

Frequently Asked Questions - Dornie Moorings Association (DMA)

The FAQs below are questions that have been asked by interested parties; for ease of reading we have summarised using Google AI.

Project Aims: What is the DMA project aiming to achieve?

Business Plan v1: Section 1: Executive Summary

RESPONSE: Dornie Moorings Association is a not-for-profit community-led charity (SC054169) focused on bringing safe access to the water in Dornie village, promoting waterborne tourism in the local area & using profits to support the regeneration of Dornie and the local area.

The Pontoon and Moorings project aims to support the regeneration of Dornie by introducing moorings and pontoon facilities to enable safe access to the water.

These facilities will encourage marine tourism, increase visitor footfall to local businesses, and create job opportunities.

Is there evidence to support the claim of decreased footfall into Dornie Village?

Business Plan v1: Section 1: Executive Summary

RESPONSE: We aim to increase footfall, including to the future community shop and café. The Dornie Hotel & Clachan owner notes 2024 showed a significant decrease in customer visits and spend and stated that it had been the quietest in many years.

Why are there no mentions of the slipways in the business plan?

Business Plan v1: Section 3 - Background, Area Need & Community Support

RESPONSE: Slipways at Dornie Hall and Dornie Village are adequate for launching boats but are not suitable for tying up, due to the tidal range.

DMA has considered purchasing the Dornie Village Slipway from Highland Council to ensure it is properly maintained and potentially upgraded. This will be added to the Business Plan Addendum as a future option.

Why is Dornie considered a "hot spot" for marine traffic?

Business Plan v1: Section 1: Executive Summary

RESPONSE: There has been a noticeable increase in small boats and yachts, especially near Eilean Donan Castle in recent years. Professional marine consultants consider Dornie a suitable transit point when yachts are in passage around the west coast.

Totaig is a recognised sheltered anchorage.

Kyle and Kyleakin have pontoons but are approx 8 miles from Dornie and do not provide a convenient mooring location for Dornie.

What community benefits were identified in the 2022 consultation?

Business Plan v1: Section 3 - Background, Area Need & Community Support

RESPONSE: The consultation highlighted increased accessibility to the water for local users as well as visitors. Once a pontoon is in place local organisations can be established to promote local involvement in watersports and water-based activities, and safer emergency access.

As stated in the business plan:

- Increased inclusivity and accessibility to and from the water for leisure and economic activities
- Increased participation in water-based leisure activities, including safer access for youngsters and those with reduced mobility
- An expanded range of water-based activities (including kayaking and paddle boarding)
- Increased exchange and cooperation with other coastal communities
- Faster and safe emergency access to nearby fish farm locations

All the above would lead to substantive economic benefit to the community from both direct and associated spend locally (hospitality, retail, etc), thus greatly contributing to arresting and turning around economic decline by galvanising local industry.

Why is a pontoon needed when kayaks already use the slipway?

Business Plan v1: Section 3 - Background, Area Need & Community Support

RESPONSE: While kayakers use the slipway, the pontoon offers varied uses. Local marine businesses noted the advantages of a pontoon with easy A87 access for several situations. Tourist marine businesses have said that the combination of a pontoon and a village shop / cafe would attract them to use the pontoon.

How does Dornie compare to other mooring locations?

Business Plan v1: Section 5.2.2: Competition

RESPONSE: Totaig as previously stated is a well known sheltered anchorage. Yacht owners increasingly prefer professionally installed moorings to anchoring. There's a growing demand for moorings on the West Coast as stated by West Highlands Anchorages & Moorings Association (WHAM).

Kyleakin and Plockton are often oversubscribed and Kyle has now removed its moorings.

What will the fees be for using the moorings?

Business Plan v1: 6.2 Products and Services/Income Generation

RESPONSE: Fees will be in line with other local mooring associations on the west coast of Scotland. Visitor moorings will be charged on a nightly or weekly basis, and permanent/local moorings will be charged an annual fee. Payment can be made online or by cash.

How many new moorings does the DMA plan install in total in Totaig Bay?

Business Plan v1: Section 7.2: Moorings

RESPONSE: The DMA has applied for a marine licence to install 8 new moorings in Totaig Bay. This has been reduced from the original proposal of 10 mooring based on consultation feedback.

Is the DMA still planning to install moorings at the mouth of Loch Long, adjacent to Eilean Donan Castle?

Business Plan v1: Section 7.2: Moorings

RESPONSE: No, the DMA has decided not to install moorings adjacent to the Castle at present. This decision was made due to major concerns raised by Historic Environment Scotland on the visual impact to Eilean Donan Castle, which is a scheduled national monument. In addition, there were several concerns raised by members of the community about strong currents in Loch Long and the narrow channel which would make the 'Castle' moorings unsafe and prone to drag. There was also concern that moorings in the mouth of Loch Long could restrict safe navigation of the channel by other vessels. The proposal of moorings in Loch Long may be revisited at a later date.

Has the DMA considered placing moorings elsewhere, like Ardelve Bay?

Business Plan v1: Section 7.2: Moorings

RESPONSE: Yes, the DMA has assessed a few other locations, however none of them have been deemed appropriate due to various factors, including ground type, current, depth and exposure to winds. Ardelve Bay for example has a steep sloping seabed, which is challenging for mooring placement, and it is very exposed to the prevailing south-westerly winds. Loch Long has strong currents and can only be accessed by un-masted vessels due to the low causeway bridge. Totaig Bay has been identified as the most appropriate mooring location for the Dornie community due to its sheltered nature and soft and flat seabed.

What will happen to existing private moorings in Totaig Bay?

Business Plan v1: Section 7.2: Moorings

RESPONSE: The DMA is in contact with existing mooring owners in Totaig Bay. Anyone with an existing licensed private mooring in Totaig can keep their own mooring, and can join the Dornie Mooring Association if they wish (joining is not compulsory). Members of the mooring association benefit from reduced Crown Estate fees compared to private moorings, which is a key advantage.

Will there still be space in Totaig for visiting vessels to drop anchor without using a DMA community mooring?

Business Plan v1: Section 7.2: Moorings

RESPONSE: Yes, the DMA understands that not all visiting sailors will want to use one of our moorings. There will still be space in the western part of Totaig Bay for visiting vessels to drop anchor, for which there will be no charge.

How many moorings will there be for locals and how many for visitors, and will these be available year-round?

Business Plan v1: Section 7.2: Moorings

RESPONSE: It is anticipated that half of the moorings will be permanent moorings for local vessels, and half will be visitor moorings.

How will people access the moorings?

Business Plan v1: Section 7.2: Moorings

RESPONSE: Moorings at Totaig should be accessed by sea from vessels. The DMA will discourage access to moorings from the Letterfearn road to reduce impact on the road and the local community.

What types of vessels will be allowed to use the moorings?

Business Plan v1: Section 7.2: Moorings

RESPONSE: The moorings have been designed to accommodate vessels up to 42 feet in length, and it is anticipated that the majority will be sailing boats. The DMA will prohibit the use of moorings by jet skis.

What about parking concerns?

Business Plan v1: Section 7.3: Parking Provision

RESPONSE: Parking will be considered in Phase 2. We'll conduct full community consultation and work with local community organisations including: Dornie Hall Committee, Dornie & District Community Council, Dornie & District Community Trust to find the best solution.

What is the total capital funding required?

Business Plan v1: Section 12: Project Finance

RESPONSE: The most recent estimation (Feb 25') of capital costs of Phase 1 & 2 are: 8 Moorings in Totaig Bay £25,500; Pontoon in Dornie £350,000

Additional questions

Is it safe for less experienced sailors to navigate the area?

Safety concerns

RESPONSE: Marine Engineers have assessed the viability of moorings and pontoons. Many boats navigate the meeting point of the lochs without difficulty. We acknowledge tidal races and conditions should be respected. Safety of people accessing the water is a prime consideration and advice, signage etc., will be used to ensure users are aware of the risks.

People mooring in Totaig may use a tender to get across the loch to Dornie. This can be a dangerous passage in a small boat if weather conditions are poor. Has the DMA considered the safety and risks of this crossing?

Safety concerns

Sailors should make their own risk assessment for crossing over Dornie, and the DMA will not accept any liability for such crossings. The DMA will publish safety notices on its website that detail local currents, encourage use of life jackets on tenders, recommend that tenders used for the crossing have engines (rather than paddle only), and strongly discourage passage making the crossing in poor weather and/or in the dark.

What about the impact of weather and tides on the proposed pontoon?

RESPONSE: Marine engineers have designed the pontoon with full consideration for the tide and wind in Loch Long.

What about the impact on the Protected Marine Area, Otters and seals?

RESPONSE: We're committed to protecting the Marine Protected Area. Moorings protect the seabed. Totaig is not a designated seal haul-out zone, and we are working with Nature Scot and Marine Scotland to minimise any environmental impact.

A detailed video survey was carried out on all proposed seabed locations and submitted to Marine Scotland. Please see the slides from the consultation meeting for more information available via our website.

Is this project worthwhile?

RESPONSE: The project is deemed to be financially viable in that the income from Moorings and Pontoons will support the maintenance of the facilities and any remaining revenue will be passed to Dornie and District Community Trust.

Are there alternative uses for the funding?

RESPONSE: The funding we are accessing is specifically provisioned for the redevelopment of marine communities. We acknowledge other worthy causes, but our funding is specific to marine/coastal community activities.