



Public Consultation – Ariogan

FIRST CONSULTATION – 20TH JUNE 2024, OBAN (also OHS 19/06/24)

Area	Comment	FLS Response
GENERAL	OHS: Wildlife hides (wildlife spot, habitats) Tree Maze	These could be developed as part of a community project
ORCHARD	Orchard / PYO	This would fit nicely alongside many of the other community projects suggested as part of this consultation.
EXERCISE TRAIL	Exercise trail through wood with points for eg situps/ balance / pullups	This is not something that FLS would provide directly but could be led as a community project. FLS is primarily focused on natural opportunities to get outdoors to promote health and wellbeing. There might be opportunities closer to town to provide this type of activity where larger number of people could benefit. <i>(not sure if anywhere nearer to town for this?)</i>
RENEWABLE	Wind turbine on top of the hill to supply Scottish Water and Oban	FLS is a major host of Scotland’s renewable energy infrastructure. Currently the projects we help deliver are driven by scale and the ability to significantly reduce the climate impact of electricity generation. Individual renewable infrastructure is not something FLS would deliver, however a community/ commercial opportunity might be possible.
TRAILS	Make a feature of the Drover’s route Retain good, maintained access to loch; add paths around loch. Make loch main feature Build footpath back to loch Walking trails appreciated on Oban side; bike trails on Lerags side	Multiuser trails for walking, biking and wheeling will likely form part of the final proposal. There are financial constraints and FLS are looking for partners to deliver community led/ supported projects. Almost all trails in Scotland are designated “multi-user” so it is not normally possible to designate a trail as walking only. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code makes clear the responsibilities for anyone taking access.

	<p>Walking trail: loop from Ariogan to reservoir to Tulloch road end or pavement</p> <p>Walking route to 'fairy hill'</p> <p>Walking routes to prevent conflict with cyclists</p> <p>Native woodland recreational walks</p> <p>Kids area</p> <p>Trails for children with interest points</p>	
ILLEGAL ACCESS	<p>Motorised bikes are accessing the woodland and using vehicles with trailers to get in</p>	<p>Advise members of the public disturbed by motorised bikes on the land to contact Police Scotland.</p>
CROFTS	<p>Take public sector leadership role in creating woodland crofts/new crofts; opportunities for young people to enter crofting and develop croft house.</p> <p>Starter farms / crofts</p> <p>Pilots – agriculture in nature</p>	<p>We will continue to follow up discussions with the agriculture sector about possible options for areas to be leased as a starter farm, possibly with the Argyll Agricultural Trust.</p>
ACCESS	<p>Pedestrian connectivity to Oban</p> <p>Walking trails from Cologin through Ariogan to Oban</p> <p>Access from town; boundary FLS and neighbouring forest.</p> <p>Car park and cycle racks at Ariogan entrance</p> <p>Pavement access into town from Ariogan entrance to Tullich; of great interest to Lerags community, Ariogan community, Mart and associated users as well as general community benefit.</p>	<p>Pedestrian access is an early aspiration and FLS are looking for funding in order to deliver this. Any potential partners or community groups who would like to work with us should get in touch.</p> <p>The existing road entrance is the most obvious place for a car park in the area. FLS will look to develop this over time. Any development for public use would need planning permission. There are financial constraints and FLS are looking for partners to deliver community led/supported projects.</p>
CYCLING	<p>Mountain bike trails – local hub</p> <p>Less env impact than walking if custom built trails?</p> <p>Very few people hiking in area?</p> <p>Built trails, especially children and community</p> <p>Sustainable outdoor recreation; locals and attract visitors – engage local clubs. Promote outdoor education; improve public health</p>	<p>FLS recognises the benefits of mountain biking across all the areas you have mentioned. FLS is currently reviewing its operating model and how we deliver across our priorities. The focus right now is on financial sustainability and ensuring that FLS can continue to deliver for the people of Scotland. At this time FLS would not be in a position to build or fund purpose built mountain bike trails in Ariogan, or indeed expand our formal offer more widely on the West Coast.</p>

	<p>Priority proximity to Oban; well-built trails; good surface so drainage a consideration</p> <p>Nearest alternatives an hour away (Tarland trails, Deeside as model)</p> <p>NACC need appropriate trail facilities to run a kids club (too steep/wet/far). Currently</p> <p>Successful Big Bike weekend demonstrates local demand</p> <p>Target at beginners/families, plenty of more advanced locally</p> <p>Accessible from Oban without a car</p> <p>Trail maintenance by NATA</p> <p>Trails: A to SP area</p> <p>Freeride tracks / Jump lines; from highest point – access path using old existing tracks to MTB trails, near SP area</p>	<p>FLS works closely with Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland, who published their Strategy for Scottish Mountain Biking 23-25 Our Work – DMBinS, in this strategy DMBinS sets out a vision for the continued success of the sport in Scotland and a number of priority areas for investment and development. At the moment Argyll and Bute is not included as a priority area.</p> <p>However, this does not mean that options are not open to us. FLS works with a number of community run Trail Associations who have been successful in supporting and developing mountain biking across Scotland. In many instances “riding in” trails, looking after existing wild trails, decommissioning older low use trails and in some instances formally adopting trails on FLS managed land. We would be keen to work with a local community trail association in the Oban area to look at how they could work with us to develop the Ariogan Land Management Plan.</p> <p>We understand the North Argyll Trail Association have a number of members who are interested in being involved. An organised group is one of the best ways to establish the need and level of support within the local community in order to work with us. If the cycling group can agree an area they would be interested in taking forward we can continue discussions whilst balancing other community interests and our statutory/regulatory requirements.</p>
LINKS LERAGS	<p>Access Link to Glencruitten woods (C)</p> <p>Tried to access loch via land opposite Lerags Rd</p> <p>Link Glencruitten to Lerags (walking /bikes)</p> <p>Habitat link to Glencruitten woods; connect trees and squirrel populations to Lerags – Squirrel bridge across main road. Otter crossing here too.</p>	<p>FLS are aware of this opportunity to join up various offer informal access’ and are keen to ensure that this option is retained, both pedestrian and habitat linkages.</p>
FUNDING	<p>Adventure Oban here to support funding bids alongside partners for feasibility studies and trails; close links with Developing Mountain biking in Scotland who have already given some funding.</p>	<p>It is really great to know that an active community group is happy to work with us, FLS is keen to work in partnership to support and enable community projects. Funding is major issue for many of the projects highlighted through this consultation.</p>
ALLOTMENTS	<p>Allotments, as accessible as possible (E)</p> <p>Or by Ariogan entrance</p>	<p>This would be best led as a community project- allotments may also require Council permission. FLS would not rule this out if community support exists although a community garden/ growing project may be an easier way to start and could offer a less onerous process for a community group to progress. There are different models that could be used to make this happen from Community Asset Transfer (CATs) or a lease / rent or an area of land. If any constituted group can agree an area they would be interested in taking forward</p>

		we can continue discussions whilst balancing other community interests and our statutory/regulatory requirements.
SKATE PARK	Skate Park / pump track (E) Approx. 100m x 60m (x 2)	This would have to be led as a community project. FLS would not rule this out if community support exists. There are different models that could be used to make this happen from Community Asset Transfer (CATs) or a lease / rent or an area of land. If any constituted group can agree an area they would be interested in taking forward we can continue discussions whilst balancing other community interests and our statutory/regulatory requirements
SAFE DOG AREA	Safe Dog park area; agility course 30m x 30m	Safe Dog Parks are an area that is currently being explored within FLS and we can continue to explore this option alongside other projects suggested as part of this consultation. If any constituted group can agree an area they would be interested in taking forward we can continue discussions whilst balancing other community interests and our statutory/regulatory requirements.
BMX	BMX track	This would have to be led as a community project. FLS would not rule this out if community support exists. There are different models that could be used to make this happen from Community Asset Transfer (CATs) or a lease / rent or an area of land (see Pump Track / Cycling above).
STATUS QUO	Keep it wild; no houses to tick free walking opportunities neighbouring Oban Fantastic resource, habitat full of moths, butterflies, birds, grasses, bogs. Please don't spoil it; some paths and parking at roadside. Promote as little disturbance as possible Love it as it is; interesting to see veg change without grazing	Full surveys are being undertaken across the land to record all species and habitat present before any draft proposals are put together. It is anticipated that there may be some area that should be retained as open space to ameliorate conditions for some of these species and habitats.
INVASIVE SPECIES	Knotweed near track to Soroba Lodge (marked on map)	This will be identified and treated appropriately in line with our invasive non-native Species policy.
GRAZING	Good summer cattle grazing to keep biodiversity Reduce fireload risk; grazing Productive agricultural land (B) Need grazing for marsh fritillary - SAC	Surveys are being completed at this stage and the environmental conditions will dictate the land management decisions. At this point FLS would not rule anything out.
CLIMATE CHANGE	Most sustainable options with respect to climate change; peat preservation and trees	Addressing climate change will be one of the key drivers in producing a balanced plan

EDUCATION	Education opportunities to learn about temperate rainforest work with local community council and youth groups.	FLS encourage access to Ariogan and all of Scotland's Forest and land. FLS are keen to promote outdoor learning via the local schools and other community groups; at this time this is not something FLS' are resourced to lead. We would be happy to assist a community or education group if they need guidance.
FOREST SCHOOL	Forest School Area: close to hospital (E)	FLS encourage access to Ariogan and all of Scotland's Forest and land. FLS are keen to promote outdoor learning via the local schools and other community groups; at this time this is not something FLS' are resourced to lead. We would be happy to assist a community or education group if they need guidance.
SCHOOLS	Rockfield Primary school previously used the area adjacent to the hospital for outdoor activities (mainly their nursery children) - however now it is overgrown and there are a lot of dogs being walked they do not use it anymore.	FLS are keen to engage with the local schools in order to promote more outdoor learning.
ALL ABILITIES	Disabilities should be taken into account Additional support needs department uses the tracks with the dam usually being the destination; only possible part way if wheelchair users amongst them. It would be of great benefit to the group of young people if there was a destination that could be reached by wheelchair; could be there and back but improved by a destination eg dam, a viewpoint or a picnic area.	Any trail development would look to achieve the most accessible standards possible within the constraints of the landscape. Really useful to know the ASN dept use this route and FLS can review options with High School.
TRAILS	Rock Climbing Walking paths Tracks for biking	Rock climbing is possible under the Scottish Outdoor Access code and there are qualified instructors throughout Argyll and Lochaber who can lead these activities. Multi user trails for walking, biking and wheeling will likely form part of the final proposal. There are financial constraints and FLS are looking for partners to deliver community led/supported projects (see Mountain biking).
HOUSING	Land nearest Oban should be used for housing; within 20-minute neighbourhood. Too hilly for housing.	To be discussed with Argyll and Bute Council looking at the bigger picture.

	No housing on this area of land; too little accessible green space in the town	
FLOODING	Problems with flooding around Balvicar road since drainage alterations from steep ground to the south. Lot of seepage on north face of land across track and down into Glenshellach Flooding at times of spate at end of Lerags road	We are working with Argyll and Bute's Flooding team to see if any mitigation measures might be possible within the plan following on from a Natural Flood Management report they have commissioned, largely focussed on the Black Lynn Burn catchment.
WILDLIFE SPECIES	Red squirrel: close to Oban Wildflowers/Bog cotton: behind WTW Butterflies: meadow brown, scotch argus, fritillaries cuckoos Skylarks: existing track to dam from Ariogan Owl pellets near dam Lichens Otters/Squirrels/Pine martens in Cologin Frogs near Ariogan Barn Owls nesting near Lerags road Blackthorn strip above Lerags road Otters crossing main road near Lerags turning but many being killed here; need safe crossing	All these species' records are invaluable in building up a picture of the land here and will be used in conjunction with surveys commissioned (see above).
SCOTS PINE	Scots pines great; please keep and foster! Love to see SP wood regenerated by controlled grazing; also SP on south side of reservoir overflow More SP / expand pines More Scots pine, Pinus sylvestris	Scots Pine would normally be included with a native broadleaf plan where appropriate, and it is anticipated we shall endeavour to expand the long-established pine trees along the ridge and encourage regeneration of the pines in this area. This may require a further reduction in deer numbers to allow young trees to successfully grow from seed.
WOODLAND	Rewilding of woodland Deciduous trees: create habitat and maintain diverse species there now Rainforest	Surveys are being completed at this stage and the environmental conditions will dictate the land management decisions. Woodland creation and biodiversity gain is all within FLS' existing objectives.
DEER	Major concern about increasing deer numbers into Lerags; since harvesting began on Kilmore side, dramatic increase deer here.	It is unlikely that FLS operations would increase deer numbers in surrounding areas. FLS are already undertaking deer control in Ariogan (and adjacent Cologin). FLS will aim to reduce deer numbers significantly on the land we manage.

	Would further increases in Lerags if deer driven off Ariogan?	
Gaelic	Ariogan – Àirigh Eoghainn	FLS' Gaelic Language Plan approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig ensures that new signage here will be ordered and installed bilingually with assistance from Ainmean Àite na h-Alba; we can confirm that a bilingual sign has been ordered for Ariogan but where regional/local differences occur in spellings, we can ensure that these are updated at the time of reordering signs with the most appropriate regional spellings.
OPPORTUNITIES	Downhill bobsleigh coaster Gorge Walking Paint ball arena Golf driving range	These are all really interesting ideas. Most of these would be best developed as commercial opportunities led business' that are experts in the delivery of these activities.
MOTOCROSS	Motocross trail: no other safe options locally	This would need to be developed by an official and organised group likely affiliated with the Scottish Autocycle Union (SACU). This is largely due to the insurance requirements in relation to public liability as well as the benefits of co-ordination of best practice. Motorised access is not a legal right in Scotland under the Land Reform Act. Home Scottish Auto Cycle Union (sacu.co.uk)
SHOOTING RANGE	Shooting range / clay pigeon shooting	Best developed as commercial or community opportunities led by business'/ individuals that are experts in the safe delivery of those activities.
AERIAL ASSAULT	Aerial assault course	Best developed as commercial opportunity led by business'/ individuals that are experts in the delivery of those activities.
HUTTING	Ariogan Hutting Site: growing culture in Scotland but land access challenge for families – form hut-group cooperative and lease sites for huts	Based on the outcomes to date at the pilot at Carnock, the two main routes for hutting groups who wish to carry out hutting projects on the national forests and land are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To identify potential sites and approach FLS through its Business Opportunities process at a market rental. FLS would consider each project on case-by-case basis. ○ To work with eligible community bodies to include leasing or purchasing land through CATS as part of an asset transfer request.

- A Tullich north to Oban
- B Tullich south to Lerags
- C strip east of public road
- D crofting land
- E land near hospital