



# Public Consultation – Aros Park

CONSULTATION – 21<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2024, TOBERMORY

Area	Comment	FLS Response
GAELIC	Gualine Duibhe – ‘black shoulder’ Gurrabain – ‘overhanging’	FLS are committed to their Gaelic Language plan and always welcomes input into improving our Gaelic knowledge of the forests – mòran taing! Any new trails, subject to funding, could include a Gaelic name based on local geography or a cultural reference point/ story etc.
STATUS QUO	Doesn’t need to change Keep low key (seconded!) Would love it to stay as is if possible Steady stream of visitors even in rain, locals and visitors	Broadly yes, the park is such a great place to visit as it is. However, there are improvements that could be made to address some quality issues. We also need to work with existing park stakeholders such as the walled garden and the Harbour Association to ensure any developments work in a joined-up/ considered way.
GENERAL	Who paints the gates at the entrance?	Title deeds show that liability for fencing part lies with the disposal to Aros Lodge but the gates themselves are not mentioned so we would assume a 50/50 responsibility with our neighbours for the gates.
	Ticks are a major problem in and around the park, especially worrying with children	Mull team aware children’s groups use the lawn area for activities. We aim to mow the grass around 4-5 times per season (2024 being less due to rainfall) We mow the grass as short as possible to discourage ticks. Ticks are a growing concern around the country there is excellent advice on dealing with this mini-menace here: <a href="#">Check for ticks   Forestry and Land Scotland</a>
ANGLING	Main lochan very important for Angling Club. Leak in dam wall below sluice	Ensure this is passed to our civils team to ensure dam meets relevant legislative guidelines.

TRAILS	Love the Apper Mor access walking and use bus to link	Mull team aware Apper mòr is popular with locals. It is used as an alternative start point to walk to Aros Park. New primary signage was installed at this site early 2024. Route to AP is marked with fingerposts. - TJ
	Handrail loose along coastal path near Aros House end	If this is on FLS land we will pick this up as soon as possible.
	Explore opportunities to widen access for push chairs and limited mobility	More accessible access is a priority for us but there are significant constraints with the landform on the island. However, we are looking at how we could improve the surface from the car park to the Lochan, around the Lochan itself and options to make the route round the lochan accessible.
	Lochside walk: path badly eroding in places: big rocks sticking up (not good for bikes or wheelchairs)  Improve some of the paths	See above
	Play Areas: opportunities for wide range of ages; consider options for social spaces as well as adventure.  More play areas	The play equipment is now ageing and likely to come to the end of its life in the next few years. Play equipment is very expensive, so FLS would be happy to talk to community groups or other parties how might be interested in helping us fund a more “natural play” replacement.
	Waterfall path deteriorating; erosion	The path is graded strenuous and is currently within that grading. However, we have identified pathworks are required here and this will be programmed for funding opportunities.
	Potential for a small path to an amazing viewpoints across to Tobermory around NM 521 533	Yes, this is a great spot and view of Tobermory; we could explore options with the community to create a path and picnic spot in this area.
PARKING FEES	Abolish fees for locals; I don't go to Aros Park now unless I have time to walk or cycle there  What are the parking fees paying for?  Happy to pay parking charges but need toilets to be open for use	Aros park has had some significant investment in recent years, the main drive was repaired which cost circa £70,000, the bridge on the coastal path to Tobermory was also repaired which cost circa £50,000. The income from the parking charges is around £5,000 so this helps offset these other sums. FLS is a largely self-funded agency so we must ensure we generate income where possible to ensure the future of our public forests.  The Harbour Association will be providing toilets as part of their development at the old pier. FLS are working with THA to make this happen.

NOTES ON DISPLAYS	<p>9. Overgrown vegetation at waterfall is part of its charm.</p> <p>6. pumphouse requires illustrated sign showing how it worked</p>	<p>This is not something FLS would be able to commit to. However, if any group would like to do something we would be happy to discuss this.</p>
WALLED GARDEN	<p>Group reinvigorated and slight change of direction; managed wild garden rather than restoring a formal garden. Issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deer proofing (gates, poss fence outside)</li> <li>- Invasives: Himalayan knotweed</li> <li>- Fire in the walled garden</li> <li>- Interested to work with FLS on projects if can raise funds and share work</li> </ul> <p>Walled Garden group would like to continue to develop an arts/growing project in the space</p> <p>Allotments in walled garden would be more useful for Tob residents</p> <p>What's needed is space for locals without gardens to grow fruit and veg and young people to learn such skills, not another arty-farty venue. Far too much of that already. It's good soil that could help the cost of living crisis</p> <p>Would be good to see walled garden used again; big space</p>	<p>The walled garden is now leased to a community body, FLS is not responsible for the activities within this area as long as it is allowed within the lease. Although we would be more than happy to work with the group where we have shared outcomes or objectives and there are clearly many opportunities for us to do this.</p>
TOILETS	<p>Are the loos working again</p>	<p>See above THA pier project.</p>
ENVIRONMENT	<p>Helleborines recorded around NM 522 536</p>	<p>Our environment team will be undertaking surveys to ensure our records our up to date for Hellebories and orchids.</p>

	Butterfly orchids around NM 506 546 – bracken encroaching and grasses taking over; needs strimming or grazing. Numbers in 2022 were more than 250; down to less than 100 in 2024	We are considering options on improving habitat in this area.
INVASIVES	Rhodie areas that were managed now regrowing  Japanese Knotweed around NM 517 539; NM 518 540  High number of different invasives including Gaultheria	As part of the plan revision we are putting together an invasive species plan for the Park to include Rhododendrum, Knotweed and Gaultheria to identify priority areas to try an manage.
	Mink are present especially in and around the lochan  Trout being taken by mink; they need to be trapped (problems with potentially trapping otters)	We are investigating options to work with west coast Mink projects using SmartTraps for mink control, as piloted on Lismore.
DEER	Reinstate deer fencing around Drumfin with neighbour contribution	We will work with our neighbours and Land Agents to move forward this 100m section of fence