



**Crown Estate
Scotland**
Oighreachd a' Chrùin Alba

Sullom Voe

**Aquaculture leasing
engagement document**

June 2025

1 Introduction and background

This is an engagement document to seek views on the proposed process for Crown Estate Scotland's approach to granting Aquaculture Lease Option Agreements ('Options') in the Sullom Voe Harbour Area of the Shetland Islands ('the Area').

Shetland Island Council have produced a Master Plan for the Area. [This Master Plan can be found here.](#)

It is Crown Estate Scotland policy to take a plan-led approach to aquaculture leasing within the Sullom Voe area to align with local priorities and impact assessment.

We are undertaking targeted engagement on the proposed approach to aquaculture leasing in the Sullom Voe Master Plan area, to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to comment on that approach.

2 Crown Estate Scotland: who we are and what we do

Overview

Crown Estate Scotland is a public corporation tasked with managing land and property on behalf of Scottish Ministers. Our purpose is to invest in property, natural resources and people to generate lasting value for Scotland.

We work with tenants, partners and other stakeholders to ensure that the assets under our management are enjoyed and developed sustainably to deliver benefits to Scotland and its communities. Our team consists of around 90 staff across three locations (with the majority based in Edinburgh), supported by external Managing Agents (mainly for the Rural and Coastal portfolios) and advisors.

Our commercial remit allows us to take a long-term view, informing our investment strategy and interest in development. It is therefore in our interest to commission targeted research to inform and, where appropriate, facilitate future development on land under Crown Estate Scotland management.

We return all revenue profit to Scottish Government for public spending.

[More information is available here.](#)

Legal context

Crown Estate Scotland was established by Scottish Ministers in early 2017 to manage assets which were, until then, part of a wider portfolio of land and property managed by The Crown Estate.

The **Scottish Crown Estate Act 2019** was implemented on 1 April 2020. It sets out our statutory duty to manage the assets to support sustainable development generally, and economic development, regeneration, social and environmental well-being specifically. The legislation also provides for two types of mechanism to be introduced (delegations and transfers) that will enable new 'managers' to take responsibility for managing specific Scottish Crown Estate assets.

Assets are held 'in right of The Crown'. This means that, while the Monarch is the legal owner, they are not the Monarch's private property and cannot be sold by the Monarch, nor do revenues from the estate belong to the Monarch.

The Scottish Crown Estate

Crown Estate Scotland is responsible for a geographically wide, varied portfolio:

- 37,000 hectares of rural land with agricultural tenancies, residential and commercial properties and forestry on four rural estates (Glenlivet, Fochabers, Applegirth and Whitehill)
- Salmon fishing rights on many Scottish rivers
- Just under half the foreshore, including 5,800 moorings and some ports & harbours

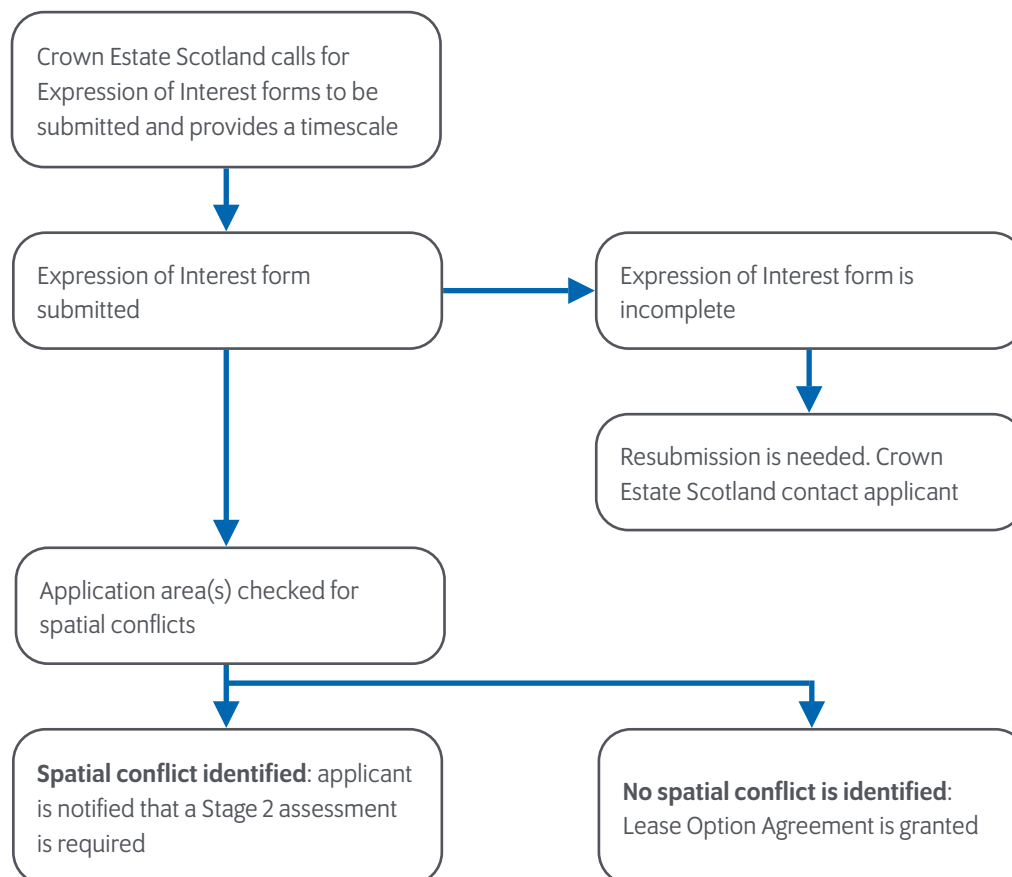
- Leasing of virtually all seabed out to 12 nautical miles covering some 750 fish farming sites and agreements with cables & pipeline operators
- The rights to renewable energy and gas and carbon storage out to 200 nautical miles
- Retail and office units at 39-41 George Street Edinburgh
- 123 acres of development land at Montrose

In 2023/24, the property assets were valued at £385.8m and generated c.£19m of gross revenue, with £11.4m revenue profit going to the Scottish Consolidated Fund.

3 Proposed process for granting Lease Option Agreements in the Sullom Voe Master Plan area

The process for granting lease option agreements in the Sullom Voe Master Plan area is summarised in diagram 1. It will be a two-step process. The Expression of Interest form will be used as the basis for the Stage 1 assessment. Applicants will only be asked to submit a stage 2 assessment if any conflicts with the requested spatial extent are identified through the stage 1 assessment.

Diagram 1



Criteria for Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessments is summarised in tables 1 and 2. The stage 1 assessment will involve an assessment of criteria given in table 1. Applicants will be contacted if incomplete submissions are provided with extra information to be provided within a set timescale.

Table 1: Stage 1 Assessment Criteria

| Criteria | Rationale |
|---|--|
| All the spatial extent applied for is wholly within identified master plan development areas | Crown Estate Scotland leasing will be in line with the masterplan |
| The number of applications made by the applicant are compliant with overall Crown Estate Scotland guidance | The process needs to be fair, reasonable and in line with current Crown Estate Scotland guidance |
| A Business Plan is submitted and assessed | Required to demonstrate applicant has the means to develop the site |
| Where more than one area is being applied for, a prioritisation of seabed will be given by the applicant | Support the negotiation of seabed rights, if needed, where there are competing interests |
| Payment has been made of a specified option fee per spatial extent applied for | Ensures fair process and is in line with current lease option terms |
| A signed Statement of Commitment is submitted in line with the template we provide | In line with Crown Estate Scotland's role as a responsible landlord |
| A Statement of Wider Value is submitted in line with the template we provide | In line with Crown Estate Scotland's role and remit |

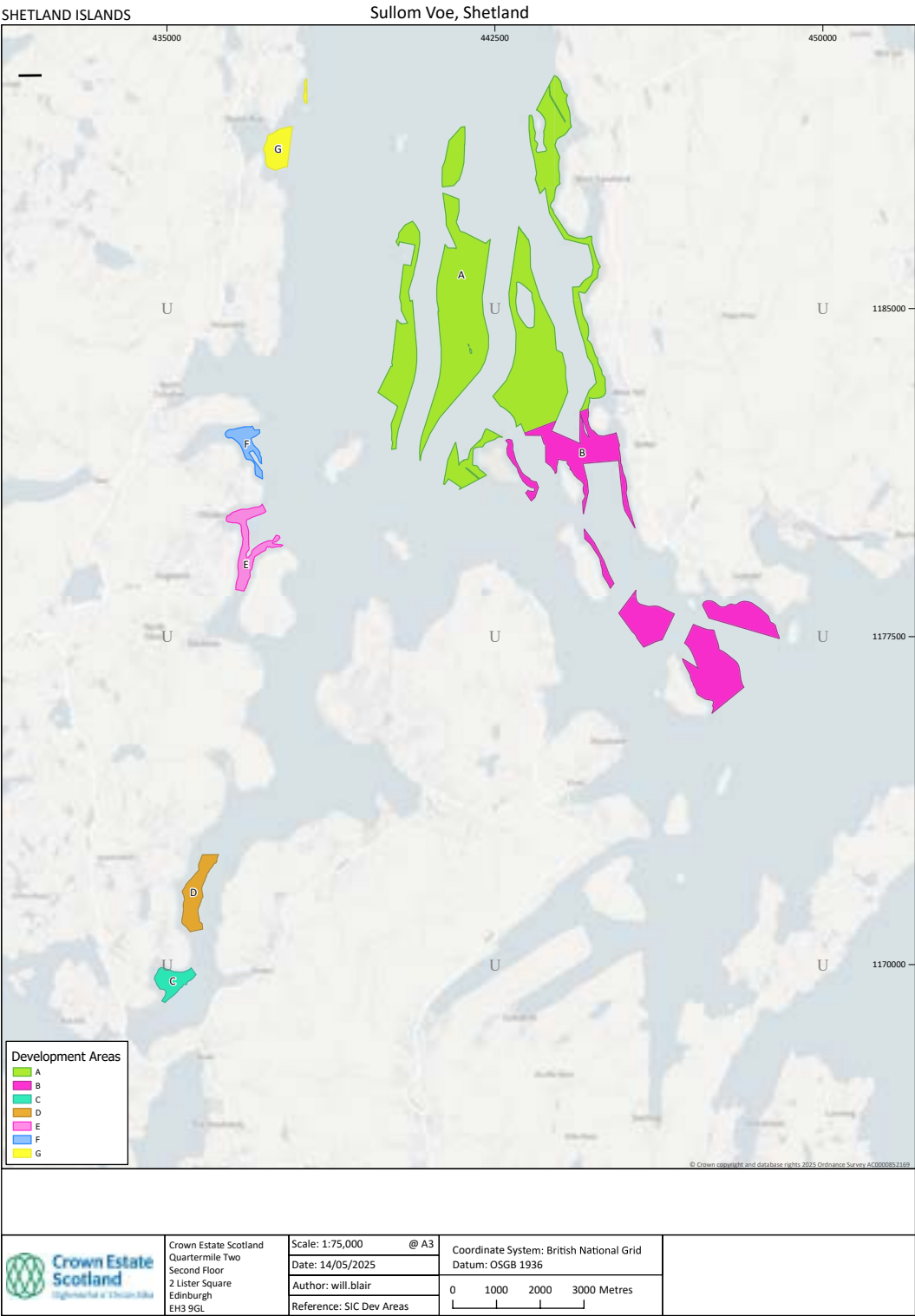
If a conflict in spatial extent applied for is identified, a more in-depth stage two assessment will need to be completed as summarised in table 2.

Table 2: Stage 2 Assessment Criteria

| Criteria |
|--|
| The application supports improvement in Economic Development |
| The application supports improvement in Environmental Wellbeing |
| The application supports improvement in Regeneration |
| The application supports improvement in Social Wellbeing |

The areas available for aquaculture development are shown in Map 1 below.

Map 1



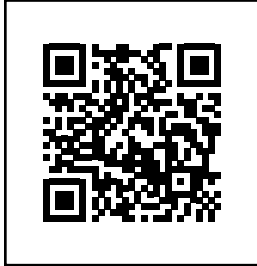
Please note this map has excluded the area referred to in the master plan as:

‘the northernmost part of Zone B (the largest of the Zone B areas that are identified for sub-surface development only) is currently the subject of a lease option agreement that was awarded by Crown Estate Scotland to Nova Innovation in 2021’.

Please share your feedback on this proposed leasing approach

We are keen to hear your thoughts on our proposed leasing approach.

Please visit our [short feedback survey by using this link](#), or scanning the QR code below.



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