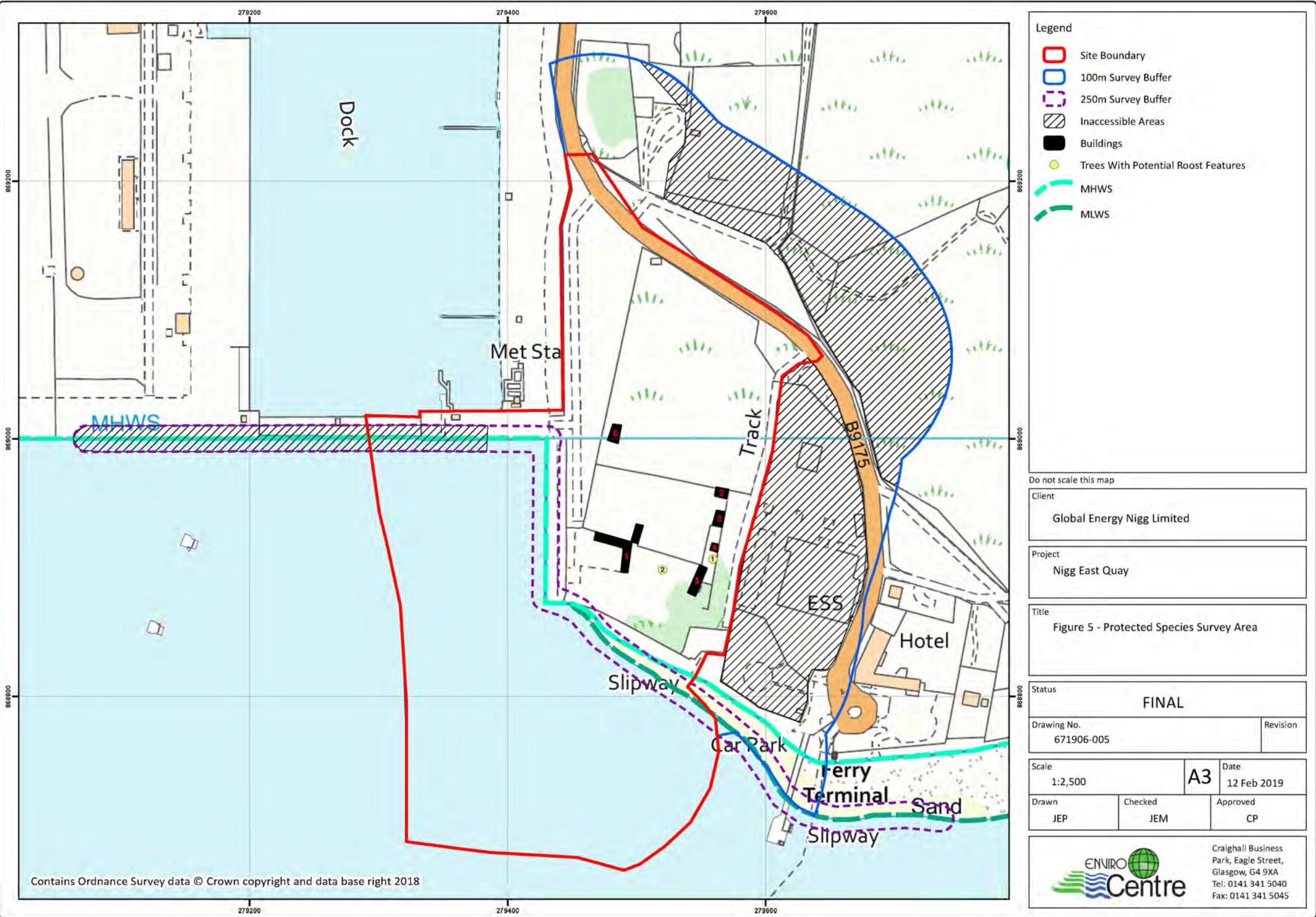


Figure 10: Protected Species Survey Area (from EIA Scoping Report)





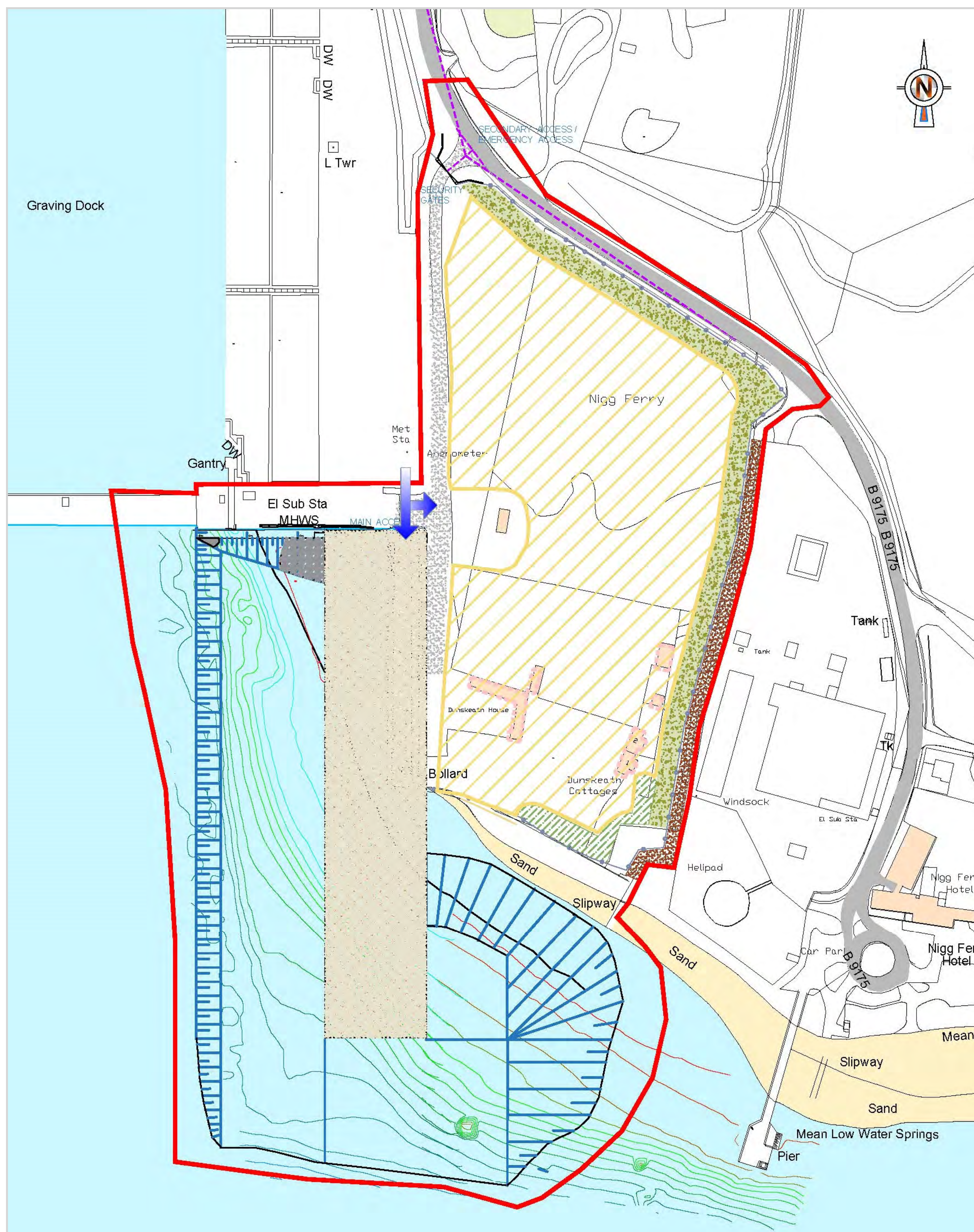
## Outline Description

The proposed development contains the following: -

- A proposed east quay of plan area 250m by 50m (0.88ha) constructed using perimeter piling to retain locally dredged material as infill.
- Associated fendering and rock armouring.
- Dredging (method to be determined) of approximately 140,000m<sup>3</sup> to achieve a minimum sea bed level at the main west facing berth of 12m below chart datum to facilitate the proposed development.
- High level lighting to quayside in accordance with Port Regulations.
- Sea water extraction for fire-fighting capability.
- Re-use of approximately 70,000m<sup>3</sup> of dredged materials within the quay structure (quantities to be determined and material characterisation and sampling to be agreed with Marine Scotland).
- Disposal of excess suitable dredged material (approximately 70,000m<sup>3</sup>) within The Sutors licenced disposal site.
- Demolition and removal of buildings on site associated with the former Dunskeath House;
- Preparatory groundwork and associated landscaping for provision of a laydown area for handling and temporary storage of plant and renewable energy components.
- Access provision from the B1975 (for occasional use and emergency purposes).
- Security lighting and fencing associated with the laydown area.

The main elements of the proposals are indicated on the Draft Site Layout Plan below.

## Draft Site Layout



### LEGEND

- site
- existing road - adopted
- existing road - private
- existing buildings
- existing grass track retained
- existing scrub land
- maximum footprint of proposed laydown area
- proposed east quay
- proposed 10m landscaped bund
- demolition
- security fence
- feature wall & gate pillars (to match existing)
- security gate
- dredging extents

Figure 11: Draft Site Layout Plan



## Draft Engineering Drawings

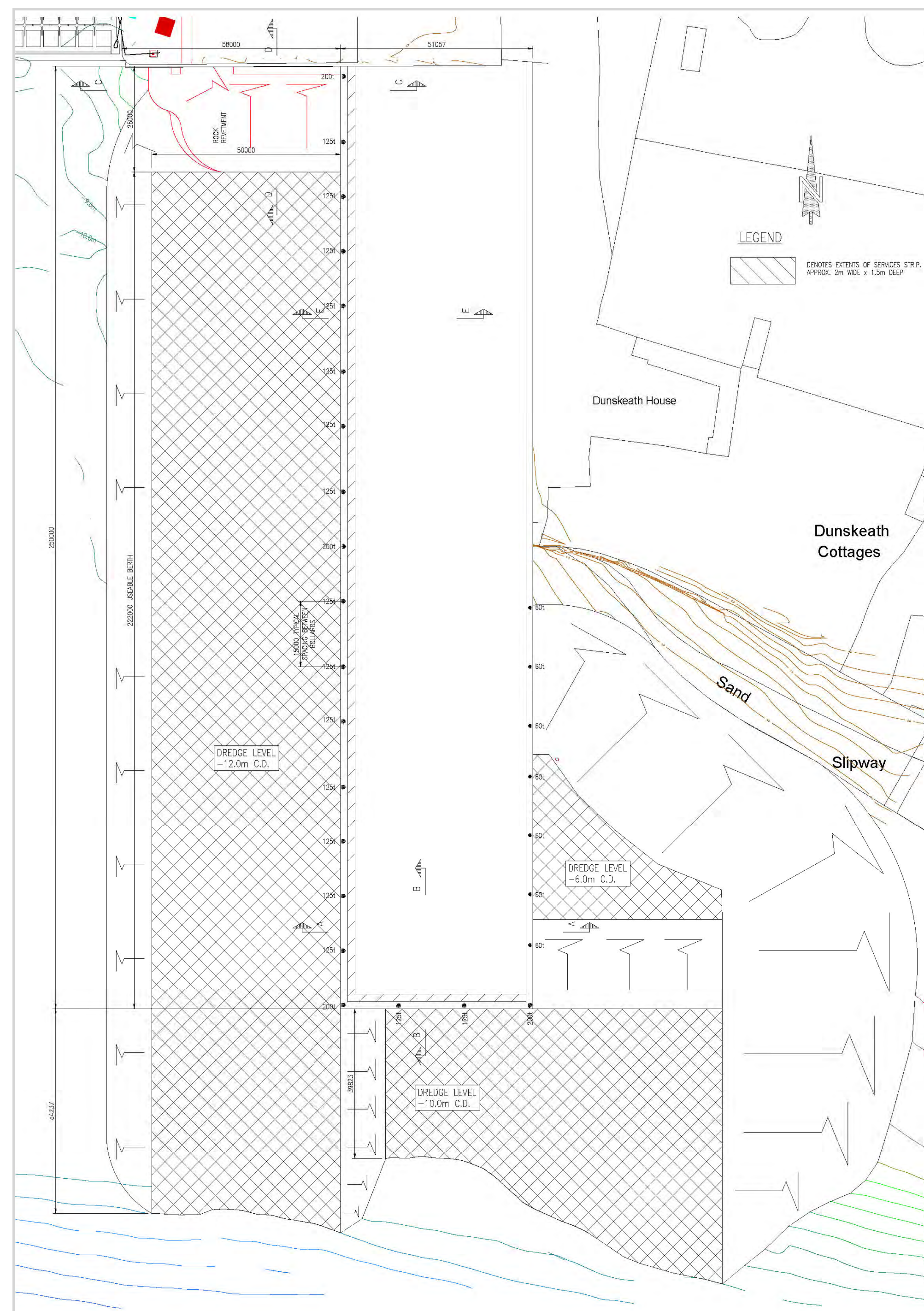


Figure 12: Draft General Arrangement and Tie Rod Layout

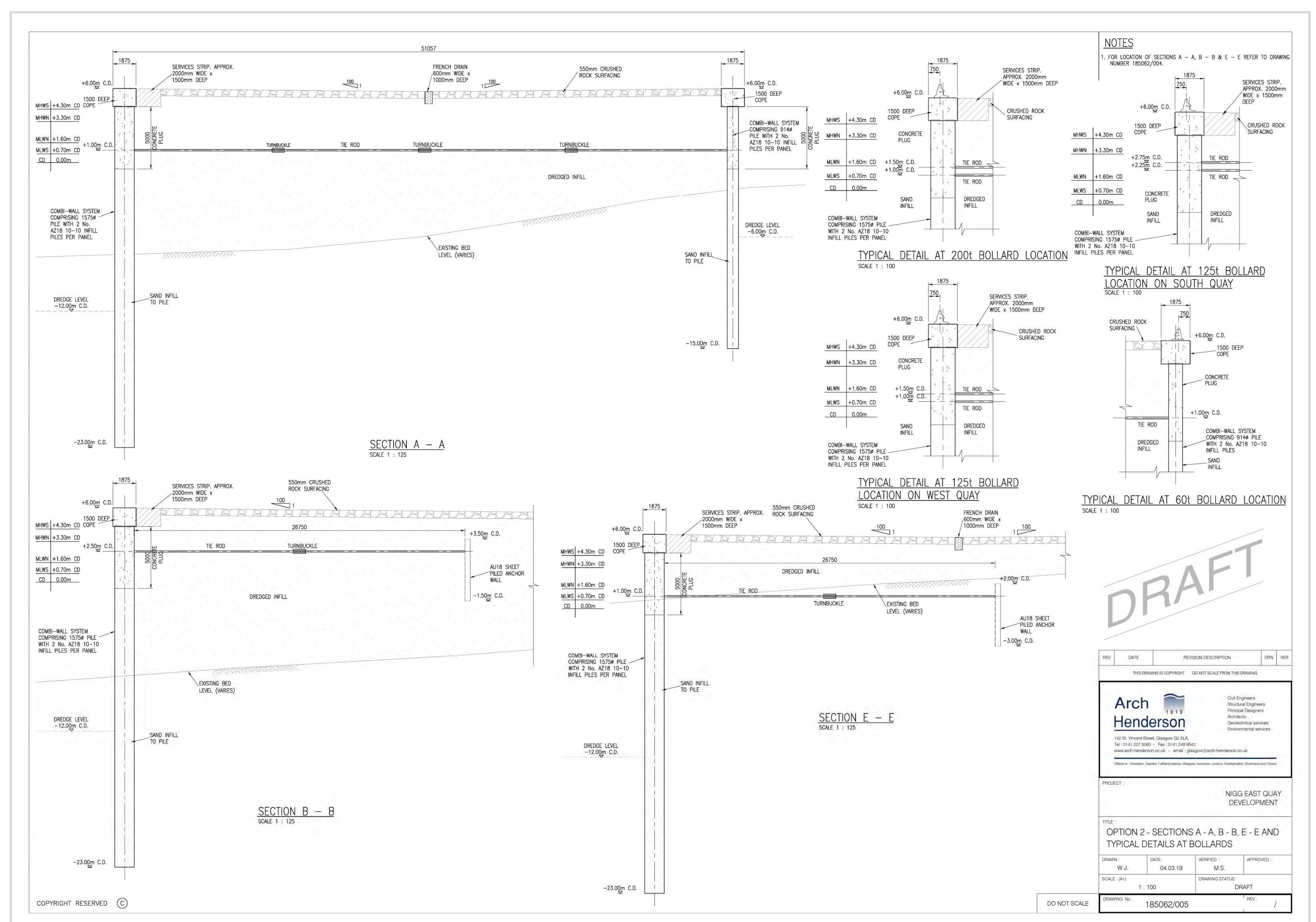


Figure 13: Draft Sections and Typical Details at Bollards



## Benefits of the Proposed Development

It is considered that the proposals will help:

- significantly enhance the berthing and storage capacity of the Facility;
- maximise work opportunities for the Port;
- allow us to facilitate dry docking opportunities in the future;
- trigger investment on the site and into the wider economy;
- create new direct and indirect jobs;
- provide opportunities for the supply chain;
- build confidence for the future;
- further enhance the reputation of Nigg and the Cromarty Firth; and
- provide opportunities for both the Offshore Renewables and Oil and Gas sectors.

In addition, the proposed development:

- is in line with national, regional and local planning policies and guidance (*see below*);
- will enhance Nigg's reputation and attractiveness as a multi-function user facility; and
- demonstrates the Global Energy Group's long term commitment to continue to invest in and develop our flagship facility.



## Conformity with the Development Plan

In the pre-application response Planning Authority officials advised that while not be strictly in accordance with the Development Plan allocation or the Supplementary Guidance, the proposed development does not necessarily conflict either. In this regard the following views are relevant: -

- The site largely lies within the wider Masterplan boundary, is contiguous with the existing allocation, and is compatible with existing land uses at Nigg Energy Park.
- Council officials acknowledge that land ownership was previously a factor in the proposed site not forming part of the allocation.
- The aims and general principles of the Masterplan will still be relevant to this site/proposal.
- As the East Quay element of this proposal is identified as a potential access to the sea in Option 2 of the Masterplan, the Council officials accept the principle subject to the relevant constraints being suitably addressed.
- Having lay down areas/working space to service the proposed new quay immediately adjacent to it, is more logical and efficient than utilising land to east of the existing complex across the B9175 road.



## Pre-application Procedure to date

Proposal of Application Notice:

- Served on the Highland Council on 27 February 2019
- Served on Nigg & Shandwick Community Council, Cromarty Community Council and the Wakelyn Trust on 27 February 2019

Screening Opinion Request under Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations:

- Sent to the Highland Council as Planning Authority on 14 February 2019
- Opinion received on 8 March 2019 — confirmed that an EIA is required

Scoping Opinion Request under Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations:

- Sent to the Highland Council as Planning Authority on 14 February 2019
- Opinion due by 21 March 2019

Press Notice: Published in Ross-shire Journal on 15 March 2019 informing of Public Exhibitions and inviting responses by 17 April 2019

Public Events:

- Exhibition in The West Church Hall, Cromarty on 26 March 2109
- Exhibition in Nigg Village Hall, Nigg on 27 March 2019
- Further exhibition to comply with Marine Regulations on a date in April and at a venue to be confirmed

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Thank you for taking part.

**YOUR COMMENTS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BEFORE FINALISING THE PLANNING APPLICATION TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE END OF MAY 2019.**

Please look out for this in the local press.

Please place comments sheets in the post box provided or return them **by Wednesday 17 April 2019 to:**

**G.H. Johnston Building Consultants Ltd**  
**Willow House**  
**Stoneyfield Business Park**  
**Inverness**  
**IV2 7PA**

Alternatively you can email your comments to: **admin@ghjohnston.co.uk**

or

**alastair.kennedy@gegroun.com**

These exhibition boards can also be viewed on

**www.nigg.com** and  
**www.ghjohnston.com**

## Draft Timetable

- APRIL 2019: further exhibition under Marine Regulations — TBC
- 17 APRIL 2019: closing date for comments on planning exhibition
- 28 MARCH to 24 MAY 2019: consider comments and finalise proposals
- 31 MAY 2019: submit planning application to The Highland Council
- 10 SEPTEMBER 2019: application to be considered by North Planning Applications Committee
- NOVEMBER 2019: commence construction on site