



Morvern Community Growth Plan



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1.Introduction

Morvern Community Development Company (MCDC) has been selected as the anchor organisation by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) to employ a Local Development Officer (LDO) to work on projects for the benefit of the Morvern area. The LDO is employed under Community Account Management (CAM) Programme, which is a community development initiative and funded by HIE and LEADER.

A requirement of the CAM programme is for LDO to develop and implement a Community Growth Plan. The Community Growth Plan is designed to become a tool for delivering growth to the whole of the community, in particular in terms of employment opportunities, affordable housing, further community development and economic growth.

The plan has been developed from three main studies that have been conducted by Highlands and Islands Enterprise in conjunction with Morvern Community Development Company – a desk top Area Analysis, a Community Survey Report, and Community Audit as well as results of previous community consultation work undertaken by members of MCDC at various stages.

The CAM Area Morvern Analysis is a demographic survey conducted by Highland and Island Enterprise consultants. This analysis mainly covers the demographic trends in Morvern – overall population change, migration patterns, age profile, gender profile, primary school roll, working age population, employment by sector, economic activity, unemployment data, household income, housing stock and tenure.

The Community Survey Report analyses data from a survey commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The survey was undertaken during June - July 2010, 195 households were surveyed and 64 responses were received, a response rate of 33%.

The Local Community Audit is a list of all services available in the community and the Local Development Officer has collated this

information with the support from local community groups and service providers.

Objectives of Community Growth Plan: to assess the main areas of potential community development in terms of employment, housing and infrastructure and creating sustainable sources of income for the benefit of the community.

Outcome: to create a vision for the community for the next 5 – 10 years, to identify what the local community would like to achieve in relation to the key elements of the healthy community, i.e. employment, housing, infrastructure and demographics.

2. Background

Morvern

Morvern is a mountainous area of south west of Highland Region on the West Coast of Scotland. The area extends to approximately 200 square miles and is bounded to the south by the Sound of Mull; to the east by Loch Linnhe; to the west by Loch Sunart and the Ardnamurchan peninsula; and to the north by Glen Tarbet and Ardgour. Loch Aline is a sea loch on the Sound of Mull in South Morvern with the village of Lochaline at its entrance.

Although it is situated on the mainland, Morvern feels remote. Access to the area is most commonly via the Corran Ferry near Fort William or from Mull via the Lochaline-Fishnish ferry. The population of Ardnamurchan and Morvern is just over 2000 and is concentrated in the north and central part of the area with Acharacle in the west and Strontian in the centre as the main settlements.

The landscape is one of picturesque uplands and mountain, with large scale, state – owned coniferous forestry plantations, and the remnants of broad – leaved native woodland, especially near to the coast. Large parts of the land are owned and managed by the Forestry Commission, a government body with the general duty to promote forestry, while other parts lie within large, privately owned estates, such as the Ardtornish Estate. Local employment is varied, including some forestry, fish farming and small scale tourism.

Lochaline

Lochaline is a small village located on the west side of the entrance to Loch Aline, a sea loch on the north shore of the Sound of Mull. With a population of 317 in 2001 (data from 2001 Census of the Population) the village is a local centre of population with a shop, post office, hotel, restaurant, petrol station, medical centre, primary school, church, cafe, social club and a ferry terminal for the Fishnish ferry to Mull.

There are several businesses operating from Lochaline, among which a Dive Centre, 2 scuba diving charter boats, Sports Fishing boat, Stalking game and Sea Fishing is also catered for.

The setting of Loch Aline is one of great beauty with the steep shores of the loch largely covered in deciduous woodland and superb views to the hills of Mull and in particular down the Sound of Mull to the hills of Lorne. The entrance to the loch is narrow, subject to strong tides and shallow but once inside the loch is land locked, deep and sheltered.

The community of Lochaline is very strong and active and constantly seeking ways to improve the quality of life for all in terms of employment, social and leisure facilities. Often marginalised on the boundary of local government initiatives, the community has to fight to have its voice heard.

3.Vision

Morvern Community Development Company has been working in the community and with the community since its establishment in 1999 and throughout this period of time has conducted several research and consultation exercises and the following items have been identified as key elements of the vision for the future: employment, affordable housing, infrastructure (especially roads and transport), demographic situation, services and facilities.

In spite of what many people may believe Morvern is actually one of Scotland's if not the UK's wealthiest areas, the per capita GDP based on a recent study was many times that of the Scottish

average of £19,000 and a Highland average of £ 12,000.

Unfortunately the wealth has remained in the hands of a few large businesses and individuals. If the community had its own land the community at large would be able to benefit directly.

Morvern has relatively few small businesses when compared with the surrounding areas of Mull, Ardnamurchan and Sunart, a common complaint is that no land is readily available on which to establish a business, any land must be negotiated either with a large private landowner or the Forestry Commission, this can be a lengthy and complex procedure and the business idea must fit with the ideals of the landowner.

Morvern has a wealth of arable land lying unused, it is not difficult to imagine that crofts could be created on some of this land which would help to make Morvern self sufficient in many areas of food production, and many locals have already expressed interest in obtaining land for crofting. Utilisation of fertile ground to produce arable crops would also create employment; at present much of the ground is underused and as such provides relatively little employment.

Employment

According to 2001 Census of Population 317 people live in Morvern. We estimate that the population is now higher, however there is no up to date information available from official data sources and for the purposes of this report we would use this figure. 195 of 317 people are those of working age (61.5%). According to the same census 8 people were unemployed (4.1%). However, with the closure of the Silica sand mine in 2007 and the loss of 15 good quality jobs the number of unemployed people is now much higher.

The largest employers in Morvern are Ardtornish Estate, Caledonian MacBrayne, the Forestry Commission and Scottish Sea Farms. Employment opportunities in Morvern in recent years have been on the decline. The closure of the silica sand mine in 2007 had a profound effect on the community as a whole and on individuals who used to be employed by the sand mine. There are

some people who are employed in service industries but the work is very much seasonal.

MCDC's vision is for a sustainable community where 90% of the local working population is in full or part time employment.

Affordable Housing

2001 Census of Population identified 149 occupied households in Morvern, this equates to 65.1% of all households in the area. This relates to all household spaces that are permanently occupied, i.e. excludes second/holiday homes and vacant properties. 2001 is the most recent year for which details on household spaces are available from official data sources for Morvern. Figures for occupied/unoccupied household spaces for 2008 are available for Morvern, Ardgor and Sunart as a whole. It would be difficult to make assumptions about how the distribution of households within Morvern may have changed between 2001 and 2008.

From the community consultation conducted by Morvern Community Development Company in 2007 it became apparent that there was still a significant demand for affordable housing in Morvern. There are two large land owners in Morvern – Ardtornish Estate and the Forestry Commission. In the recent years Ardtornish Estate have been more involved with the community in terms of land acquisition and management. As a result, 3 new properties have been built and 2 more are awaiting being built on the land West of Kirk Brae on Drimnin Road in Lochaline. There is also a township development of approximately 20 houses at Achabeg. This project is still in early stages but it should provide a healthy boost to the housing market in Lochaline.

MCDC's vision is for a sustainable community where people own their own property, take pride in it and seek to improve their immediate environment.

Infrastructure

Although situated on the mainland, Morvern feels remote. This is due to the fact that getting here is not easy. To get to Morvern, one has to either travel via the Corran Ferry, 8 miles from Fort William or go via the Isle of Mull on the Fishnish to Lochaline ferry. If one

chooses the first option, after a 5 minute crossing over Corran ferry, there is a 12 mile double track stretch to the Lochaline turn off and after that a further 18 mile of single track road to Lochaline. If the second option is chosen, one has to travel via Oban first, take a ferry from Oban to Craignure (a 45 minute crossing that can be costly too if using a vehicle) and then a ferry from Fishnish to Lochaline (this takes 20 minutes). The second option is a more expensive option and requires having a car as the bus service on Mull does not always fit in with the Fishnish to Lochaline ferry timetable. Lochaline local community have made several attempts to negotiate with Caledonian MacBrayne a road equivalent tariff of getting to Mull for those living in Lochaline but unfortunately, this has been unsuccessful so far.

MCDC's vision is to ensure that existing infrastructure stays in good working order and new attempts will be made in order to try and negotiate a road equivalent tariff with Caledonian MacBrayne.

Services and Facilities

Morvern has the following services and facilities, with majority of them located in the village of Lochaline. There is a grocery's shop with adjacent petrol pumps, a post office, a public use coins operated laundry, a restaurant, a hotel that serves evening meals in summer and caters mainly for hotel residents in winter; a social club, a snack bar, a cafe (open summer months only), primary school, medical centre.

The facilities that are not present are a banking service and police.

There are 22 community organisations in Morvern, a full list of their activities is in Appendix 1.

A full list of all existing services and facilities in Morvern is available in the Appendix 1.

MCDC's vision is to see the existing services and facilities strengthened and improved to better serve the community and attract a wider tourist group.

Demographic situation

Area	2001	2008	Change 2001 – 2008	% change 2001 – 2008
Morvern	317	346	29	9.2%

According to the desk based analysis the population of Morvern is growing. It is difficult to say how many people live in Morvern exactly. The 2011 National Census will hopefully provide a clearer picture of the demographic trends in Morvern. For the purposes of this analysis, the estimated figures used are taken from the desk top analysis conducted by Highland and Island Enterprise, see table above.

The lowest geographic level for which data is available from the GROS 2008 Small Area Population Estimates is an area combining Morvern, Ardgour and Sunart. In the absence of accurate up to date data, the 2008 figure for Morvern is therefore a “best estimate”. In 2001 the population of Morvern accounted for 34% of the total population of Morvern, Ardgour and Sunart. It has been assumed that this proportion would be similar in 2008.

The population of Morvern, Ardgour and Sunart was estimated to be 1,017 in 2008. According to the Census of Population, the population of the same area in 2001 was 931. Latest estimates therefore suggest that the population of this area has increased by 86 persons (up 9.2%) since 2001. The opening of the Ardnamurchan High School in Strontian in 2002 will have attracted new residents to the area (e.g. teaching staff); it is therefore possible that a considerable proportion of the increase in population over the period occurred in the area around Strontian, which is outwith the Morvern area. As a consequence, the population of Morvern may now account for less than 34% of the population of Morvern, Ardgour and Sunart; the assumption used may therefore over estimate the potential change in the population of Morvern between 2001 and 2008.

There is a steady increase in the number of children starting school in Morvern, from 23 in 2001 to 28 in 2009, a 21.7% increase 2001 – 2009 (from Scottish Government, Historical School Rolls, 1996 to

2009).

MCDC's vision is for a sustainable demographic growth supported by good employment opportunities, good services and facilities and affordable housing.

4.Intended Outcomes

Aim: to create a sustainable community through providing adequate employment opportunities, sustainable and affordable housing, leisure services and facilities for all ages, promoting healthy lifestyle and encouraging people to take part in various community activities.

Objectives: investing in revenue generating projects in order to make the Morvern community financially sustainable in a very short period of time and generating a surplus that can be reinvested in the community for projects that the community wants and that will make the community even more prosperous thus attracting more people and businesses to the area.

5.Ongoing Projects

Pontoons

Concern over reduced prospects for employment in the Lochaline area, combined with the strong recommendations of The Countryside Exchange report in 2001, led the community to recognize the potential of marine based tourism in sustaining the local economy. The location is remote by land but by sea is strategically well placed as an anchorage and is well used as an overnight stop for yachts on the popular routes up and down the Sound of Mull, well placed between Oban and Tobermory.

At present the popular anchorages in the loch are distant from the village and access to the shore and village is difficult. There are commercial access restrictions associated with the ferry slipway

and the silica sand mine, plus strong tides, restrictive depths and difficult access to the foreshore. There are also limited facilities accessible to yachts for services such as water and fuel. As a result the village does not benefit greatly from passing yachts.

The Morvern Community Development Company (MCDC) aims to stimulate the local economy through encouraging both visiting yachts to stop here and to come ashore to the village and to develop permanent marina berthing. The project is seen as having an important and mutually beneficial relationship with an independent private proposal for a boat yard and yacht storage facility in the loch put forward in 2003.

We have compiled a brief overview of existing data on yachting in Scotland and on the West Coast in particular to assess the potential market and potential benefits to the community of a yachting development in the loch. Local surveys and visits to other yachting developments on the West Coast have confirmed this view.

In consultation with the community we have assessed the physical and technical problems associated with developing such a facility and identified a number of development options. The most popular and most economically viable option is installation of pontoons to berth up to 20 average size yachts and associated services, water, electricity, marine diesel fuelling facilities and Wi-Fi access.

Morvern Community Development Company have been pursuing for some time the installation of a floating pontoon based structure which will enable visiting yachts to tie alongside and either come ashore safely to purchase provisions and services or to use as an overnight berth.

The Company originally had proposals for an 80 berth marina, however following feasibility studies it was deemed that this was not an economically viable option. Since then the proposals have been altered to a floating pontoon structure to berth up to 20 average size yachts some with 50m walkway to it, built on top of an old stone jetty. Planning permission has been granted for this by the Highland Council.

The MCDC has also considered the installation of shore based facilities which would include shower and toilet facilities. However at this stage we feel that we should concentrate our efforts on

installing the pontoons with the view of generating revenue to help with the installation of the shore facilities. The design of the pontoons will enable them to be extended in a modular and cost effective fashion should demand dictate.

At present Lochaline has a large volume of visiting yachts but unfortunately with most of the good anchorages being located away from the village and its facilities the visitors tend not to come ashore in great numbers. The pontoons will be located at the closest feasible point to the village and will enable visitors to take a 10 minute stroll along the loch side path to the village facilities. Informal observations throughout summer 2006 (Mid May-Mid September) indicated that there were an average of 19 visiting vessels entering Lochaline every day during this period, using an estimate of 3 persons per visiting boat this equates to almost 7000 visits during the main summer months. While this figure drops off rapidly over the winter months there are still many sport dive boats and sport fishermen operating out of Lochaline throughout the winter months who have expressed interest in safe berthing facilities.

The pontoon development will ensure that locals and visitors will have a safe and reliable access to the sea. Local people have indicated that better mooring and berthing facilities would encourage them to use the water more readily. A number of local boat owners are elderly and the pontoons will allow them safe access to their vessels.

Local dive boat operators have indicated that they will use the facility, as the pier at the mouth of Lochaline is unsuitable for use at low tides, giving problems of safe access for clients.

New small businesses could be generated through activities, such as windsurfing, kayaking and scuba diving. The area is agreed to be the premier all year round diving Mecca in the UK and Lochaline itself is described in many yachting magazines as offering some of the best all weather anchorages of any harbour in this part of the West coast.

The pontoons would further assist in the aspirations of Morvern to be a player in "Lochaber, Outdoor Capital of the UK" project. New leisure opportunities, which may be engendered by the creation of

pontoons will be a major benefit to the young people who live in the village, providing healthy outdoor activities, without them having to travel to Fort William and beyond to participate.

It is expected that with creation of pontoons, that extra visitors will add significantly to the sustainability of existing businesses, and may create new business opportunities.

The nearest pontoons to Lochaline are in Tobermory Harbour on the Isle of Mull. Tobermory offer slightly superior facilities to what Lochaline pontoons will be offering initially, and this will be reflected in the price. We have plans for installing shore facilities as soon as the pontoons are in place. We do not consider ourselves to be in competition with Tobermory, quite the opposite – we are going to be working together to promote each other's businesses as safe and secure places to stay overnight while exploring the Sound of Mull.

Allotments

Morvern Community Development Company is working on the allotments scheme on land belonging to the Ardtornish Estate adjacent to the existing Old Orchards Garden Centre. This area of land has long been derelict and is something of an eyesore in the heart of the village.

Benefits of the allotments scheme: increased local food production, health benefits from working on allotments, known as the Green Gym effect; reduced reliance on imported goods, reduction in carbon footprint associated with food production, greater social interaction and cooperation amongst local people, incorporation of a proposed local composting scheme, with its attendant benefit of reduction in land fill waste, possible incorporation of a school vegetable garden, extra demand for goods and services from existing local businesses, regeneration of a local eyesore.

6.Future Projects

Pontoons Shore Facilities

Shore facilities for the pontoons is the extension of the pontoons project itself and is designed to provide more extensive services to the visiting yachtsmen. MCDC envisage that the shore facilities will consist of showers and toilets, including disabled, a small office, a laundrette and a small chandlery shop.

Creation of shore facilities will greatly improve the services provided and will provide a full time job for a local person in the summer and a part time position in the winter.

Scout Hut

The old Scout Hut is a very dilapidated, disused building that once served as a dormitory for mine workers and then a meeting place for a scout group in Lochaline. It is located in the centre of the village next to the fuel pumps and the shop. The building itself is not fit for any use due to its poor condition. Morvern Community Development Company and Morvern Community Council have been in negotiations with the owner of the building, Tarmac, to see if it would be possible to acquire the building and the land. Tarmac have offered to look favourably on this, providing that the Community bring forward a legitimate community plan for the building.

MCDC have conducted a community survey regarding the use of the building. There were several suggestions put forward regarding the best use of the new building, for example, craft shop, tea rooms, workshops, wildlife and heritage centre, business centre, a place for young people "to hang out", picnic area and parking, wine bar, chandlery shop, youth centre/cafe, internet cafe, small retail outlets, community kitchen, youth hostel, soft play area for 0-5 year olds, gym/keep fit centre, nice planted up and landscaped garden, charity shop and even a swimming pool.

As is seen from the list above, people in the community have many ideas for the use of the old Scout Hut. Taking into account all of the above, the Morvern Community Development Company is hoping to

develop a multi – purpose building that will incorporate most of the suggestions above. The hope is that the building will be used all day every day for various purposes – for baking in the morning, for small children to play in the afternoon, for school children to come and use the facility after school and in the evening, the craft shop/charity shop/local produce shop would be open all day, the heritage/information centre would be open all day too to cater for tourists, tea rooms will be open all day in the summer and possibly in afternoons in the winter to provide a place to meet for local people during long cold winter days.

While thinking about this facility for the local community, we are hoping to create 1 -2 part time jobs for people in the local community while giving tourists a reason to stop in Lochaline and spend some of their money.

Former Kiel Camp

In 2000 the idea evolved to open a commercial sawmill built on the triangular strip of land West of Kiel. The file on this project is quite large, and a great deal of work had gone into taking various plans for it forward. None of the plans brought forward reached fruition for a variety of reasons.

Current thinking is that the MCDC could lease the land and use it for a low cost project, nominally, the creation of a number of compounds that would be available to local people for a variety of uses. They could be used for instance for storage of boats and other equipment, or the establishment of small craft businesses. A bare compound would be provided with a screen fence all round. Power and water would also be supplied to each compound, and it would be largely up to the individual what the compound was used for, subject to planning consents. A similar project has been realised on Mull by Mull and Iona Community Trust with the help of funding, it proved very popular and they are generating an income for the MICT.

Artificial Reef

It is for some time now people who are involved in water sports in Morvern have been talking about a possibility of having an artificial reef placed somewhere not too far from the village of Lochaline

perhaps in the Ardtornish Bay or any other reasonably sheltered and shallow place. The idea came about after the sinking of HMS Scylla off the coast of Cornwall.

Scylla is an ex-Royal Navy frigate that was placed on the seabed in Whitsand Bay, south Cornwall on 27 March 2004 as a reef for recreational diving. Scylla has provided the opportunity to study colonisation sequence and the time-of year that particular species settle. A total of 257 taxa (species and species groups) had been identified from Scylla by the fifth anniversary of her sinking. Such information is important for understanding potential recovery times of damaged ecosystems and to identify those species that will settle and grow rapidly through to those that are unlikely to settle on new or damaged surfaces and should therefore be considered as sensitive to disturbance.

Apart from the obvious scientific benefit and it being a fantastic safe wreck to dive, the impact the sinking had on the local economy was impressive.

Lochaline is already a popular diving destination, there are several wrecks in the Sound of Mull that divers from all over the country frequent, divers seem to be keen on diving wrecks that resemble ships, but many historical wrecks have deteriorated over time.

Potential social and economical benefits arising from the project would include: more divers coming to stay in Lochaline and areas around it, Oban, Tobermory, Kingairloch etc thus boosting local economies and this will potentially encourage new businesses, leisure facilities and services to develop in order to support a steady flow of visitor divers. Divers will be able to use the reef at no direct cost. Environmental benefits arising from the creation of a location that will provide a breeding ground for fish and other marine life, enhanced opportunities for disabled diving, increased research possibilities and linking to the wider community and education sector. Sinking of ships in other areas of the world (New Zealand and Australia) brought 40% rise to the local economy.

The project would need to consist of several stages – finding a group of people/ businesses to take the project on, conducting a feasibility study and, if sustainable, identifying a suitable vessel and negotiating purchasing it or ideally being given the vessel, this

would be followed by preparation, cleaning and sinking of the vessel.

It is unrealistic to expect that Morvern Community Development Company will be able to realise this project on its own, therefore, it is important to establish a framework for bringing together those organisations that are interested in the development of more detailed proposals, whilst monitoring the actual impact of the sinking.

Wind Farm

UK is enjoying the best wind resources in the whole of Europe.

Below are the wind speed results for PA34 postcode in Lochaline, Morvern (calculations by Department of Energy and Climate Change):

for the 1km grid square 167 744 (NM6744)

Wind speed at 45m agl (in m/s)

6.8	6.4	6.1
5.6	5.2	5.8
		6.1

Wind speed at 25m agl (in m/s)

6.1	5.8	5.6
4.9	4.4	5
		5.6

Wind speed at 10m agl (in m/s)

5.3	5	4.9
4	3.4	4
		4.8

Blank squares indicate areas outside the land area of the UK - i.e. areas at sea or of neighbouring countries.

agl = above ground level.

Squares surrounding the central square correspond to wind speeds for surrounding grid squares.

With volatile fossil fuel prices and declining technology costs, and incentives such as the introduction of the Feed-in Tariff, interest in microgeneration is steadily growing, with more and more homes and businesses generating their own clean, green energy and with more and more potential sites becoming commercially attractive for the installation of wind turbines.

The UK small wind system sector continues to grow its contribution to national energy requirements, with overall annual production estimated by RenewableUK to have reached 35.8GWh in 2009. The current annual energy production levels are only scratching the surface of what may be possible in the future. RenewableUK estimates that if barriers to market growth are adequately addressed, by 2020 the UK small wind system sector will be annually generating 1,700GWh (1.7TWh) of renewable electricity.

In 2009, RenewableUK estimated the UK small wind system sector to have generated a level of energy that would have emitted 22,580 tonnes of carbon dioxide if sourced from the national grid (Digest of UK Energy Statistics). The Carbon Trust states that 'in theory small-scale wind energy has the potential to generate 41.3TWh of electricity and save 17.8Mt of CO₂ in the UK annually', approximately 12% of the UK's electricity requirements.

Morvern Community Development Company have been in talks with local private and institutional landowners to explore potential avenues for the community to become directly involved in renewable energy projects.

Hydro Scheme

Hydro electric schemes are the largest contributor of electricity from renewable sources worldwide and it is estimated that 20% of the world's electricity is generated from such schemes. (A Layman's Guide to Small Hydro Schemes in Scotland).

Scotland's wet climate and mountainous terrain, especially on the west coast, means it is well placed to make use of the technology on a large scale. Currently 10% of our electricity is produced from hydro power and most of the large hydro schemes in Scotland were constructed during the period from the 1930s to the 1950s. Whilst

one major scheme is still being constructed at Glendoe (now under repair due to rock fall into one of the tunnels) most schemes to be developed in future would be in the range of 100 – 1500 kilowatts (kW). Schemes of less than 100Kw may still be developed; mainly for domestic consumption and the selling of any surplus electricity to the grid where possible.

Hydro schemes may be classified as either ‘impoundment’ or ‘run of river’. The majority of Scotland’s large hydro stations are based around the use of a dam and impoundment reservoir.

Impoundment schemes have an advantage over other renewable energy technologies in that using a dam or weir to store water in a reservoir means it can be used when it is needed most.

Run of River schemes normally divert water from a river by the building of a diversionary weir which diverts water from a river into an intake which then passes through a generator and the water is returned some distance down the river. Hydro power is produced by simply using a body of moving water to turn a turbine. This is normally achieved by passing the water down a closed pipeline or through a closed culvert which then turns the turbine and the revolutions of the turbine convert mechanical energy through the generator into electricity.

Morvern Community Development Company have submitted their Expression of Interest regarding a possible community hydro scheme. Several sites have been identified for this purpose in Fuinary and Savary.

7. Carbon Footprint Assessment and Reduction Plan

There is no doubt about the fact that supplies of oil and natural gas will diminish in the very near future. Leading petroleum experts consider that Peak Oil is likely to occur in the next decade, although there is much debate about it. **Peak oil** is the point in time when the maximum rate of global petroleum extraction is reached, after which the rate of production enters terminal decline. (Wikipedia).

In this plan we would try and concentrate on how we, as a community, can adapt for a future with less available energy. The vision for Morvern as a community in 10 – 20 years time is a thriving community acting as a role model for others. In this section we will be looking at food and energy production and consumption, housing, transport, waste, young people and community, health and tourism. This section will largely concentrate on trying to find ways of reducing CO2 emissions instead of depleting the limited resources available.

Food Production and Consumption

We are quite fortunate in Lochaline to have a local shop. Most essential foods and bits and pieces can be bought from the shop. However, if people were to make a big family shop they would tend to travel to Fort William (40 miles by road and also includes a ferry crossing) or to Oban (70 miles away and a ferry crossing).

It takes a large amount of energy to produce a person's food and then even larger amount of time to process, pack and transport that food to the customer. Taking it into account, we believe that the best possible place to buy food should be locally, from local farmers, crofters etc.

We are hopefully moving in the right direction with this by setting up an allotments scheme in the village, where people from the local community will be able to grow their own fruit and vegetables, thus reducing the carbon footprint of food being delivered to the village. Food growing will become an integral part of village life.

Energy

Energy is essential in everyday life. We use energy to cook, store food, heat water, to heat our homes, provide light etc. Energy is vital to communities and it should not be wasted. We as a nation are using a vast amount of energy to sustain our lifestyle.

As previously stated, fossil fuels are fast running out. Globally, we are moving towards using renewable sources of energy, e.g. wind, solar, tidal etc. Morvern is ideally placed, geographically speaking, to take advantage of these opportunities.

Wind is a fact of nearly everyday life, and elevated positions high above the natural tunnel that is the Sound of Mull, make it an ideal site for wind farm facilities. Establishment of wind farm facilities would allow generated power to be sold to the grid, generating a sustainable income for the community, the income perhaps used as seed funding for further initiatives.

Morvern Community Development Company are in negotiation with local landowners and other external governmental and non-governmental organisations regarding the possibility of community run renewable energy projects. Community awareness needs to be raised regarding the importance of energy saving.

Housing

Sustainable housing is usually self-built and self driven. All new houses need to be built sustainably, with high levels of energy efficiency, using modern energy generating and energy saving technologies and with a high proportion of local sustainable materials. Old properties need to be insulated so as not to lose essential energy and heat.

The proposed new township development at Achnaha brought forward by Ardtornish Estate has the potential to become a flagship development that can demonstrate best sustainable practice and become a model for other similar developments elsewhere.

Transport

People in Morvern are very dependent on transport, merely because of the location of Morvern and the distances involved in order to maintain a normal lifestyle. People use their cars in order to go shopping, to take their children to school or to enjoy leisure activities and see their peers. People are already car sharing to get to places of work and leisure and there are also local minibuses available in order to take people to and from Fort William for example.

Because of the location of Morvern, it is unrealistic to expect that people would stop using cars and rely more on the public transport. The public transport network is not very developed or indeed reliable, therefore, perhaps a pool car scheme can be realised,

where the community will own 1 or 2 cars that people in the community could hire for a day or two, or maybe a week or so. That way people will only hire cars when needed, thus reducing carbon footprint and the hire fee will be going towards taxing, insuring and maintaining the pool of cars.

Waste

The Highland Council have set up an area wide waste management and recycling scheme and local community are recycling tins, glass, paper and cardboard. There are also public recycling bins conveniently located next to the shop in the village of Lochaline.

People in the community are also composting in their gardens but MCDC are hoping to set up a composting site for garden waste as part of the allotments scheme which will be available to be used by all.

Young People

The young people of Morvern are our most valuable asset. They need to be empowered with the necessary skills and the focus for their future in order to stay in the community, with necessary skills, and to take it to the next level of sustainability.

Health

According to Ardnamurchan and Morvern Sub – Area Profile by the Highland Council, 72.9% of the population describe their general health as being good. 16.2% of the population has a limiting long – term illness. This data is based on the 2001 Census and no data is available for the area of Morvern only.

As such a large percentage of people are considering themselves as being in good health, in the future the establishment and maintenance of good health will be as important as the treatment of the disease. With creation of allotments, we hope that local people would be able to lead a healthier lifestyle with inclusions of gentle exercise that is so important, especially for the older generation.

Tourism

With the development and establishment of all of the projects that are running at the moment and those that are still being considered, Morvern will appear on the wider tourist map and will be an attractive place to come for all categories of people, young and old, yachtsmen, walkers and hikers, wild life lovers, backpackers, etc. By sustaining healthy tourism, the community will be able to economically sustain their local people and businesses. Sustainable tourism will also become the vehicle for building the infrastructures that will sustain Morvern beyond tourism.

8. Project Schedules and Intended Funding

Ongoing Projects		
Project name	Time scales	Funding
Pontoon and static walkway	Finished and in use by June 2011	SailWest Project, HIE, the Highland Council, local donations
Community allotments	In use by planting season 2011	LEADER, Awards for All, Climate Challenge Fund
Future Projects		
Project name	Time scales	Funding
Shore Facilities		Big Lottery, HIE, Community Growth Fund, LEADER
Scout Hut		Big Lottery

Wind Farm and Hydro Scheme		Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES)
Sawmill		NFLS

9.Key Community Growth Targets

Increase in population

- Make Morvern a desirable place for people to live and work
- Ensure that young people are given every opportunity, both social and economic, to allow them to remain in Morvern
- Provide the best possible educational facilities locally in order to retain youngsters, and to allow all members of the community to obtain new skills and qualifications
- Where further education is the reason for leaving ensure that graduates can be tempted back by a progressive dynamic community
- Provide employment opportunities for school leavers through economic diversification whilst ensuring graduates are encouraged to return, bringing skills with them, to a community that is progressive and dynamic
- Encourage provision of all types of housing – from social and affordable through private development, to creation of new crofts in partnership with public and private landlords.

Land Acquisition

Morvern Community Land Reform Steering Group have been looking at ways to help revitalise the community for a number of years. The aim of the group is to secure the land for the people of Morvern for the creation of crofts, for long term renewable energy projects that will ensure that the community of Morvern will prosper from it, for people to be able to buy or lease the land in

order to develop new businesses and buying plots with the view to building new houses.

Economic development

- Encourage establishment of new businesses
- Work in close proximity with local landowners to ensure availability of land for business generation
- Provide support, encouragement and access to expertise to get new business off the ground and to allow established businesses to flourish
- Actively promote Morvern as a destination rather than a transit point. Market all facilities and attractions with a common banner in order that Morvern becomes a widely recognisable brand. (Think “Freedom is a place called Ardnamurchan”)
- Reach out to the Morvern Diaspora who may have knowledge, expertise and contacts in areas which may benefit the social and economic health of the community
- Welcome tourists who can add to the viability of the economy while protecting the natural beauty of Morvern

Support existing and develop new community initiatives

- Explore the benefits of renewable energy production to the community
- Move on with the renewable energy projects

10. Risk Assessment

The potential risks identified with this Growth Plan are as follows:

- Availability of funding
- Availability of resources in order to realise some of the project (employed and volunteer)
- Always conducting a community consultation before any project starts in order to ensure that a particular project is supported and is of benefit to the community

11. Plan Review

The intention is to periodically review and update this plan, at least every 6 months in order to make sure that it is being adhered to and in order to make amendments to adapt to the changing needs, priorities and aspirations of the community.

12. Appendices

1. Existing Services and Facilities – Lochaline Audit
2. Community Survey Report
3. Pontoon Design Layout
4. Allotments Design Layout