

Shellfish Rafts

- Developments aligned parallel to the dominant coastal edge prevent fragmentation of the water surface and reduce visual intrusion.
- Rafts within individual operations should be aligned parallel to each other, and to those of other operations in the same area.
- Keep rafts to the minimum possible height above the water surface.
- Ensure rafts are constructed from dark, non-reflective materials.
- Buoys and floats should be battleship grey in colour to minimise visual intrusion.
- Limit the use of brightly coloured buoys to those necessary for safety, and ensure continuity of colour within an area.



The vertical profile and bulky nature of shellfish rafts makes them visually intrusive. Their height above water should be minimised.



Bright, reflective colours and materials can be very visible in some lights.

Oyster Trestles and Tumblers

- Like other installations, trestles or tumblers, wherever possible, should be aligned parallel to the coastal edge.
- Trestles within individual operations should be aligned parallel to each other and to other operations in the same area. This will reduce any visual intrusion at low tide.
- Use existing foreshore access routes and buildings where possible, keeping shed size to a minimum.



Use should be made of existing slipways where possible. Any new development should reflect the scale, design and materials surrounding the development.



Visual intrusion can be minimised by ensuring that trestles are aligned parallel to each other.

What Information Does the Department Need?

Use the checklist in the box below to make sure you have included all the information required.

- Proposed location and dimensions of licence area
- Proposed location of any on-shore activities, for example, storage, processing
- Location of pier or slipway to be used
- Layout, dimensions, orientation, materials and colours of all structures on the shellfish farm
- Any measures taken to reduce the visibility of these structures
- Details of how the farm will be managed to ensure that the licence area is well ordered and tidy
- Location of nearby existing aquaculture sites in relation to the proposed farm
- Details of why this is the best or only site for the farm, and alternative locations considered
- Map of the visual envelope of the proposed farm
- Description of key viewpoints and types of viewers (marked on a map)
- Photographs and overlays to show 'before and after' views for the most important viewpoints

Department of the Marine and Natural Resources - Useful Addresses

Central Office

Department of the Marine and Natural Resources
Coastal Zone Administration Division
Leeson Lane
Dublin 2

Tel 01 6199 200
(lo - call 1890 449900)

Divisional Engineering Offices

Department of the Marine and Natural Resources (South)
Sullivans Quay
Cork

Tel 021 313410

Department of the Marine and Natural Resources (South West)
3 Greenvue Terrace
Princes Quay
Tralee
Co Kerry

Tel 066 7127235

Department of the Marine and Natural Resources (West)
Ross House
Merchants Road
Galway

Tel 091 568313

Department of the Marine and Natural Resources (North West)
Upper Main Street
Ballyshannon
Donegal

Tel 072 51867

Department of the Marine and Natural Resources (East)
Leeson Lane
Leeson Street
Dublin 2

Tel 01 678 5444

Marine Survey Office

Department of the Marine and Natural Resources
Marine Survey Office
26/27 Eden Quay
Dublin 1

Tel 01 874 4900

Information in this leaflet is based on the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of Marine Aquaculture* published by the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources. Copies are available from the Department at the offices listed above.



Assessing the Landscape and Visual Impact of Marine Shellfish Operations

Aquaculture developments should respect the character and diversity of their landscape setting and help to sustain the qualities that lend a distinctive sense of place to Ireland's coastline. Coastal landscapes and seascapes are a vital part of the national heritage. They are a valuable resource that contributes to the quality of life of the Irish people, and an important economic asset, for example to the tourism industry.



This leaflet provides guidance from the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources on how applicants for shellfish licences should address landscape and visual issues when preparing a licence application.

What are Landscape and Visual Impacts?

The term *landscape* refers to the appearance of the land, including the way landform, vegetation cover and man-made elements combine to create specific patterns and pictures that are distinctive to a particular area. Landscape includes *seascape*, that is the landscape of the coastal area, the coastline and adjoining areas of open water. *Landscape impacts* are changes in the fabric, character and quality of the landscape as a result of development. *Visual impacts* result from changes in available views of the landscape and the effects of those changes on people.



Scheme Planning and Preparation

Careful consideration of landscape and visual issues in the early stages of preparing the licence application will help ensure that the scheme proceeds as quickly and as smoothly as possible. There are *three main steps* that an applicant should take when planning a new shellfish farm.

1. Talk to the Department

As soon as possible, discuss your plans informally with the Department's local Divisional Engineer. Contact details are provided on the back of this leaflet. The Divisional Engineer will be able to give general advice on the likely suitability of the site or sites you are considering and supply background information about environmental constraints, including potential landscape and visual concerns.

2. Choose Your Site Carefully

Careful siting of your shellfish operation is by far the best way to avoid adverse landscape and visual impacts. Think about why you have chosen your site. Are there any alternative locations? It is your responsibility to demonstrate to the Department that you have chosen the best or only location available for your shellfish farm. The box below lists some issues to consider when choosing a suitable site.

How Well is Your Farm Sited?

- How will your shellfish farm relate to the landscape of the surrounding area? Contact the County Council to find out where you can view a copy of the Development Plan (and, if available, the accompanying landscape assessment).
- How will your operation relate to other aquaculture developments in the vicinity? If there is a Single Bay Management Group or local producer group that helps co-ordinate the approximate location of new aquaculture operations along the coastline, make contact.
- Where will your shellfish farm be seen from, who will see it and how are they likely to respond to your proposals? Will your shellfish farm affect existing users of the coast or water area? Consider and anticipate the reactions of viewers.

3. Talk to Others

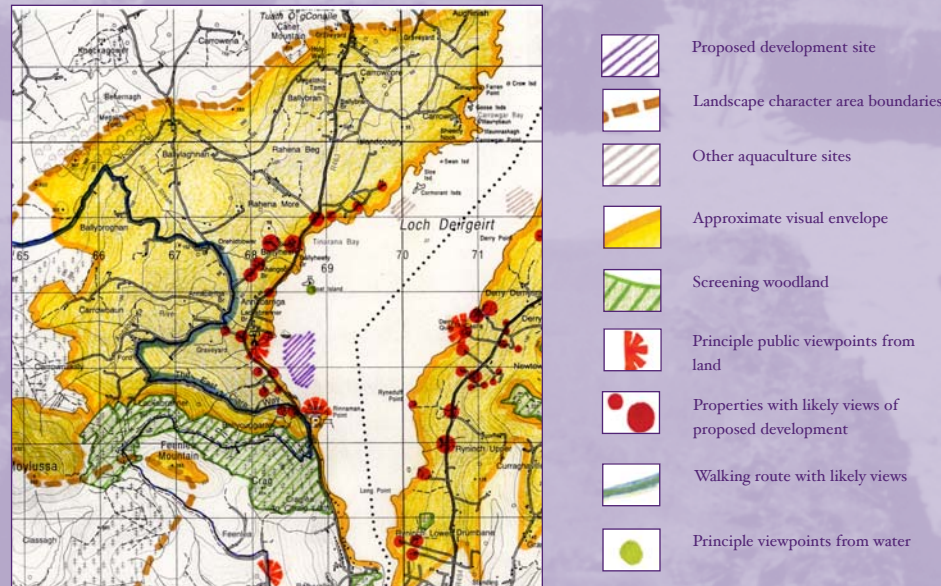
The Department will consider the views of statutory consultees and the public when reviewing your application. It may be beneficial for you to talk informally, beforehand, with organisations and individuals who may be affected by views of your proposed shellfish farm. By doing this, you will have the chance to address their concerns before submitting your application, and this may speed the application process. The local Divisional Engineer will be happy to give advice on who you should approach.

Assessing Landscape and Visual Impacts

Describe the Existing Landscape and Visual Environment

Consider the main characteristics, qualities and features of the landscape, and the ways in which the landscape is valued. Identify which views contribute to the enjoyment of the area for residents, visitors and others. Find out about any scenic areas or key views that may be shown in the County Development Plan, and identify any existing aquaculture licence areas close by. Is the landscape and visual environment particularly sensitive to change? Go out and look at the landscape and the key views with these issues in mind. Take photos to record what you see.

Sample of a Field Survey Map :- this may be a useful way to record the information you collect



Based on Ordnance Survey Ireland by permission of the Government Permit No. 7302 © Government of Ireland

Predict How the Landscape and Visual Environment Will Change

Imagine and predict, as accurately as you can, the effects that your site will have. You may find the following two methods helpful.

Draw on a map the visual envelope of your proposed shellfish farm *ie* the area of land from which your farm will be seen. The simplest way to do this is to visit the position of your proposed licence area and mark on a map all areas of land and sea which are visible to you (and which you are visible from).

Take photographs of the area to be covered by your shellfish farm from the most important viewpoints (it is helpful to discuss and agree these with the Department in advance). These photos should be taken using a 50 mm lens as this is closest to what is seen by the naked eye. Overlay a sketch of your farm on these photos to show a 'before and after' image. Be careful to ensure that the overlay is to scale and accurately positioned.

Assess How Significant the Change Is

The Department will use the information you provide to assess how significant the predicted changes will be and this, together with other factors, will inform the Department's decision. In respect of landscape and visual issues, the Department will consider how sensitive the landscape is to change, the types of viewers affected, and how large an impact your proposals will have on the character of the landscape and on the visual amenity of the area as a whole.

Principles for Good Practice

These principles of good practice for siting, layout, design and site management of shellfish operations are intended to help you integrate the proposed farm into the landscape and minimise visual intrusion.

General points that apply to all shellfish farms are that:

- well-ordered, consistent layout, design and materials tend to work best in landscape and visual terms;
- new structures should use dark, subdued colours and non-reflective materials wherever possible;
- lighting should be limited to that required by the Marine Survey Office or safety and navigational purposes;
- existing piers and slipways should be used wherever possible;
- if new development is necessary however it should mimic traditional local styles and be sited unobtrusively;
- equipment should be kept in a good state of repair and stored tidily so that it does not become an eyesore;
- redundant structures should be removed promptly and disposed of.

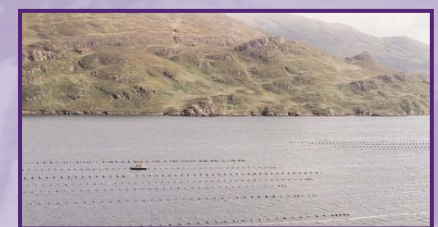
Specific points for different types of shellfish operation are outlined below.

Shellfish Longlines

- Developments aligned parallel to the dominant coastal edge are least obtrusive.
- Hence lines within individual operations should ideally be parallel to each other, and to those of other operators within the same area.
- Lines less than 150 m long are preferable, as they are less likely to bow.
- Buoys should be battleship grey in colour to minimise visual intrusion.
- Limit the use of brightly coloured buoys to those necessary for safety and ensure continuity of colour within an area.
- Ensure buoys lie horizontally within the water to minimise their height above the water.



Lines which are particularly long are more likely to bow, which can be visually distracting.



Construct longlines from grey barrels that are laid horizontally to decrease visual intrusion.