



Item: 3

Development and Infrastructure Committee: 11 November 2025.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.

Report by Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

1. Overview

- 1.1. Under the provisions of The Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020, the Council is required to prepare the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, for adoption by Scottish Ministers.
- 1.2. The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP), attached as Appendix 1 to this report, has been prepared by the Council to address local priorities and establish local objectives and policies for marine planning, development and activities in the Orkney Islands marine region (0-12 Nautical miles).
- 1.3. The OIRMP, together with the undernoted supporting information, has been prepared with extensive input from a wide range of stakeholders, including but not limited to, the Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group, local communities, businesses, statutory consultees and the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government.
- 1.4. The supporting information comprises the following impact assessments, attached as Appendices 3 to 7 respectively to this report:
 - Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment.
 - Equality Impact Assessment.
 - Island Communities Impact Assessment.
 - Business Regulatory Impact Assessment.
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report.
- 1.5. The Orkney Islands Region Marine Plan: Consultation Draft, and supporting information, was deposited for consultation from 1 August to 25 October 2024, and the details of this extensive consultation are set out in the Consultation and Modifications Report, attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 1.6. The Consultation and Modifications Report contains information on the issues raised in response to the consultation and the modifications made to the Orkney Islands

Region Marine Plan: Consultation Draft in response to the consultation, referred to at paragraph 1.5, and wider stakeholder engagement process.

- 1.7. Following the consultation, stakeholder engagement and plan modifications process, the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government has agreed the content of the OIRMP, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, for the purpose of making a recommendation to Scottish Ministers to adopt the plan.
- 1.8. Public authorities must take authorisation or enforcement decisions in accordance with the adopted national marine plan and the appropriate adopted regional marine plan, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise e.g. decisions on marine licences and planning applications.
- 1.9. Should the OIRMP be endorsed by the Council for submission to Scottish Ministers for their adoption, as recommended, a decision by Scottish Ministers on whether to adopt the plan is anticipated in early 2026.
- 1.10. The Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan was approved by the Council in 2016 as a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning and works licence applications.
- 1.11. Should the OIRMP be adopted by Scottish Ministers, it is recommended that the Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan be withdrawn for the purposes of Council decision making on planning and works licence applications.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Endorse the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, for submission to Scottish Ministers for their adoption.
 - ii. Subject to adoption of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan by the Scottish Ministers, approve the withdrawal of the Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan for the purposes of Council decision making on planning and works licence applications, subject to adoption of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan by the Scottish Ministers.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 introduced a new era for the management of Scotland's seas, including provision for local stakeholders to prepare statutory regional marine plans for the eleven Scottish marine regions. A regional marine plan contains statutory policies and spatial information to guide public authority

decision making on marine development and activities, including but not limited to, marine licence, section 36 consent for electricity generation and relevant planning applications.

3.2. The Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020 (the Direction), commenced on 27 November 2020, delegating functions to the Council to prepare a statutory Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP) and supporting documents. The Council is responsible for delivering these functions on behalf of Scottish Ministers. The function to adopt a regional marine plan remains with the Scottish Ministers.

3.3. The Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group (OMPAG) provides technical advice and guidance to the Council on the preparation of the OIRMP. OMPAG has provided significant input into preparation of the OIRMP to ensure that the plan addresses a broad range of interests and priorities. Policy sub-groups were set up for OMPAG members to discuss and feed into the drafting of the OIRMP. OMPAG membership includes:

- Orkney Regional Inshore Fisheries Group.
- Orkney Harbour Authority.
- Orkney Renewable Energy Forum.
- Orkney Marinas.
- Orkney Marine Services Association.
- Orkney Sub-aqua Club.
- International Centre for Island Technology/Heriot Watt University.
- NatureScot.
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency.
- Historic Environment Scotland.
- Crown Estate Scotland.
- Salmon Scotland.
- Visit Scotland.
- Flotta Oil Terminal Operator.
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland.
- Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks.

3.4. The Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan, prepared by Highland Council, Orkney Islands Council and the Scottish Government, was put in place to provide a marine planning policy framework in advance of statutory regional marine planning. In 2016, this plan was approved by the Council as a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning and works licence applications. It is recommended that, once the OIRMP is adopted by Scottish

Ministers, the Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan be withdrawn by the Council for the purposes of decision making on planning and works licences.

4. Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

- 4.1. The purpose of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP), attached as Appendix 1 to this report, is to provide a policy framework for public authorities to make decisions on sustainable development and activities within, or that affect, the Orkney Islands marine region. The policies in the OIRMP have been prepared in accordance with the National Marine Plan, and to be compatible with National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4).
- 4.2. The OIRMP has been prepared to address local priorities and establish local objectives and policies for marine planning, development and activities. The plan contains a vision, aim and objectives, general policies on social, economic and environmental matters, and sector policies for the sustainable development of Orkney's key marine economic sectors.
- 4.3. The timetable for the preparation of the OIRMP, and supporting information, is detailed in the Statement of Public Participation.

5. Consultation and plan modifications

- 5.1. The Marine Planning team delivered early community engagement workshops in Stromness, Kirkwall, St Margaret's Hope, Stronsay, Sanday, Westray and Hoy in Spring/Summer 2022. This helped to engage local communities in the plan making process and outline the scope and purpose of the forthcoming marine plan.
- 5.2. The Orkney Islands Region Marine Plan: Consultation Draft was deposited for consultation between 1 August and 25 October 2024. An extensive public consultation was undertaken including 10 in-person community consultation events which ran through the day and into the evening in multiple locations around Orkney, including Stronsay, Rousay, St Margaret's Hope, Shapinsay, Finstown, Hoy, Stromness, Kirkwall, Sanday and Westray. Two further online community consultation and engagement sessions were delivered to maximise participation opportunities.
- 5.3. Ten local school class sessions were delivered by the Marine Planning team to engage young people in the plan preparation process and to find out what young people value about Orkney's marine environment, economy and resources.

- 5.4. Details of the consultation are set out in the Consultation and Modifications Report, attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 5.5. The Consultation and Modifications Report contains information about the consultation respondents and the issues raised in response to the consultation. It contains a summary of the key modifications and details of specific modifications made to the plan in response to the consultation and wider stakeholder engagement.
- 5.6. Following the consultation and plan modifications process, the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government has agreed the content of the OIRMP, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, for the purpose of making a recommendation to Scottish Ministers to adopt the plan. Should the OIRMP be submitted by the Council for adoption by the Scottish Ministers, it will be subject to a formatting and accessibility review, and potential minor modifications, to ensure compliance with Scottish Government accessibility and publishing requirements.

6. Legislative Position

- 6.1. The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 (the 2010 Act) and the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (the 2009 Act) provide the statutory framework for marine planning and management. The 2010 Act legislates for marine planning, licensing and conservation activities in Scottish inshore waters (0-12 nautical miles) whilst the 2009 Act provides executive devolution to Scottish Ministers for marine planning, licensing and conservation powers in the offshore region (12-200 nautical miles).
- 6.2. The 2010 Act and the 2009 Act establish responsibility for Scottish Ministers to prepare a national marine plan for Scotland (0-200 nautical miles) and the 2010 Act establishes provisions to prepare regional marine plans for the eleven adopted Scottish marine regions (0-12 nautical miles). The 2010 Act requires that the national marine plan must be in conformity with the current UK Marine Policy Statement and regional marine plans must be in conformity with the adopted national marine plan unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. The 2010 Act makes provision for Scottish Ministers to delegate functions in relation to regional marine plans to a nominated person(s) and public authorities with an interest in the region.
- 6.3. Section 27 of The Islands (Scotland) Act enables the Council to deliver regional marine planning functions on behalf of Scottish Ministers as a single public authority. The OIRMP has been prepared by the Council in accordance with the Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020 (the Direction). The Direction designates the Council as the Delegate, for the purposes of the Direction, and delegates functions including

the preparation of the OIRMP and supporting documents to the Council. The function to adopt a regional marine plan remains with the Scottish Ministers.

- 6.4. The 2010 Act requires that public authorities must take authorisation or enforcement decisions in accordance with the adopted national marine plan and any relevant adopted regional marine plan, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Once adopted by Scottish Ministers, the OIRMP will be used in public authority decision making in accordance with this identified statutory duty.
- 6.5. In accordance with the provisions of the Marine Licensing (Consultees) (Scotland) Order 2011, the Council, as the Delegate, must be consulted in relation to any application for a marine licence from the Scottish Government for an activity which is to be carried out wholly or partly within the Orkney Islands marine region. This consultation process provides an opportunity for the Council to provide advice on the implementation of the OIRMP under the marine licensing process.

7. Supporting Information

- 7.1. The Direction, referred to paragraph 6.3, requires the Council to prepare supporting information alongside the OIRMP. This information includes the following impact assessments:
 - Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment: attached as Appendix 3 to this report.
 - Equality Impact Assessment, attached as Appendix 4 to this report.
 - Island Communities Impact Assessment, attached as Appendix 5 to this report.
 - Business Regulatory Impact Assessment, attached as Appendix 6 to this report.
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report, attached as Appendix 7 to this report.
- 7.2. Following the adoption of the OIRMP by Scottish Ministers, a Strategic Environmental Assessment Post Adoption Statement and Habitats Regulations Appraisal Record will be published.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1. Should the OIRMP be endorsed by the Council for submission to Scottish Ministers for their adoption, a decision by Scottish Ministers on whether to adopt the plan is anticipated in early 2026.
- 8.2. In accordance with the 2010 Act and the Direction, once adopted, the OIRMP will be kept under review by the Council and a report detailing this review will be published

a minimum of every five years from the date of the plan's adoption. The plan will be kept under review with regards to the effects of the policies and their effectiveness in securing the Plan's objectives. This review process will be informed by monitoring and evaluation of the Plan's effectiveness using an appropriate framework and indicators.

- 8.3. Should the plan be adopted, the Council will have an active role providing advice on the implementation of the OIRMP as a statutory consultee under the marine licensing process, as detailed at paragraph 6.5.

For Further Information please contact:

James Green, Team Manager (Marine Planning), extension 2516,
Email James.Green@orkney.gov.uk

Implications of Report

1. **Financial:** The resources required to prepare the OIRMP, and supporting documents, mainly in the form of staff time, has been contained within existing Planning Service revenue budgets. The cost of running the OIRMP public consultation in 2024 was fully funded by a grant of £5,330 from the Marine Fund Scotland. Once adopted, the ongoing resources required to keep the OIRMP under review, monitor and evaluate its effectiveness and discharge the marine licensing statutory consultee role will be contained within the Planning Service revenue budgets.
2. **Legal:** The Council's preparation of the OIRMP discharges the functions delegated to the Council under the Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020. This Direction has enabled the Council to prepare a statutory regional marine plan that addresses local priorities and objectives. The adoption of the OIRMP by Scottish Ministers would place a statutory duty on public authorities, including the Council and the Scottish Government, to take relevant authorisation and enforcement decisions in accordance with the adopted OIRMP, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Relevant authorisation and enforcement decisions taken by the Council include coastal and marine planning permission and work licences for marine works within Orkney harbour areas. Relevant authorisation and enforcement decisions taken by the Scottish Government include marine licence and section 36 consent under the Electricity Act 1989 e.g. for offshore renewable energy generation.
3. **Corporate Governance:** In terms of the Scheme of Administration, the discharge of marine planning functions delegated to the Council from Scottish Ministers, including the preparation, monitoring and review of the Orkney Islands Regional

Marine Plan, is a referred function of the Development and Infrastructure Committee.

4. **Human Resources:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
5. **Equalities:** An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 4 to this report.
6. **Island Communities Impact:** An Island Communities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 5 to this report.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - ☒ Growing our economy.
 - ☒ Strengthening our Communities.
 - ☒ Developing our Infrastructure.
 - ☐ Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - ☐ Cost of Living.
 - ☒ Sustainable Development.
 - ☐ Local Equality.
 - ☐ Improving Population Health.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk:** A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 7 to this report. The SEA includes an assessment of climate change factors. The SEA: Environmental Report underwent consultation alongside the OIRMP. The OIRMP includes climate objectives and policies to manage climate risks including provisions to encourage, promote and facilitate development, activities, and use that minimise greenhouse gas emissions, and that are adapted to the current and future impacts of climate change.
10. **Risk:** No significant risks have been identified.
11. **Procurement:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
12. **Health and Safety:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
13. **Property and Assets:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
14. **Information Technology:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
15. **Cost of Living:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.

List of Background Papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1: Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.

Appendix 2: Consultation and Modifications Report.

Appendix 3: Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment.

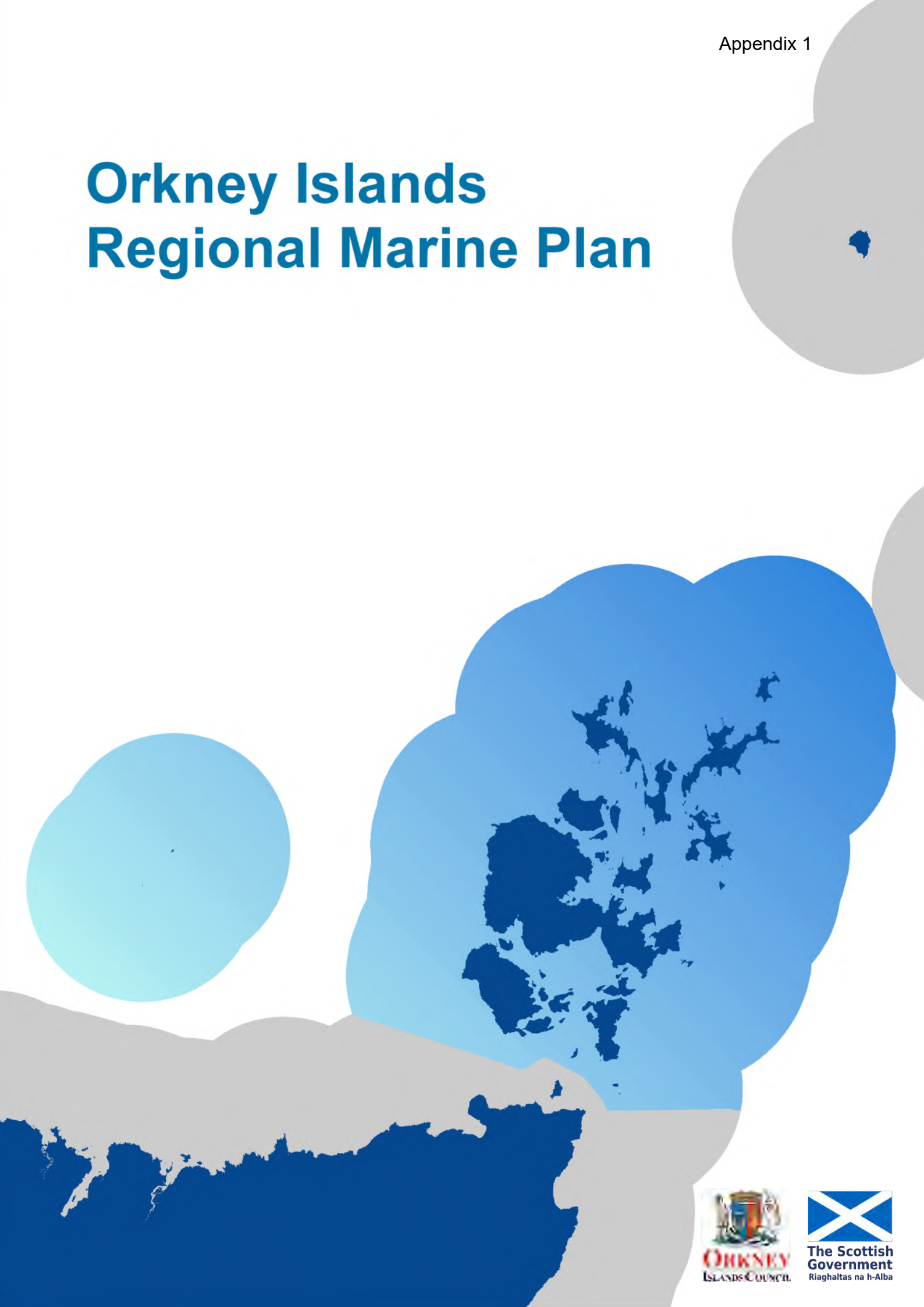
Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment.

Appendix 5: Island Communities Impact Assessment.

Appendix 6: Business Regulatory Impact Assessment.

Appendix 7: Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan



Blank Page



Foreword

The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan is a significant step forward for the protection of our marine waters whilst supporting sustainable economic development in the Orkney Islands marine region. It provides a clear framework for decisions on how we use our marine space and sets out planning policies that will help to drive progress and innovation. The plan will support sustainable management of our marine environment and will help decision makers to guide sustainable development to the right places, whilst safeguarding our marine environment and quality of life for Orkney communities.

This Plan is a major milestone in supporting the delivery of the Blue Economy Vision for Scotland, ensuring action is taken to combat the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, whilst supporting fair, prosperous, nature-positive marine sectors and communities. Climate change in particular is one of the most pressing issues facing the nation and can be felt amongst the fragile island communities around Orkney.

The preparation of the Plan has been undertaken utilising a collaborative approach, enabling a wide range of stakeholders, especially local communities, to work together across the Orkney archipelago to consider their marine priorities. This has enabled the people of Orkney to engage in the process of marine planning from the earliest stage. We would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the commitment and input of local people. Their valuable range of expertise and knowledge has been a vital asset during the process of preparing this Plan.

All of Scotland's society, including Orkney communities, the public sector, businesses and organisations will have a role to play in achieving our vision. With a shared ambition, we look forward to a prosperous future for the local community, and all of Scotland's citizens, visitors and future generations, who can all benefit from Orkney's very special marine environment and thriving economy.



Gillian Martin MSP,
Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy



Councillor Kristopher Leask,
Chair of Development and Infrastructure Committee, Orkney Islands
Council
Chair of Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group



Blank Page



Executive Summary

Our seas and coast are an integral part of day-to-day life in Orkney and play a significant role in the local economy, transportation, recreation and our unique way of life. This Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan ('the Plan') marks an important milestone in the ongoing sustainable management of our marine environment.

Orkney Islands Council has prepared the Plan on behalf of Scottish Ministers in accordance with the Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020.

The Plan sets out an integrated planning policy framework for marine development and activities in the Orkney Islands marine region, whilst ensuring the quality of the marine environment is protected, and where appropriate, enhanced. It supports the delivery of a vision for Orkney's coastal and marine environment, economy and communities. This vision will be delivered through the Plan objectives and implementation of the Plan policies. To accord with the statutory purpose of a regional marine plan, the policies relate directly to public authority decision making on development and activities, and the consideration of use in the marine environment.

Public authorities must take any authorisation or enforcement decision in accordance with the appropriate marine plans, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. The appropriate marine plans are any national marine plan which is in effect, and for decisions that relate to a Scottish marine region, any regional marine plan which is in effect for the region. The Plan will be used by public authorities in the determination of relevant licences, permissions and consents.

The Plan's policy framework consists of a suite of general policies and a suite of sector policies. These policies express intent and guide decisions to achieve the Plan's aim and objectives and the delivery of sustainable development in Orkney.

Once adopted, the implementation of the Plan will be monitored and evaluated to consider the extent to which the Plan vision, aim and objectives are being met. This monitoring and evaluation process will inform the ongoing review of the Plan's effectiveness, using appropriate indicators.

The Plan's appendices provide supporting information to assist plan users.

Contents

Foreword	3
Executive Summary.....	5
List of maps.....	8
List of tables	9
List of figures.....	10
Section 1: Introduction.....	11
Purpose of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan	11
How to use the Plan policy framework	11
Impacts or effects from development and activities	14
Vision, guiding principles, aim and objectives	15
Plan area	19
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment	19
Spatial information and use of data.....	20
Section 2: General Policies.....	21
Introduction.....	21
Policy structure	21
General Policy 1: Sustainable development, activities, and use	23
General Policy 2: Safety.....	27
General Policy 3: Climate change	31
General Policy 4: Supporting sustainable social and economic benefits	37
General Policy 5: Safeguarding natural capital and ecosystem services	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
General Policy 6: Water environment.....	43
General Policy 7: Coastal development and coastal change	49
General Policy 8: Historic environment	53
General Policy 9: Nature	59
General Policy 10: Seascape and landscape	69
General Policy 11: Surface and underwater noise, and vibration	74
General Policy 12: Marine litter and waste	78
General Policy 13: Non-native and invasive non-native species.....	82



General Policy 14: Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities	86
Section 3: Sector Policies	91
Introduction	91
Policy structure	92
Sector Policy 1: Commercial fishing	93
Sector Policy 2: Aquaculture	98
Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	107
Sector Policy 4: Pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure	117
Sector Policy 5: Offshore wind, wave and tidal renewable energy generation	123
Sector Policy 6: Zero fossil carbon fuels, and oil and gas transition	131
Sector Policy 7: Tourism, recreation, leisure and sport.....	136
Section 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Plan	143
Appendix 1: Licensing and Consenting Decisions	145
Appendix 2: Relevant Legislation, Plans, Strategies and Policies	147
Appendix 3: National Marine Plan interactive	151
Appendix 4: Natural Capital and Marine Ecosystem Services	153
Appendix 5: Priority Marine Features	156
Appendix 6: Wild Seaweed Harvesting	158
Appendix 7: Glossary and Acronyms	159



List of maps

Map no.	Map title	Page
1	Orkney Islands marine region	19
2	Health and Safety Executive consultation zones and COMAH site	30
3	Waterbody Classification: water quality status	46
4	Wastewater treatment works	47
5	Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) locations	48
6	Protected coastal and marine historic environment assets	58
7	International and national nature conservation sites	67
8	Seal haul-out sites	68
9	Landscape character types	72
10	National Scenic Area and Wild Land Area	73
11	SCRAPbook coastal litter survey	81
12	Active aquaculture sites and disease management areas	105
13	Aquaculture water environment designations	106
14	Harbour areas, harbour infrastructure and ferry routes	113
15	Scapa Flow harbour infrastructure and operations	114
16	Anchorage	115
17	Dredge spoil deposit sites	116
18	Cables and pipelines	122
19	Offshore wind, wave and tidal energy sites	130
20	Oil and gas infrastructure	135
21	Recreational anchorages, visiting yacht moorings and marinas	141



List of tables

Table no.	Table title	Page
1	Definition of key policy terms used in this Plan	14
2	Vision, guiding principles, aim and objectives	17
3	General Policy 1 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	26
4	General Policy 2 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	29
5	General Policy 3 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	36
6	General Policy 4 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	39
7	General Policy 5 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	42
8	General Policy 6 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	45
9	General Policy 7 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	52
10	General Policy 8 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	57
11	Hierarchy of designated sites in Orkney	60
12	General Policy 9 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	66
13	General Policy 10 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	71
14	General Policy 11 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	77
15	General Policy 12 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	80
16	General Policy 13 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	85
17	General Policy 14 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	89
18	Sector Policy 1 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	97
19	Sector Policy 2 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	104
20	Sector Policy 3 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	112
21	Sector Policy 4 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	121
22	Sector Policy 5 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	129
23	Sector Policy 6 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	134



24	Sector Policy 7 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans	140
A1	Licensing and consenting for marine development or activities	145
A2	Relevant legislation, plans, strategies and policies	147
A3	Priority Marine Features in the Orkney Islands marine region	156
A4	Glossary	159

List of figures

Figure no.	Figure title	Page
A1	Examples of marine ecosystem benefits	154



Section 1: Introduction

Purpose of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

- 1.1 The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan ('the/this Plan') has been prepared to guide decision making that will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, activities and use in the Orkney Islands marine region (Refer to Map 1).
- 1.2 The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 requires a regional marine plan to state the Scottish Ministers' policies for and in connection with the sustainable development of the area to which the plan applies and on the contribution of Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas, and other relevant conservation sites, to the protection and enhancement of that area. The Plan is a regional marine plan prepared and adopted in accordance with this statutory purpose.
- 1.3 The Plan has been prepared by Orkney Islands Council as a single delegate, in accordance with the Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020. It has been prepared in conformity with the UK Marine Policy Statement 2011 and the National Marine Plan 2015. Steps have been taken to ensure that the Plan is compatible with the development plan which includes the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017.
- 1.4 The Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group has provided expert input on environmental, social, economic and recreation matters to inform the preparation of the Plan¹.

How to use the Plan policy framework

- 1.5 Marine planning and associated decision making requires careful balancing of considerations. This Plan contains policies to guide public authorities, including but not limited to, decision makers, consenting authorities, regulators, and planners, to make decisions on sustainable development and activities (see the definition of these terms in Table 1 and Appendix 7) within, or that affect, the Orkney Islands marine region (see Map 1).
- 1.6 Public authorities are required by the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 to take authorisation or enforcement decisions in accordance with the appropriate marine plans, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Public authorities are also required to have regard to the appropriate marine plans in

¹ Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group.
<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/advisory-group/>

making any other decision which relates to the exercise by them of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the Scottish marine area². For these purposes, the appropriate marine plans are any national marine plan which is in effect, and for decisions that relate to a Scottish marine region, any regional marine plan which is in effect for the region.

- 1.7 The Plan policies included are to guide public authority decision makers to contribute towards the delivery of the Plan objectives. The Plan policies aim to guide relevant decision making. It is for the relevant public authority decision maker to determine which policy, policies, or component of a policy, are relevant to a specific decision and what weight to attach to policies on a case-by-case basis.
- 1.8 The Scottish Government, through its Marine Directorate, is responsible for fisheries management within the Orkney Islands marine region. It is the current Scottish Government policy position that regional marine plans are not the vehicle for the delivery of fisheries management policy or measures. As such, this Plan has been prepared without policies that directly aim to address further management of fisheries.
- 1.9 The Plan policies should be applied proportionately by public authority decision makers. The Plan policies should not be considered or applied in isolation, they should be read as a whole. Decision makers need to consider whether the type, location and/or scale of a development or activity, and its associated impacts or effects, justify the application of a specific policy or a provision within a policy. If to any extent a policy stated in this Plan conflicts with any other statement or information in the Plan, that conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy. Where there is the potential for conflicts to arise between Plan policies, decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis to best support the delivery of the objectives of this Plan.
- 1.10 The level of detail required to demonstrate compliance with Plan policies should be proportionate to a proposal's scale and potential impacts, and in accordance with any relevant assessment requirements.
- 1.11 In accordance with the provisions of the Marine Licensing (Consultees) (Scotland) Order 2011³, Orkney Islands Council, as the delegate, must be consulted in relation to any application for a marine licence for an activity which is to be carried out wholly or partly within the Orkney Islands marine region. This consultation process provides an opportunity for Orkney Islands Council to provide advice on Plan implementation.
- 1.12 Appendix 1, which is not exhaustive, identifies relevant licence and consent regimes administered by public authorities to manage development and

² Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/marine-scotland-act/>

³ Marine Licensing (Consultees) (Scotland) Order 2011.
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2011/79/contents/made>



activities in the Orkney Islands marine region. These decision-making regimes are the primary mechanism for implementing the Plan's objectives and policies.

- 1.13 The Plan is structured into four sections:
1. Introduction;
 2. General Policies;
 3. Sector Policies; and
 4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review.
- 1.14 These sections are supported by appendices that provide further information to assist Plan users.
- 1.15 The Plan's policy framework consists of a suite of general policies and a suite of sector policies. These policies express intent and guide decisions to achieve the Plan's aim and objectives (see Table 2).
- 1.16 All of the Plan policies should be considered alongside the relevant legislation, policies and plans; key documents are outlined in Appendix 2, which is not exhaustive.
- 1.17 To enable the general and sector policies to be interpreted and implemented by decision makers, and clearly understood by other Plan users, Table 1 provides definitions of the key policy terms. Appendix 7 provides definitions of terms referred to in this Plan, along with a list of acronyms used.



Table 1: Definition of key policy terms used in this Plan*

Term	Definition
Activity/activities	Any activity/activities that require authorisation from a public authority and falls within devolved competencies, e.g. 'licensable marine activities' identified under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and activities licensed under the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011.
Authorisation or enforcement decision	The determination of any authorisation or any decision relating to enforcement as detailed and further expanded upon in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, section 15 ⁴ . Appendix 1, which is not exhaustive, contains relevant licensing and consent regimes, and associated processes, administered by public authorities to manage marine development and activities.
Development	Any construction, building, engineering, mining, other operation and/or works, e.g. planning permission or a works licence, that require authorisation from a public authority under devolved competencies. This can include new development, or alterations, extensions or changes in material use to existing development or land.
Use	Any legitimate use of the marine and/or coastal environment that is exercised under a public right and that does not require authorisation from a public authority, e.g. freedom of navigation for shipping or the exercise of public access rights for the purposes of recreation.
Marine and/or coastal user(s)	Legitimate users of the marine and/or coastal environment for purposes such as, but not limited to, fishing, aquaculture, shipping, transport, energy generation, utilities, recreation and other economic and/or community activities.

*see Appendix 7 for a glossary.

Impacts or effects from development and activities

1.18 The Plan policies aim to maximise positive impacts or effects from development and activities and appropriately manage adverse impacts or effects. The impacts or effects of marine development and activities are not

⁴ Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/5/section/15>



limited to the site boundaries of a proposal; for example, sediment plumes arising from dredging activity can be transported to surrounding areas before settling on the seabed. Impacts or effects can be temporary, permanent, direct, indirect, short term, medium term, long term and/or cumulative.

- 1.19 It is important to consider the cumulative impact of development and/or activities on the marine environment, economic receptors and infrastructure. Proposals for development and/or activities should consider cumulative impacts associated with relevant existing and proposed development and/or activities, not just those of the same type or sector. Where required, cumulative impacts or effects should be assessed in accordance with the requirements of the appropriate Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations.
- 1.20 The determination of what is a significant impact or effect should be made by the appropriate public authority decision maker. This judgement should be informed by relevant information and data, assessment, and the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders.
- 1.21 Impact or effect significance can be appraised by considering factors including the nature, size and location of the proposal, the potential pathways to impact, potential for cumulative impacts or effects, the significance and sensitivity of affected receptors (e.g. an environmental feature or infrastructure asset), and the magnitude of the impact or effect.
- 1.22 An overarching aim of the Plan's general and sector policies is to, in order of preference, avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate any significant adverse impacts or effects that could be caused by proposed development and/or activities. This should be achieved by implementing the mitigation hierarchy (see Appendix 7a). The most effective mitigation measures are those which avoid or prevent the creation of adverse impacts or effects at source, and such measures should be identified during the project planning and design stage e.g. avoiding sites with potential to have significant adverse impacts on sensitive receptors. The aim of this approach is to prevent or avoid the adverse impacts or effects, if possible, and only then consider other mitigation measures. Where specific mitigation measures are required, these can be secured as part of the relevant consent and/or permission.
- 1.23 In addition to supporting the identification of appropriate mitigation measures, the Plan policies aim to support the delivery of environmental, social and economic benefits, enhancement and positive effects for biodiversity.

Vision, guiding principles, aim and objectives

- 1.24 Orkney's coastal and marine environment needs to be carefully managed to ensure it is clean, healthy, safe and productive, now and for future generations. This Plan aims to enable sustainable marine development, activities, and use in Orkney, whilst protecting, and where appropriate



enhancing, the environment and associated ecosystems on which these undertakings, and local communities, depend.

- 1.25 Regional marine plans must set economic, social and marine ecosystem objectives, and objectives relating to mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.
- 1.26 The Plan's vision, guiding principles, aim and objectives are presented in Table 2. The vision statement declares the goal that is intended to be achieved looking forward to 2045. The vision will be achieved by implementing the Plan's aim and objectives, and associated policies, and monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness. The Plan policies implement the aim and objectives. Each of the Plan policies is supported by a table that identifies the objectives to which the policy contributes. Appendices 4 and 7 provide further information on the terms outlined in Table 2.



Table 2: Vision, guiding principles, aim and objectives of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Vision – looking forward to 2045	
The Orkney Islands marine region is clean, healthy, safe and productive; Orkney's marine and coastal environment is rich in biodiversity and managed sustainably to support thriving and resilient local communities.	
Guiding principles	
The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan has been developed in accordance with five guiding principles adopted to help steer the plan-making process, strategy and policies.	
A	Sustainable development, activities and use Sustainable development, activities, and use are enabled whilst protecting the environment; ensuring a strong, safe, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; using sound science responsibly; and supporting the delivery of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals ⁵ .
B	Ecosystem approach An ecosystem approach is used to manage the marine environment and enable climate change mitigation, as well as adaptation to the predicted effects of climate change, in response to the twin global climate and nature crises.
C	Coexistence Coexistence between marine development, activities, and use is supported to minimise potential conflict and maximise synergistic benefits.
D	Partnership working and stakeholder participation This Plan is developed through an inclusive process of partnership working and stakeholder participation.
E	Integrated approach to marine and land-use planning Land and marine development and/or activities are planned in a joined-up way to address development and infrastructure requirements, and associated impacts, across the interface between land and sea.

⁵ United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>



Aim

Sustainable development, activities, and use of the marine and coastal environment of Orkney is supported, helping to tackle the twin climate and nature crises.

Sustainable development, activities, and use should maintain, and where appropriate enhance, biodiversity and ecosystem services; protect natural capital for future generations; and maximise social, economic and wellbeing benefits for local communities.

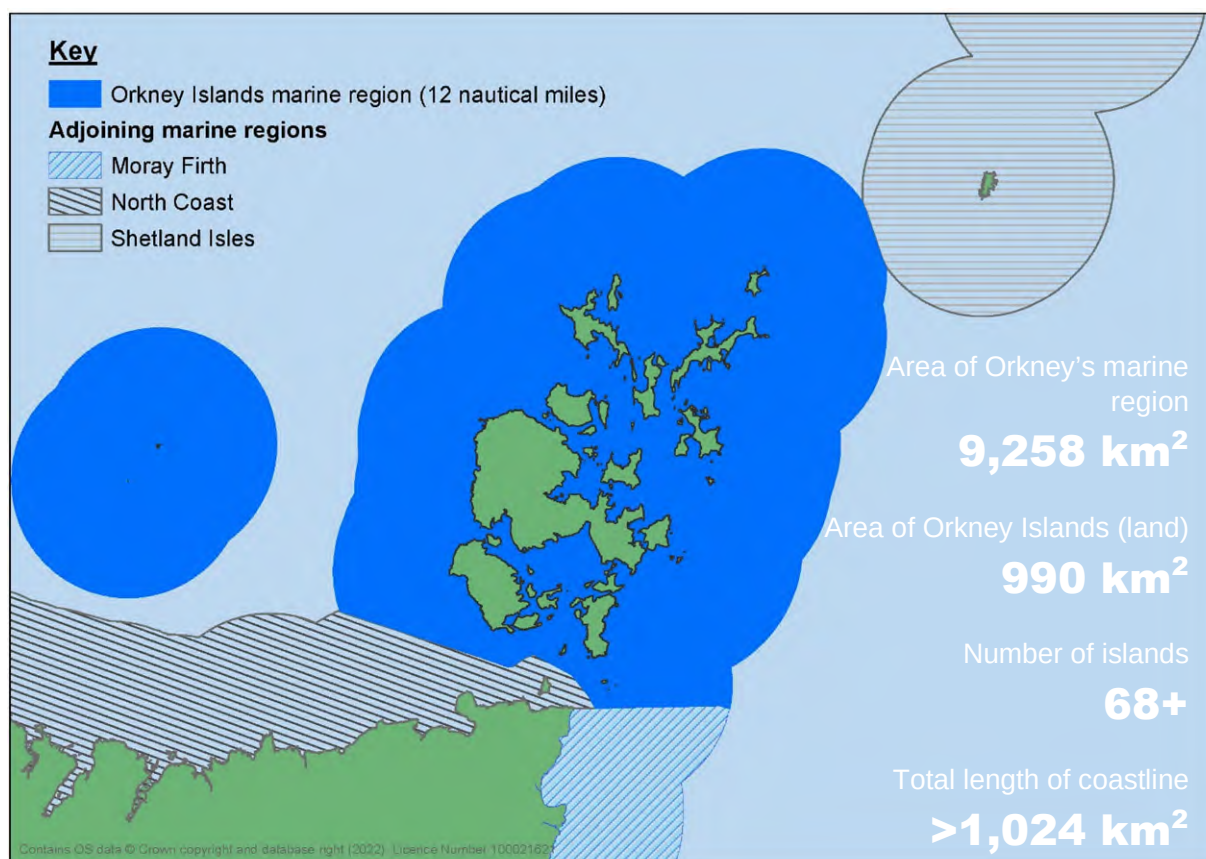
Objectives

Number	Objective
1	A clear strategic direction is provided for development, activities, and use in the Orkney Islands marine region and there is greater certainty for prospective developers, investors and local communities.
2	Development, activities, and use are managed within an ecosystem approach, to protect and, where appropriate, enhance the biological, chemical and physical functioning of the marine and coastal environment, including the management of cumulative impacts.
3	A rapid and just transition to a low-carbon economy is supported to achieve net-zero commitments.
4	Mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change is supported.
5	Socio-economic benefits and prosperity are delivered for local communities and the wider economy.
6	The well-being of local communities and the amenity of marine and coastal places are protected and enhanced.
7	Reliable information is provided on existing and proposed coastal and marine development, activities, use and assets.
8	Spatial planning and data are provided, enabling sustainable coexistence and synergies between existing and new marine development, activities, and use, and the environment.
9	Plan users are assisted in navigating the relevant legislative and policy frameworks more easily and effectively.
10	Local communities are effectively engaged in decisions affecting the Orkney Islands marine region.



Plan area

- 1.27 The Plan area is the Orkney Islands marine region (Map 1). This region extends from Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) out to the 12 nautical mile limit, which is an area of approximately 9,258 km²; this is nearly ten times the Orkney Islands land area. This Orkney Islands marine region includes Sule Skerry and Sule Stack with their separate 12 nautical mile boundary. The Orkney Islands marine region was established by the Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015⁶.



Map 1: Orkney Islands marine region

Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment

- 1.28 To inform the preparation of this Plan, a baseline assessment was carried out, with key findings published in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment⁷. The assessment provides a snapshot of the physical, environmental, social and economic condition of the Orkney Islands marine region, including a summary of significant pressures and impacts from

⁶ The Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2015/193/contents/made>

⁷ Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>



human activities, and the identification of relevant data gaps. In addition, Scotland's Marine Assessment⁸ provides an assessment of both the state of Scotland's seas and the main activities and pressures in the various Scottish marine regions.

Spatial information and use of data

- 1.29 The Plan policies are supported by maps containing spatial information, which are presented alongside the relevant policy, where appropriate. In addition, the Plan's maps and other spatial information can be accessed on Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government's (Marine Directorate) National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi)⁹. The maps within this Plan contain hyperlinks to display the map data within NMPi, where available. Data on NMPi is maintained by the data holder and may be updated or amended as required. Information on how to use NMPi is provided in Appendix 3.
- 1.30 The spatial information and relevant reference information presented within the Plan are intended to guide decision makers and applicants seeking permission or consent. This information represents the best available data at the point of publication.
- 1.31 Knowledge and understanding of the Orkney Islands marine region will develop over time. Therefore, when using the Plan, it is important that relevant available data, including within NMPi, is consulted to consider the most up-to-date spatial information.
- 1.32 As many of the issues and economic sectors addressed in this Plan are changing and evolving, new data, strategies and legislation will become available during the lifetime of the Plan. Whilst the most up-to-date information has been used to inform the plan-making process, data gaps and data redundancy are unavoidable. Users of this Plan should access the most up-to-date versions of any supporting data or documents referred to. The Plan will be reviewed in accordance with statutory requirements (see Section 4), and new relevant information will be made available on the Orkney Islands Council website.

⁸ Scotland's Marine Assessment 2020. <https://marine.gov.scot/sma/>

⁹ National Marine Plan interactive. Marine Scotland. <http://maps.marine.gov.scot/>



Section 2: General Policies

Introduction

- 2.1 The suite of general policies provides a framework for decision making to help deliver the Plan's environmental, social, economic, marine ecosystem and community wellbeing objectives. These types of policies are often referred to as cross-cutting policies as they can be applied to many different types of decision, for example decisions on renewable energy, aquaculture or harbour developments, to address a specific policy issue e.g. nature conservation.
- 2.2 The general policies assist public authorities, including but not limited to, regulators, decision makers and planners, to make decisions on sustainable development and activities that take place within, or that affect, the Orkney Islands marine region.
- 2.3 The general policies can help to guide applicants preparing proposals for development and activities.
- 2.4 Section 1 provides relevant information on how to use the Plan's policy framework.
- 2.5 Sector policies are contained in Section 3.

Policy structure

- 2.6 Each policy has an introductory section detailing the intent and context for the policy, and key information about the topic that is particularly relevant to Orkney. The policy is then presented in a clearly defined policy box. The associated text for each policy includes supporting information that should be taken into account in relevant decision making.
- 2.7 Each policy is supported by an information box that outlines:
 - the contribution of the policy to the Plan objectives;
 - relevant information in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment; and
 - the policy's alignment with other key marine and land-use plans.
- 2.8 Where appropriate, the Plan policies are supported by spatial information in map form or by reference to other relevant spatial information (see Section 1 for details on the use of spatial information and data).
- 2.9 Appendix 1, which is not exhaustive, identifies the key authorisation and enforcement decisions through which the Plan policies will be implemented.

- 2.10 A summary of the wider relevant legislation, policies and guidance that should be considered alongside this Plan is provided in Appendix 2, which is not exhaustive.



General Policy 1: Sustainable Development, Activities, and Use

Policy intent

To encourage, promote and facilitate sustainable development, activities, and use.

Context

- 2.11 This Plan aims to support a thriving Orkney economy and a healthy marine and coastal environment that meets the needs of all our communities. General Policy 1 establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and is supported by a suite of general and sector policies to help deliver a sustainable future for Orkney.
- 2.12 Delivering sustainable marine and coastal development, activities, and use is the fundamental aim of this Plan, in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals¹⁰, and in conformity with the National Marine Plan 2015¹¹ and other relevant Scottish Government policy and guidance.
- 2.13 The Orkney Islands marine region is biologically diverse, productive and contributes significantly to the local and national economy. Orkney's marine and coastal environment needs to be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced to support the continued delivery of social, economic and environmental benefits for current and future generations. To achieve this, this Plan adopts an integrated approach to land-use and marine planning. It supports the balanced consideration of social, economic and environmental factors in decision making, and the implementation of a just transition to net zero¹², community wealth building¹³, a wellbeing economy¹⁴ and the precautionary principle¹⁵.

¹⁰ United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. United Nations. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

¹¹ Scotland's National Marine Plan 2015. Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-national-marine-plan/>

¹² Just transition policy actions. Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/climate-change/just-transition/>

¹³ Community wealth building policy action. Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/cities-regions/community-wealth-building/>

¹⁴ Wellbeing Economy Governments (WEGo). Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/groups/wellbeing-economy-governments-wego/>

¹⁵ Environment – guiding principles: statutory guidance. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-guiding-principles-environment-statutory-guidance/documents/>

- 2.14 This Plan is a key delivery mechanism for Scotland's Blue Economy Vision¹⁶ in Orkney. Delivering Scotland's Blue Economy Approach¹⁷ identifies six, equally weighted outcomes, and looks to transition away from conventional thinking that stipulates we must always trade off economic production against environmental protection. Instead, it recognises that one relies on the other – economically productive and thriving marine sectors require a biologically healthy marine environment. This principle is embedded within the approach to sustainable development set out in the vision, aim, objectives and policies in this Plan.
- 2.15 Marine and coastal development can deliver significant social and economic benefits for host island communities. It can also have significant impacts on the local environment, infrastructure, housing markets, community services and facilities. It is therefore important that social, economic and environmental benefits for Orkney communities are maximised, whilst ensuring that any significant adverse impacts on these communities are appropriately addressed.
- 2.16 Using sound science responsibly, effective community engagement and valuing local knowledge are principles that underpin the approach to sustainable development in this Plan. The implementation of these principles in decision making will help to deliver sustainable development and sustainable outcomes for Orkney communities.

¹⁶ A Blue Economy Vision for Scotland 2022.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/blue-economy-vision-scotland/>

¹⁷ Delivering Scotland's Blue Economy Approach 2022. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/delivering-scotlands-blue-economy-approach/>



General Policy 1: Sustainable Development, Activities, and Use

General Policy 1a: Supporting sustainable development

There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, activities, and use when consistent with the policies and objectives of this Plan.

General Policy 1b: Sustainable development principles

Proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate:

Maximising benefits

- i. that opportunities have been taken to maximise sustainable environmental, social and economic benefits.

Effective community engagement

- ii. effective engagement with affected local communities.

Addressing direct and indirect impacts

- iii. that any significant adverse direct or indirect environmental, social, economic and/or historic environment impacts or effects have been avoided, minimised and/or appropriately mitigated.

Addressing cumulative impacts

- iv. that any significant adverse cumulative environmental, social, economic and/or historic environment impacts or effects have been avoided, minimised and/or appropriately mitigated.

Effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure and services

- v. the effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure and/or services.
- vi. that such proposals will not create an unacceptable burden on existing infrastructure and/or services that cannot be addressed as part of the consenting process.

Addressing impacts on existing development and marine users

- vii. that any significant adverse environmental, social, economic and/or operational effects on existing development, activities and/or use have been avoided, minimised and/or appropriately mitigated.

Using sound science and local knowledge

- viii. that sound science and/or evidence has been used responsibly, alongside relevant local knowledge, in the design and assessment of such proposals.

General Policy 1c: The precautionary principle

The precautionary principle should be applied in decision making in accordance with relevant legislation and Scottish Government guidance.

Table 3: General Policy 1 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives	1, 2 and 10
Indirect contribution to objectives	4, 5 and 8
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Whole assessment
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 1, GEN 2, GEN 3, GEN 4, GEN 18, GEN 19 and GEN 21.
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 4 e) and Policy 12 b)i.
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Sustainable Communities
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 1



General Policy 2: Safety

Policy intent

To encourage, promote and facilitate safe development, activities, and use.

Context

- 2.17 Safety is an important consideration in all aspects of marine traffic, development and activities. As competition for marine space increases due to development, potential impacts on shipping and maritime safety will need to be reconciled. It is recognised that all vessels have the right of innocent passage and freedom of navigation. The safeguarding of routes used by shipping is essential for the viability of island communities.
- 2.18 The marine safety regime is underpinned by international safety, security and pollution-control regulations and codes issued by the International Maritime Organisation. A series of measures have been introduced to support safety at sea and protection of the marine environment, including conventions, recommendations and other instruments which are implemented in UK waters by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).
- 2.19 Orkney Islands Council, as the statutory harbour authority (Orkney Harbour Authority), has responsibility for safety of navigation within harbour areas (see Map 2), and the MCA has responsibility for facilitating the safety of shipping and seafarers, saving lives, and protecting the maritime environment. Those proposing development and/or activities that could affect navigational safety or harbour operations should therefore liaise with the relevant authority in the early stages of planning.
- 2.20 Orkney Harbour Authority is responsible for the safe and efficient operation of 29 piers and harbours located throughout the Orkney Islands and operates under the principles set out in the Port Marine Safety Code¹⁸ ('the Code'). The Code sets out a national standard for every aspect of port marine safety. Whilst not mandatory, it is endorsed by the UK Government and the devolved administrations; these bodies have a strong expectation that all harbour authorities will comply. The Code is applicable both to statutory harbour authorities and to other marine facilities which may not have statutory powers and duties.
- 2.21 The Orkney Harbour Authority Marine Safety Management System accords with the Code and includes safety management systems maintained by other

¹⁸ Port Marine Safety Code. 2016.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/port-marine-safety-code-compliant-ports>

operators (e.g. towage and ferries) and commercial marine operations within the Orkney harbour areas (e.g. Flotta Oil Terminal). Details can be found in the Orkney Harbour Authority Marine Safety Management System Manual¹⁹.

- 2.22 Orkney Islands Council has a duty under the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015 (COMAH) to prepare an off-site emergency plan for the Flotta Oil Terminal. The aim of the off-site emergency plan is to limit the consequences of any major accident or incident for people working and/or residing on the island of Flotta.
- 2.23 Under a Memorandum of Understanding between the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the MCA, there are consultation zones around licensed piers in Orkney, to help ensure that appropriate safety measures are in place relating to the transportation of hazardous goods. These piers and associated HSE consultation zones (see Map 2) are licensed by the HSE under the Dangerous Goods in Harbour Areas Regulations 2016. Planning authorities consult HSE directly for advice on developments located within consultation zones and developments in the vicinity of major accident hazard sites²⁰ (see Map 2).

General Policy 2: Safety

- i. The Orkney Harbour Authority should be consulted on proposals for development and/or activities that would have implications for any aspect of safety in harbour areas.

¹⁹ Marine Safety Management System Manual. Orkney Islands Harbour Authority. 2018.

<https://www.orkneyharbours.com/documents/marine-safety-management-manual>

²⁰ Control of Major Accident Hazards. Health and Safety Executive. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/comah/>



Table 4: General Policy 2 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

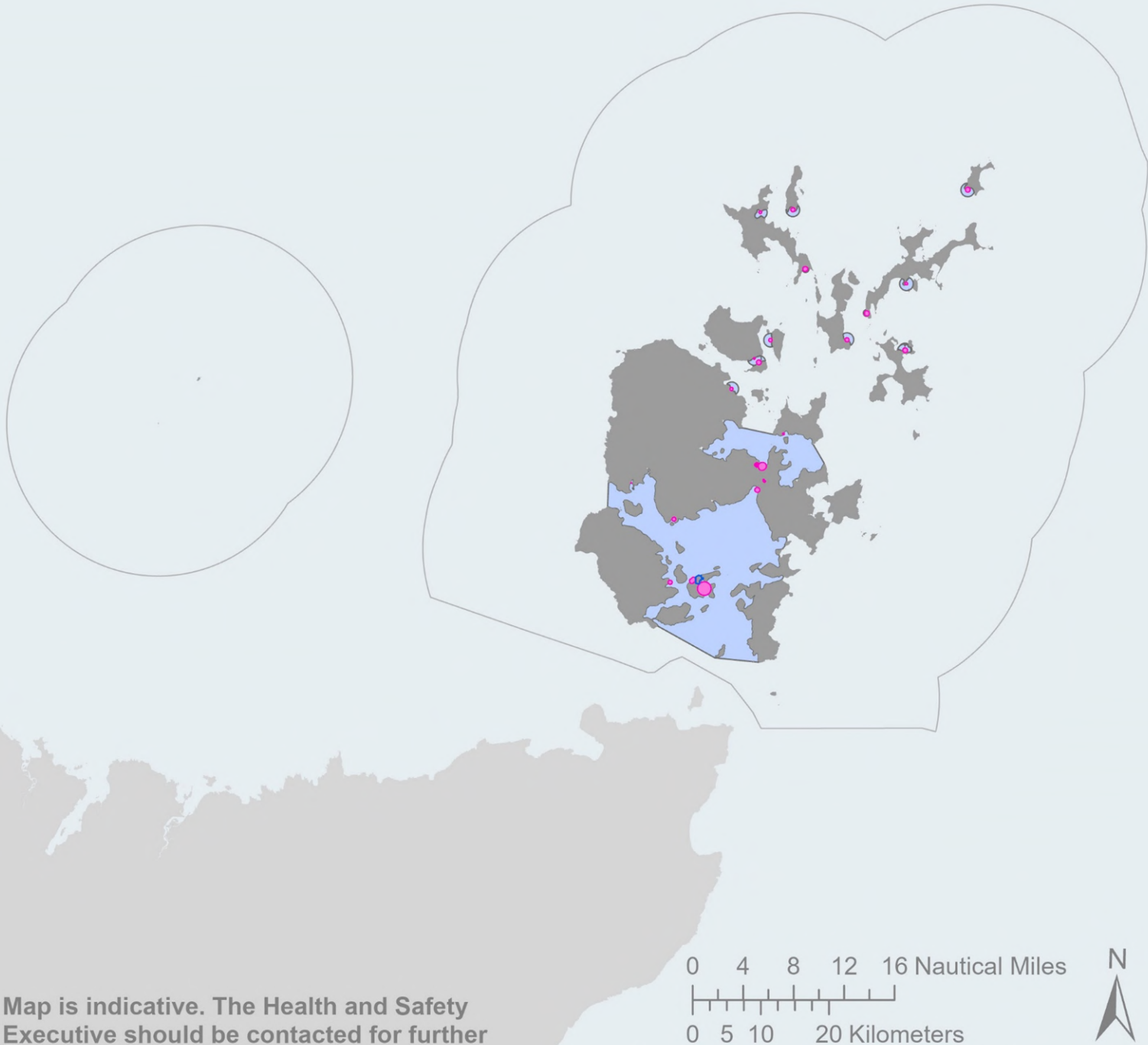
Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	6, 7 and, 8
Indirect contribution to objectives:	2
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Sections 6.4 and 6.6.3
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Safety is a cross-cutting policy matter within the National Marine Plan.
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 23 g)
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	N/A
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 1 vi



Map 2: Health and Safety Executive consultation zones and COMAH site

Key

- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) consultation zone
- Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) site
- Orkney Harbour Authority areas
- Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. The Health and Safety Executive should be contacted for further information on this spatial data.

General Policy 3: Climate Change

Policy intent

To encourage, promote and facilitate development, activities, and use that minimise greenhouse gas emissions, and that are adapted to the current and future impacts of climate change.

Context

- 2.24 Climate change is the most critical factor affecting Scotland's marine environment, businesses and coastal communities. Its effects are many and far-reaching, including changing weather patterns, sea level rise causing increased flooding and coastal erosion, and changes to the sea's temperature and acidification levels. All these factors affect the environment, economy, communities and species' ecology in numerous ways.
- 2.25 The world's oceans play a significant role in climate regulation, absorbing 93% of the heat that accumulates in the earth's atmosphere and around a quarter of the carbon dioxide released from fossil fuels. Sea surface temperature around the UK generally shows a significant warming trend of around 0.3°C per decade over the last 40 years and these warming trends are predicted to continue²¹, and contribute to changing ocean circulation systems²². Sea levels are predicted to rise between 1.01m and 1.07m around Orkney by 2100 under the high emissions scenario²³.
- 2.26 The Orkney Partnership (Orkney's Community Planning Partnership) vision is a future which meets the challenges of climate change head on, by doing everything the partnership can to ensure that Orkney is ahead of the curve, aiming for Net Zero Emissions by 2030 and a fully decarbonised (zero carbon) island economy by 2045. Orkney aspires to play a leading part in achieving a just transition where our economy, communities and natural environment all prosper and benefit, building their resilience, and adapting to the changing climate²⁴.

²¹ The Impacts of Climate Change on Sea Temperature around the UK and Ireland. Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership. <https://www.mccip.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/The%20Impacts%20of%20Climate%20Change%20on%20Sea%20Temperature%20around%20the%20UK%20and%20Ireland.pdf>

²² Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership. <https://www.mccip.org.uk/>

²³ The difference between a High or Low Emissions future. Dynamic Coast. <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/defe901982154099b6ceb19db8aa41a4>

²⁴ Orkney vision for a climate resilient and Net Zero future – Autumn 2024. Orkney Partnership. <https://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/communityplanning/documents/orkney-climate-resilient-net-zero-vision-september-2024.pdf>



- 2.27 This Plan supports greenhouse gas reduction measures, a rapid and just transition to zero carbon energy generation and zero fossil carbon fuels, climate change adaptation, sustainable economic development, activities, and use, and, compliance with public authorities' climate change duties.²⁵ The Plan integrates with wider strategic policy to support the transformational change required to address the Global Climate Emergency²⁶, including but not limited to; the Climate Change Plan update, Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029, NPF4, National Marine Plan 2015, and the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017 (see Appendix 2).
- 2.28 NPF4, published in February 2023, introduced a change in national planning policy by giving significant weight to the climate crisis in decision making on development proposals. National Marine Plan 2015 policy GEN 5 Climate change states that marine planners and decision makers must act in the way best calculated to mitigate, and adapt to, climate change. In 2019, the Scottish Government and Orkney Islands Council declared a climate emergency. In response to these policy drivers, General Policy 3a: Climate crisis gives significant weight in decision making on development and activity proposals to the global climate crisis.
- 2.29 Climate change mitigation measures are those actions taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or re-capture previous emissions, while adaptation measures aim to reduce the vulnerability of people, infrastructure and/or nature to the effects of climate change. Mitigation, therefore, attends to the causes of climate change, while adaptation addresses its impacts²⁷. Some climate change effects can be reduced by various mitigation measures, while adaptation measures can help limit the impact of climate change consequences that are already 'locked-in' due to past emissions.
- 2.30 Mitigation measures include:
- practising energy efficiency.
 - displacing fossil-fuel use through greater and more diverse use of renewable energy and e-fuels, for example, to electrify industrial processes or to support use of alternative energy for transport, such as hybrid or hydrogen ferries.

²⁵ The Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Order. 2015.
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2015/347/contents/made>

²⁶ The Global Climate Emergency - Scotland's Response: Climate Change Secretary Roseanna Cunningham's statement. 2019.
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/global-climate-emergency-scotlands-response-climate-change-secretary-roseanna-cunninghams-statement/>

²⁷ Sustainability For All. Acciona.
<https://www.activesustainability.com/climate-change/mitigation-adaptation-climate-change/>



- capture and storage of excess atmospheric carbon, particularly in natural and semi-natural habitats.

2.31 Adaptation measures include:

- adapting existing and future coastal development, activities and infrastructure to be more resilient against climate change impacts, e.g. sea level rise.
- relocating facilities and infrastructure to secure locations, e.g. away from areas affected by coastal flooding and erosion.
- research and development on possible climate change scenarios, e.g. modelling the effects of sea level rise in coastal areas or temperature impacts on the behaviour and distribution of commercially viable species.
- preventive and precautionary measures, e.g. emergency planning and flood warning systems.
- building capacity for more diverse marine and coastal business activities, enabling communities to adapt to climate-related stresses, both within sectors (e.g. fishers targeting a wider range of species) and between sectors (e.g. ability to shift to alternative activity).
- safeguarding and, where appropriate, restoring blue carbon habitats as part of development and activities or habitat-enhancement projects²⁸.

2.32 Enhancing local resilience to the effects of climate change is a key priority. Resilience is the capacity of social, economic and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event, trend or disturbance, responding or reorganising in ways that maintain their essential function, identity and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning and transformation²⁹. A key part of the vision for this Plan is that Orkney's marine and coastal environment is managed sustainably to support thriving and resilient local communities.

2.33 The ecosystem services provided by a healthy functioning coastal and marine environment (e.g. coastal protection and carbon sequestration and storage) are under threat from the effects of climate change and other pressures. For example, disturbance of blue carbon habitats by development, activities, and use can release further emissions and reduce the capacity of these habitats to store and sequester carbon. On the other hand, habitat restoration measures have the potential to mitigate adverse effects of climate change and are an

²⁸ United Nations Decade on Restoration. <https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/>

²⁹ Definitions adapted from IPCC, 2022: *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability The Working Group II contribution to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report*. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/>



example of enabling climate change resilience. Appendix 4 provides further information on ecosystem services from coastal and marine habitats and species.

- 2.34 The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment³⁰ provides information on the main climate change issues and pressures in Orkney's coastal and marine areas. These include sea level rise and coastal change, sea temperature increases, changes in salinity and acidification, flooding, and impacts on habitats that are potential blue carbon stores³¹.
- 2.35 A Flood Risk Management Plan is produced by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) to identify areas of flood risk within each Local Plan District, including Orkney. This plan is then consulted upon with partners (known as Responsible Authorities) to identify actions to address the identified risks. The most recent Flood Risk Management Plan for the Orkney Local Plan District (LPD3) was produced in 2021³². In relation to flooding issues, SEPA can provide guidance on climate change adaptation requirements for development.
- 2.36 The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan is a case study within the Marine Spatial Planning Addressing Climate Effects (MSPACE) programme³³. The MSPACE programme is designed to drive forward the implementation of climate-smart marine spatial planning in the UK. It utilises state of the art analyses of climate change impact modelling projections to consider how climate change will affect the conservation, fisheries and aquaculture sectors. The models enable the identification of climate change hotspots for these sectors, where climate pressures drive an ecosystem into a new state beyond its natural variability, and refugia areas that exhibit long term resilience to climate change. When completed in December 2025, the MSPACE programme will include recommendations for climate-smart marine spatial planning which will inform future marine planning in Orkney.

³⁰ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

³¹ Blue carbon audit of Orkney waters. Marine Scotland Data Publications. 2020. <https://data.marine.gov.scot/dataset/blue-carbon-audit-orkney-waters>

³² Flood risk management plans. 2021. SEPA. <https://www2.sepa.org.uk/frmplans/>

³³ Marine Spatial Planning Addressing Climate Effects MSPACE. 2025. <https://www.mccip.org.uk/all-uk/solutions/mspace>



General Policy 3: Climate Change

General Policy 3a: Climate crisis

When considering proposals for development and/or activities, significant weight in decision making should be given to the global climate crisis including measures for mitigation and adaptation.

General Policy 3b: Climate change mitigation

Proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate that measures have been taken to mitigate climate change including, where appropriate, measures to minimise greenhouse gas emissions over the proposal's life cycle as far as possible.

General Policy 3c: Climate change adaptation and resilience

Proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate that:

- i. measures have been taken to adapt to climate change;
- ii. climate change adaptation and resilience measures have been built into the project over its lifetime; and
- iii. they include, where appropriate, nature-based solutions to enhance the resilience of infrastructure, coastal communities and/or the environment to the effects of climate change.



Table 5: General Policy 3 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives	3 and, 4
Indirect contribution to objectives	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 4
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 5
National Planning Framework 4	Policies 1 and 2
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Climate Emergency
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policies 12 and 13



General Policy 4: Supporting Sustainable Social and Economic Benefits

Policy intent

To encourage, promote and facilitate development, activities, and use that delivers sustainable social and economic benefits in local communities.

Context

- 2.37 Marine planning and decision making have an important role in enabling social and economic opportunities to be realised by supporting the achievement of national and local aspirations for sustainable economic development. A significant challenge for marine planning and decision making is balancing the requirements of existing coastal and marine users, and the needs of growing, or potentially novel, economic sectors, to deliver sustainable social, economic and environmental benefits. Marine planning and decision making can help to avoid, minimise and mitigate adverse socio-economic impacts, maximise benefits and deliver synergies between new and existing development, activities and use.
- 2.38 Job creation and increased economic activity can have a transformative impact on the viability and sustainability of island communities. It is therefore important that every community in Orkney benefits from sustainable economic development opportunities. The growth of the marine economy, including upstream and downstream businesses, should create jobs, support skills development and wider economic activity in Orkney's North and South Isles, as well as the Mainland and barrier-linked island communities.
- 2.39 General Policy 4 aims to support the delivery of the core principles of community wealth building. This approach prioritises local economic benefits and retaining wealth within local communities. Community wealth building is a people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people. The Orkney Partnership's target outcomes for sustainable development include supporting community wealth building to achieve an upturn in Orkney's economy, to ensure wealth is retained in Orkney and that this wealth is shared fairly³⁴. During the lifetime of this Plan, Orkney Islands Marine Region: Supporting Sustainable Social and Economic Benefits Guidance may be adopted to help guide the implementation of General Policy 4.

³⁴ Target outcomes for sustainable development. The Orkney Partnership.
<https://orkneycommunities.co.uk/COMMUNITYPLANNING/index.asp?pageid=723415>



General Policy 4: Supporting Sustainable Social and Economic Benefits

General Policy 4a: Supporting sustainable social and economic benefits

Proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate that:

- i. opportunities have been considered to maximise sustainable employment benefits and create skilled employment in local communities;
- ii. opportunities have been considered to support local businesses, skills development, supply chains and research and development;
- iii. opportunities have been considered to support synergistic benefits with existing marine and coastal development, activities and use; and
- iv. the social and economic benefits of the proposal outweigh any significant adverse impacts on existing social and/or economic activities.

General Policy 4b: Impacts on local infrastructure, services and other marine and coastal users

Developers should undertake early engagement with the local authority, any other relevant bodies, service providers and/or stakeholders if significant impacts on local infrastructure, services and/or the activities of other coastal and marine users are likely to result from proposed development and/or activities.

General Policy 4c: Supporting sustainable social and economic benefits guidance

Proposals for development and/or activities should have regard to the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Supporting Sustainable Social and Economic Benefits Guidance, where available.



Table 6: General Policy 4 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	1, 3, 5, 8 and 10
Indirect contribution to objectives:	7 and 9
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
State of the Environment Assessment baseline information:	Sections 6 and, 7
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 1, GEN 2, GEN3 and GEN 4
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 25 a)
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Thriving Economy
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policies 1, 9 and 12



General Policy 5: Safeguarding Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

Policy intent

To safeguard and enhance natural capital and ecosystem services.

Context

- 2.40 Orkney's marine environment is affected by multiple pressures from human activities. These pressures need to be effectively managed to prevent a decline in the health and functioning of natural capital assets and the many benefits local communities derive from these assets. This Plan aims to protect and enhance natural capital, biodiversity and ecosystem services for current and future generations.
- 2.41 The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment³⁵ presents a summary of the environmental pressures and impacts of human activities affecting the Orkney Islands marine region. Many of the features that contribute to the health of the marine environment in Orkney are in relatively good condition. However, there are a number of concerns relating to climate change, impacts on biodiversity from a variety of anthropogenic sources, and an increasing demand for development and use of marine space.

Natural capital is the stock of renewable and non-renewable natural resources (e.g. animals, air, water, soils, minerals) that combine to yield a flow of benefits to people that are often referred to as ecosystem services.

- 2.42 As well as having its own intrinsic value, Orkney's coastal and marine environment is rich in natural resources which provide a wide range of ecosystem services, supporting local communities, health and well-being, and underpin the economy. These ecosystem services are provided by many of Orkney's habitats and species such as maerl beds, kelp beds and seagrass. For example, kelp beds in Orkney provide a habitat to support nursery grounds for fish, crustaceans and invertebrates and a diverse marine community. As well as protecting gene pools, kelp beds provide a regulatory service through carbon cycling and a cultural service through kelp's

³⁵ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020.
<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>



importance to the Orkney community for its heritage value³⁶. In addition to considering impacts on individual receptors (e.g. a Priority Marine Feature), a more holistic approach should be taken to decision making on development and activities by considering potential impacts at an ecosystem scale, for example, impacts on prey species affecting the availability for predators to feed.

Ecosystem services are processes by which the environment produces resources that are utilised by humans, such as clean air, water, food, energy and materials. A well-functioning marine ecosystem supports these vital ecosystem services.

- 2.43 Marine biodiversity enhancement activities should have regard to the appropriate guidance provided by NatureScot³⁷.
- 2.44 During the lifetime of this Plan, Orkney Islands Marine Region: Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services Guidance may be adopted to guide the implementation of General Policy 5.
- 2.45 Appendix 4 identifies ecosystem services provided by the marine environment.

General Policy 5: Safeguarding Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

Proposals for development and/or activities should:

- i. demonstrate, where appropriate, that significant adverse impacts on coastal and/or marine natural capital and ecosystem services have been avoided, minimised and/or appropriately mitigated.
- ii. include, where appropriate, measures to maintain and enhance coastal and/or marine natural capital and ecosystem services.
- iii. have regard to the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services Guidance, where available.

³⁶ Natural Capital Assessment of the Orkney Marine Region Area. Scottish Wildlife Trust.
<https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Orkney-Marine-Natural-Capital-Assessment-Final-Report-compressed-1.pdf>

³⁷ Marine and coastal enhancement framework. 2022. NatureScot.
<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/land-and-sea-management/managing-coasts-and-seas/marine-enhancement>



Table 7: General Policy 5 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	2
Indirect contribution to objectives:	3, 4 and, 5
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Sections 2, 4 and, 5
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Para 4.39, Annex A.
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 3
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 9C



General Policy 6: Water Environment

Policy intent

To protect the water environment and improve the ecological status of coastal waterbodies.

Context

- 2.46 High quality marine waters and benthic habitats are essential for a healthy environment, a successful economy and recreational activities. It is vital to maintain and, where possible, enhance this quality, as it underpins the current and future growth of the marine economy and the well-being of local communities. A high-quality water environment supports rich biodiversity and a variety of essential ecosystem services. Under the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003, Scottish Ministers and every public body and office-holder must, in exercising any functions, have regard to the desirability of protecting the water environment.
- 2.47 The Scotland River Basin District (Standards) Directions 2024³⁸ and the Scotland River Basin District (Status) Directions 2024³⁹ direct the SEPA regarding the application of environmental standards for the water environment including environmental standards for the purposes of assessing the ecological status of water bodies. Assessing Scotland's water environment – use of environmental standards, condition limits and classification schemes – Policy Statement⁴⁰ sets out how SEPA should implement the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003, using the Directions from 2024.
- 2.48 The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP)⁴¹, coordinated by SEPA, promote sustainable water use, whilst protecting and improving the water environment. These plans cover inland waters, groundwater, lochs, estuaries, and coastal waters out to three nautical miles. Therefore, there is a spatial overlap and a requirement for alignment and integration with regional marine

³⁸ The Scotland River Basin District (Standards) Directions 2024.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/the-scotland-river-basin-district-standards-directions-2024/>

³⁹ The Scotland River Basin District (Status) Directions 2024.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/the-scotland-river-basin-district-status-directions-2024/>

⁴⁰ Implementing the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003: Assessing Scotland's water environment - use of environmental standards, condition limits and classification schemes - Policy Statement.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/implementing-water-environment-water-services-scotland-act-2003-assessing-scotland-s-water-environment-use-environmental-standards-condition-limits-classification-schemes-policy-statement/>

⁴¹ The River Basin Management Plan for Scotland 2021 – 2027. SEPA.

<https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/594088/211222-final-rbmp3-scotland.pdf>



plans. Under RBMP, Orkney's coastal waters are classified as good or high for water quality (see Maps 3–5).

- 2.49 The classification of coastal waterbodies includes assessment of ecological, chemical and physical parameters, using available data, for factors including water quality and physical condition (i.e. the assessment of coastal engineering), as well as biological parameters, the presence of invasive non-native species, and benthic monitoring results. The benthic environment is characterised by animal and plant communities with no, or slow, mobility that rely on the seabed to feed, hide, rest and reproduce, as well as by areas of high exposure with strong tidal influences. Developments that place structures on the seabed, or activities such as deposition from aquaculture, dredging and trawling, have the potential to cause removal of habitat, smothering and abrasion. If not managed appropriately, these developments, activities and uses can have significant impacts on benthic habitats and species, including Priority Marine Features (PMFs) (see Appendix 5), and on some qualifying features of designated nature conservation sites.

General Policy 6: Water Environment

Proposals for development and/or activities should:

- i. be accompanied by sufficient information to enable an assessment of the likely effects, including cumulative effects, on water quality and the benthic environment.
- ii. take existing activities that affect water quality in the proposed location into account, and demonstrate early engagement with relevant stakeholders, to ensure that suitable mitigation is provided for potentially incompatible activities, and where that is not possible, that they are not co-located.
- iii. not cause any waterbody to deteriorate in status nor prevent the achievement of objectives in the River Basin Management Plan for the Scotland river-basin district.
- iv. consider contributing, where possible, towards objectives to improve the ecological status* of coastal waterbodies and the environmental standard** of marine waters.

* [Ecological status in surface waters | WISE Freshwater](#)

** [EU policies to protect Europe's ocean, seas and coasts](#)



Table 8: General Policy 6 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	2 and, 8
Indirect contribution to objectives:	5 and, 7
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 2.3
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 12
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 22
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 9D



Map 3: Waterbody classification: water quality status

Key

Overall water quality status

High

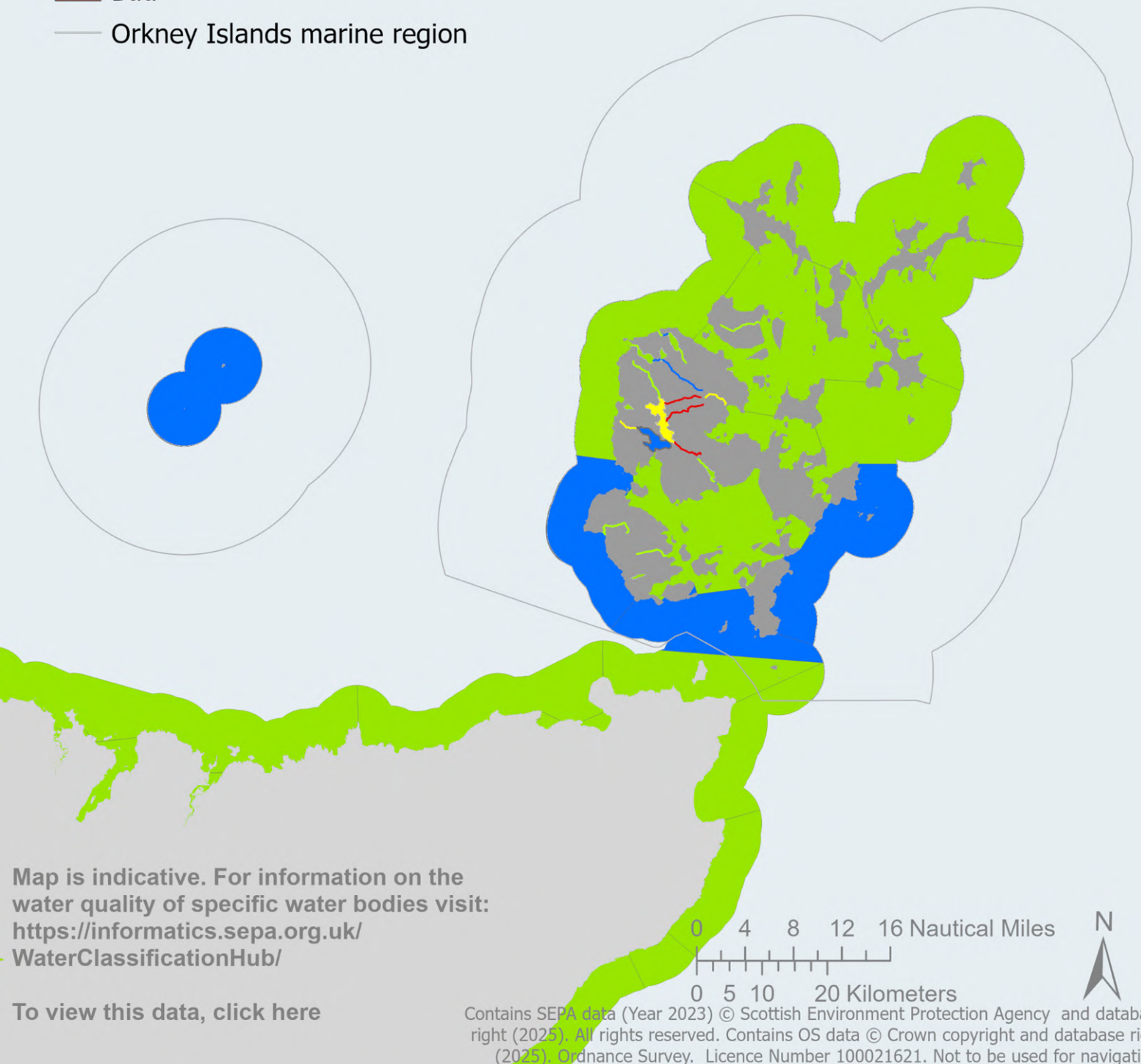
Good

Moderate

Poor

Bad

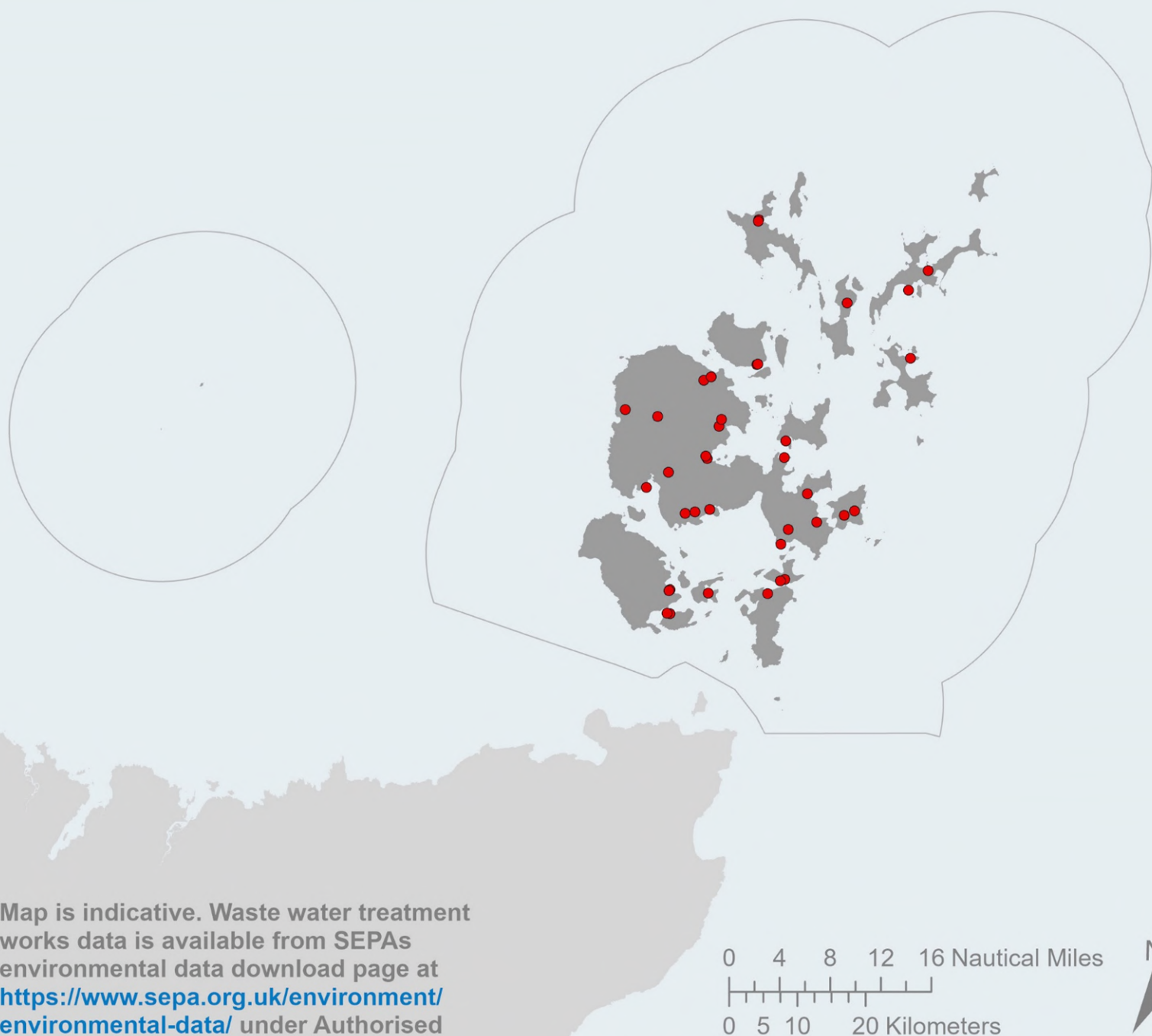
Orkney Islands marine region



Map 4: Wastewater treatment works

Key

- Wastewater treatment works
- Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. Waste water treatment works data is available from SEPAs environmental data download page at <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/environmental-data/> under Authorised Sites.

Contains SEPA data © Scottish Environment Protection Agency and database right (2024). All rights reserved. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2024). Ordnance Survey. Licence Number 100021621. Not to be used for navigation.

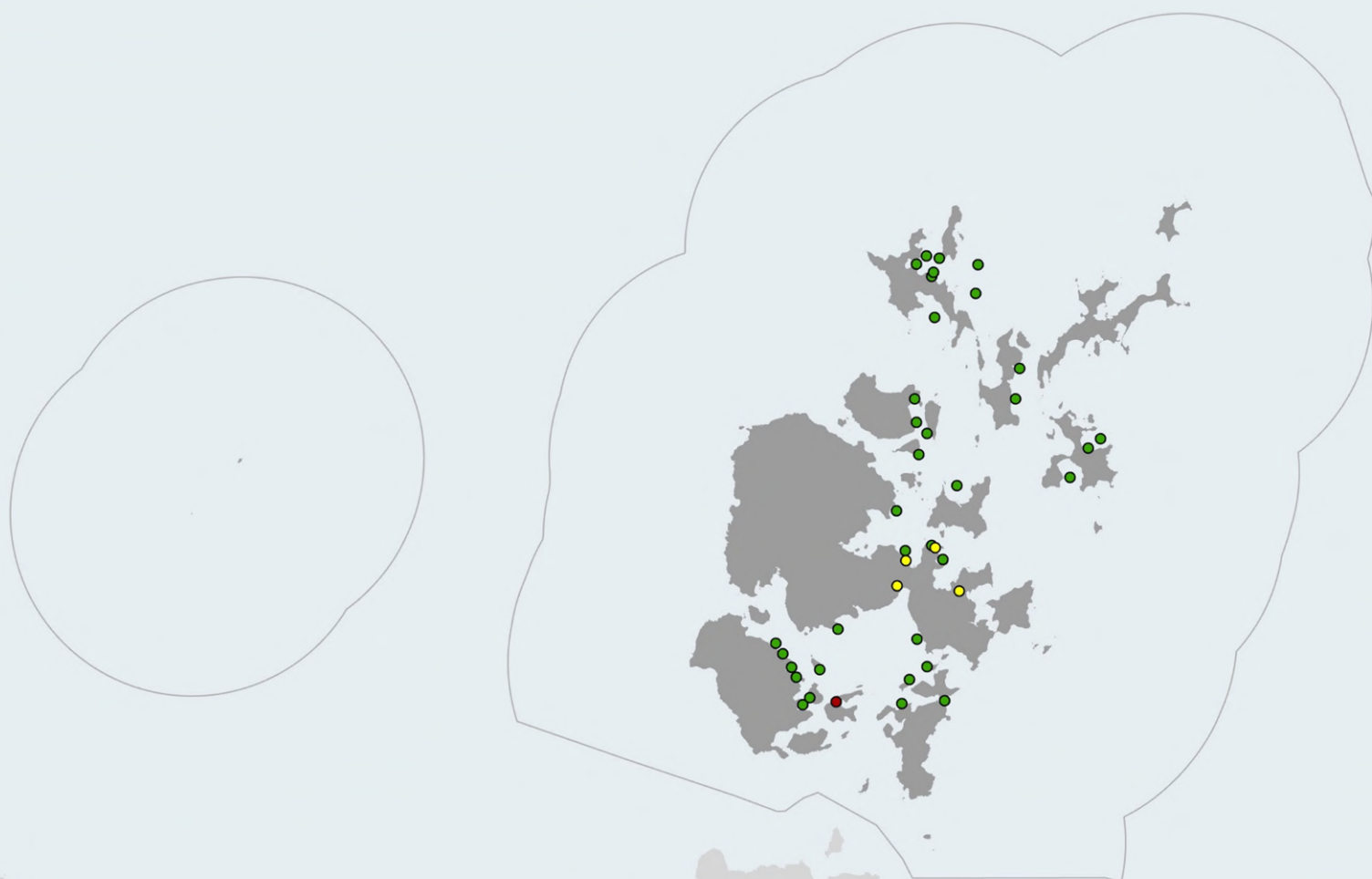
Map 5: Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) locations

Key

— Orkney Islands marine region

Sector

- Energy sector
- Intensive livestock production and aquaculture
- Waste and waste-water management



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPi. Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)

0 4 8 12 16 Nautical Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers



Contains SEPA data © Scottish Environment Protection Agency and database right (2025).
All rights reserved. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2025).
Ordnance Survey. Licence Number 100021621. Not to be used for navigation

General Policy 7: Coastal Development and Coastal Change

Policy intent

To protect and enhance the coastal environment, communities and assets, and support resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Context

- 2.50 The water masses of the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean meet in Orkney waters producing diverse hydrodynamic conditions. The Sounds between the islands create extraordinarily strong tidal flows, and the exposed coasts experience powerful wave action. These forces create the geographical and physical diversity of Orkney's coast and associated habitats, species and marine resources.
- 2.51 Orkney's western seaboard is characterised by dramatic sea cliffs and associated arches, stacks, geos and ghoups. The lower-lying coastal areas are dominated by tilted flags, dune systems and sandy bays. There are numerous indented bays that expose these lower-lying areas to coastal flooding and erosion. The main source of flooding in Orkney is from coastal flooding, which accounts for approximately 94% of the annual average damage by flood⁴².
- 2.52 Orkney Islands Council produces the Orkney Local Flood Risk Management Plan⁴³. It outlines the various responsibilities and actions required of agencies such as SEPA, Scottish Water and the local authority to meet the objectives of the strategy. The primary responsibility to protect land from flooding, including coastal land, lies with the landowner.
- 2.53 Coast protection authorities, which is Orkney Islands Council in the case of Orkney, are permitted to undertake maintenance and emergency work under the terms of the Coast Protection Act 1949, and certain public bodies are expected to take a proactive role in managing and, where achievable, lowering overall flood risk. Local authorities have discretionary powers to carry out coast protection work that they consider to be necessary or expedient for the protection of any land in their area against erosion and encroachment by the sea.
- 2.54 The rate of coastal change is influenced by a changing climate. Dynamic Coast⁴⁴ is a Scottish Government project that monitors Scotland's erodible

⁴² The River Basin Management Plan for Scotland 2021 – 2027. SEPA.
<https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/594088/211222-final-rbmp3-scotland.pdf>

⁴³ Local Flood Risk Management Plan for Orkney. Orkney Islands Council.
<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/development-planning-land/local-flood-risk-management-plan/>

⁴⁴ Dynamic Coast. <https://www.dynamiccoast.com/>



shore. It has investigated coastal erosion and flood risk, under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change high emissions, medium emissions and low emissions future scenarios. The data identifies coastal areas and assets at risk from coastal erosion and flooding. Since the 1970s, the average rate of coastal erosion has increased significantly in Orkney, particularly in areas of soft substrate, such as sand, soils and clays. In Orkney, 61% of the coast is categorised as hard, 36% is categorised as soft and 3% as artificial. Given that many of Orkney's settlements and infrastructure are in low-lying soft coast areas, there is a need to plan ahead for predicted sea level rise, and the increased risk of coastal erosion and flooding.

- 2.55 The Dynamic Coast project encourages Local Development Plan policy changes to ensure that any development avoids the disturbance or degradation of coastal landforms⁴⁵ and encourages society to become 'sea level wise'⁴⁶. This work recognises the crucial role that habitats such as beaches, dune systems, saltmarshes and kelp beds play as natural defences against coastal erosion and flooding. Key sites such as the Bay of Skail are particularly vulnerable, as Mean Low Water Springs in the southern third of the Bay has moved landward, with suggested associated increase in flood risk⁴⁷.
- 2.56 In 2025, Orkney Islands Council commenced the preparation of a Coastal Change Adaptation Plan (CCAP) for Orkney to identify and evaluate specific areas that are susceptible to coastal flooding and erosion, both currently and into the future. The plan making process will investigate potential options for future actions to increase the resilience of coastal areas in the short, medium and long term, as well as identifying trigger points for taking specific strategic actions. This CCAP will serve as a vital tool to support adaptive decision making, now and into the future, in partnership with local communities.

⁴⁵ Looking ahead: planning for coastal change. 2019. NatureScot.
<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/planning-and-development-advice/planning-and-development-coastal-change#:~:text=By%20making%20use%20of%20our%20guidance%20on%20Looking>

⁴⁶ Dynamic Coast: The National Overview. 2021. CREW.
https://www.crew.ac.uk/sites/www.crew.ac.uk/files/publication/CREW_DC2_SYNOPSIS_FINAL.pdf

⁴⁷ Dynamic Coast: Erosion Enhanced Flooding. 2021. CREW.
https://www.dynamiccoast.com/files/dc2/DC2_WS1a_Flooding_FINAL.pdf



General Policy 7: Coastal Development and Coastal Change

General Policy 7a: Coastal Development

Proposals for development and/or activities located on, or directly adjacent to, the coast should have regard to:

- a. The National Planning Framework;
- b. The Orkney Local Development Plan;
- c. The Orkney Local Flood Risk Management Plan;
- d. The Coastal Change Adaptation Plan (where available); and
- e. Dynamic Coast data and maps.

General Policy 7b: Coastal processes

Proposals for development and/or activities that would significantly affect coastal processes should demonstrate that:

- i. significant adverse effects on coastal and marine habitats, species and geomorphological features, including, but not limited to, those that are caused by erosion, compaction, sediment transport, accretion, scouring, deposition and/or coastal flooding, have been avoided, minimised and/or appropriately mitigated.
- ii. significant adverse effects from the proposal on existing coastal and marine infrastructure and other assets, due to coastal erosion, flooding and/or wider coastal change, have been avoided, minimised and/or appropriately mitigated.

General Policy 7c: Coastal protection

Development and/or activities proposals for coastal protection/defence measures should:

- i. be consistent with the policies and objectives of this Plan, the National Planning Framework, the National Marine Plan, the Orkney Local Development Plan, the Orkney Local Flood Risk Management Plan and any relevant Coastal Change Adaptation Plan.
- ii. have regard to the Dynamic Coast data and maps.
- iii. utilise nature-based solutions and permit managed future coastal change wherever practical.
- iv. demonstrate that any in-perpetuity hard defence measures are necessary to protect essential assets.
- v. avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse effects on habitats and coastal geomorphological features that provide significant coastal protection services for infrastructure and other assets, and should where appropriate, enhance the functioning of these habitats and features.

Table 9: General Policy 7 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	2 and, 4
Indirect contribution to objectives:	9
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 2.2
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 5 and GEN 8
National Planning Framework 4	Policies 5 a) and 10
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Sustainable Communities Strategic Priority: Climate Emergency
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 13



General Policy 8: Historic Environment

Policy intent

To protect and enhance the historic environment.

Context

- 2.57 The historic environment includes any physical evidence of human activity through time. Orkney is world renowned for the quality and quantity of its historic environment assets, both terrestrial and marine. This policy addresses impacts from development and/or activities on the historic environment. The impacts of physical processes on the historic environment, such as erosion and storm damage, which are likely to be exacerbated by climate change, are further addressed in General Policies 3 and 7.
- 2.58 Archaeological records in Orkney date back as early as c.7000 BC, and include Neolithic settlements and tombs, Iron Age tower houses of the broch villages, and a rich Viking heritage of international significance. More recently, Orkney played a pivotal role in both World Wars, leaving poignant reminders of these turbulent periods etched on our seascape and coastal areas in the shape of wrecks, barriers, gun emplacements and concrete bunkers. The wrecks of the German High Sea Fleet in Scapa Flow are afforded protection as scheduled monuments; and there is a Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area in recognition of its nationally important marine historic assets.
- 2.59 Examples of important historic environment assets around Orkney include the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site; scheduled monuments; listed buildings; gardens and designed landscapes; and controlled sites and protected places, including designated military maritime graves. The seabed is also of palaeo-environmental interest, particularly areas that were once dry land during ice age conditions and where there is potential for a wide range of buried deposits of archaeological interest. Drowned palaeolandscapes are rare in Scotland and are a distinctive feature of Orkney's marine heritage.
- 2.60 Historic environment assets and places (both designated and non-designated) are of historical, cultural, economic and recreational interest to Orkney communities and to the thousands that come to visit the islands. It is therefore vital for Orkney to protect its historic environment wherever possible. Trove.scot provides an online catalogue to Scotland's designated and undesignated archaeology, buildings, industrial and maritime heritage⁴⁸.
- 2.61 Many historic assets and places are afforded legal protection through various national and international designations. The Historic Environment Policy for

⁴⁸ National Record of the Historic Environment <https://www.trove.scot/about-us/the-national-record-of-the-historic-environment>



Scotland is also a key policy consideration for decision making in the whole of the historic environment⁴⁹. To support the implementation of this policy, Historic Environment Scotland has published practical guidance on conserving underwater heritage⁵⁰.

- 2.62 Planning and licensing authorities are advised by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) on matters affecting historic environment assets. The Orkney Islands Council Islands Archaeologist can advise on matters affecting Orkney's historic environment assets. Developers are recommended to undertake early engagement with HES and the Islands Archaeologist on these matters. The licensing requirements for controlled sites and protected places are administered by the Ministry of Defence (see Map 6 and Appendix 1).
- 2.63 The National Register of Historic Vessels provides an overview of the UK's surviving historic vessels⁵¹.

⁴⁹ Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS). HES.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=1bcfa7b1-28fb-4d4b-b1e6-aa2500f942e7>

⁵⁰ Conserving our Underwater Heritage. Historic Environment Scotland. 2025.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=32199b0c-f102-4548-97d7-a58e01023c9b>

⁵¹ The National Register of Historic Vessels.

<https://www.nationalhistoricalships.org.uk/the-registers/find-a-vessel>



General Policy 8: Historic Environment

General Policy 8a: Historic assets and places

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities affecting the historic environment should, where relevant, have regard to:
 - a. The National Planning Framework; and
 - b. The Orkney Local Development Plan.
- ii. Proposals for development and/or activities with a potentially significant impact on historic assets or places should be accompanied by an assessment* which is based on an understanding of the cultural significance of the historic asset and/or place. The assessment should identify the likely visual or physical impact of any proposals for change, including cumulative effects, and provide a sound basis for managing the impacts of change.
- iii. Proposals should also be informed by national policy and guidance on managing change in the historic environment, and information held within Historic Environment Records.
- iv. Proposals for development and/or activities should, where appropriate, include a Protocol for Accidental Archaeological Discoveries (PAD)**.

*Where relevant, for EIA development and/or activities refer to: [Historic Environment Scotland: Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook](#)

**For example: The Crown Estate: [Archaeological Written Schemes of Investigation for Offshore Wind Farm Projects](#)

General Policy 8b: Recording

- i. Where developments and/or activities are permitted in areas known to contain, or where there are reasonable grounds to believe they contain, archaeological deposits, conditions may be attached to a licence or consent to ensure the effective assessment, analysis, archiving and publication of any archaeological remains to an agreed timeframe.
- ii. Where a historic environment asset, or a significant element thereof, will be lost as a result of a development and/or activity, it may be necessary to record the site to an agreed level prior to the commencement of development and/or demolition.

General Policy 8c: Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities affecting the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site or its setting should demonstrate that the Outstanding Universal Value*** is protected and preserved.

*** [Heart of Neolithic Orkney Statement of Outstanding Universal Value](#)

General Policy 8d: Historic marine protected area (Historic MPA)

Development and/or activities capable of affecting a Historic MPA will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.

General Policy 8e: Controlled sites and protected places

The protection of controlled sites and protected places will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986.

General Policy 8f: Scheduled monuments

Proposals for development and/or activities that will affect scheduled monuments should:

- i. avoid direct impacts on the scheduled monument; and
- ii. avoid significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the setting of the scheduled monument; or
- iii. demonstrate that there are exceptional circumstances to justify the impact on the scheduled monument and/or its setting, and that impacts on the monument or its setting have been minimised.

General Policy 8g: Listed buildings

- i. Development and/or activities proposals for the reuse, alteration or extension of a listed building should preserve its character, special architectural or historic interest and setting.
- ii. Development and/or activities proposals affecting the setting of a listed building should preserve its character, and its special architectural or historic interest.

General Policy 8h: Conservation areas

Proposals for development and/or activities in or affecting a conservation area should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting. Relevant considerations include the:

- i. architectural and historic character of the area;
- ii. existing density, built form and layout; and
- iii. context and siting, quality of design and suitable materials.

Proposals for development and/or activities in or affecting conservation areas should ensure that existing natural and built features which contribute to the character of the conservation area and its setting are retained.



General Policy 8i: Inventory gardens and designed landscapes

Proposals for development and/or activities should preserve or enhance the character and features of inventory gardens and designed landscapes and their setting. Development and/or activities should not have a significant adverse impact upon the character of these areas.

General Policy 8j: Non-designated historic environment assets

Non-designated historic environment assets and their setting should be protected and preserved in situ wherever feasible. Where there is potential for non-designated remains to exist at a development site, developers should provide an evaluation of the archaeological resource at an early stage so that impacts can be assessed. Where impacts from development and/or activities cannot be avoided, they should be minimised and appropriately mitigated.

Table 10: General Policy 8 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

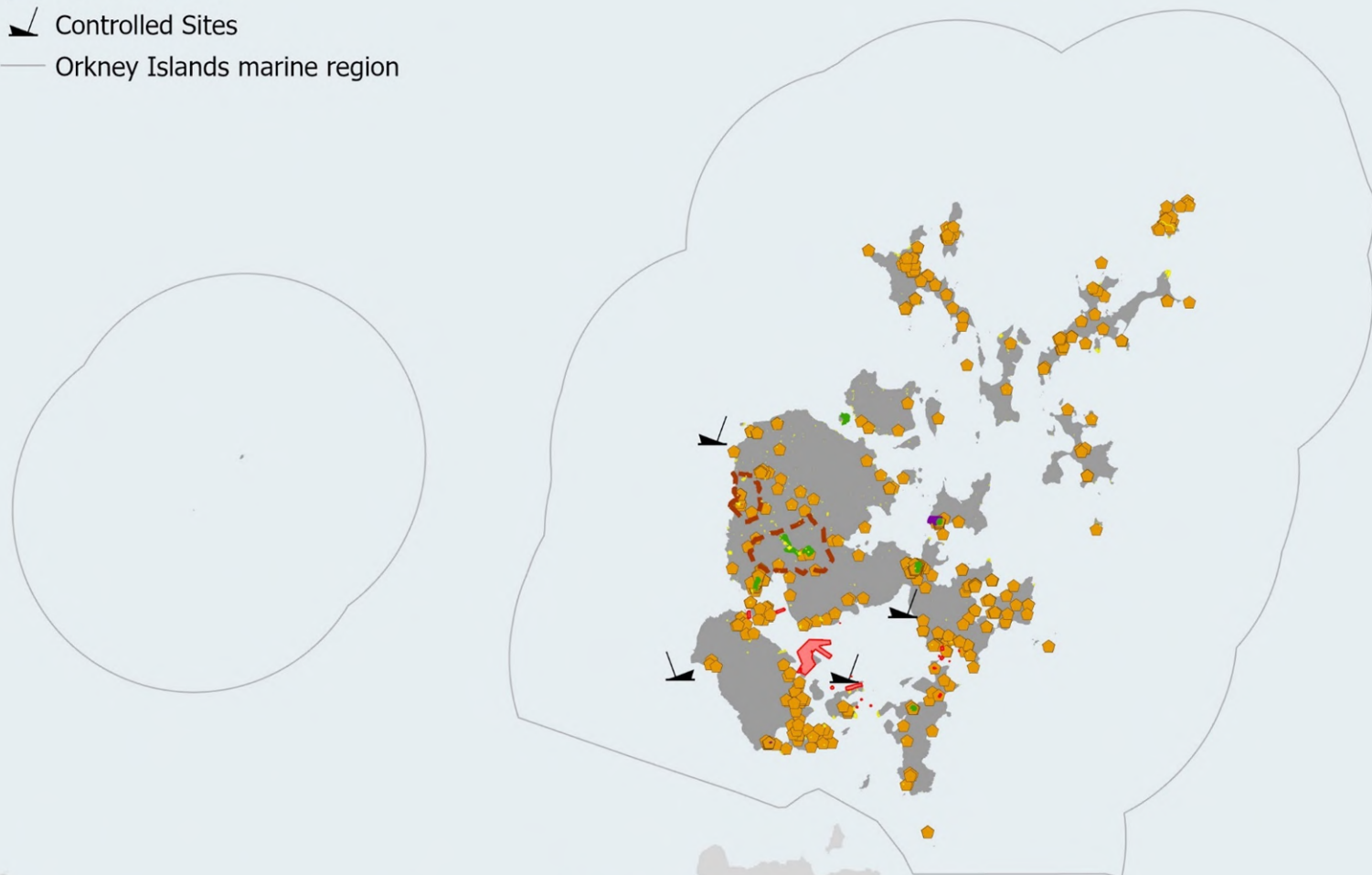
Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	5, 6 and, 7
Indirect contribution to objectives:	9
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 5
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 6
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 7
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 8



Map 6: Protected coastal and marine historic environment assets

Key

- Historic Marine Protected Area
- Inventory Gardens & Designed Landscapes
- World Heritage Site Inner Sensitive Zone
- World Heritage Site
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Area
- Listed Buildings
- Protected Place
- Controlled Sites
- Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPi. Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)

0 4 8 12 16 Nautical Miles

0 5 10 20 Kilometers



General Policy 9: Nature

Policy intent

To protect and enhance biodiversity and the health of the natural environment.

Context: Background

- 2.64 The Orkney Islands marine region is home to a range of internationally, nationally and locally important marine and coastal natural heritage features and designated sites. As well as its conservation importance, a healthy, biodiverse marine environment is essential for providing ecosystem services, enhancing well-being and supporting a sustainable marine economy. Further information on the importance and condition of the natural heritage in the region can be found within the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment⁵².
- 2.65 The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services⁵³ has highlighted significant pressures on global biodiversity; this significant issue is referred to in this Plan as the nature crisis. Some of the drivers of biodiversity loss include changing use of land and sea, direct exploitation of organisms, and climate change.
- 2.66 Under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, public bodies in Scotland have a duty to further the conservation of biodiversity, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions⁵⁴.
- 2.67 The Environment Strategy for Scotland⁵⁵ sets an ambitious vision for 2045: 'By restoring nature and ending Scotland's contribution to climate change, our country is transformed for the better, helping to secure the wellbeing of our people and planet for generations to come.' Steps to deliver this vision are set out in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 and supporting Delivery Plan 2024 to 2030⁵⁶, which signals the Scottish Government ambitions for tackling the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. There is scope for marine planning policy to reflect the 2045 target set out above, in the way that

⁵² The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

⁵³ Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. 2019. IPBES. <https://ipbes.net/global-assessment/>

⁵⁴ Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/6/contents>

⁵⁵ The Environment Strategy for Scotland: vision and outcomes. 2020. Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/environment-strategy-scotland-vision-outcomes/documents/>

⁵⁶ Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and Delivery Plan. Scottish Government. <https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/scottish-biodiversity-strategy/scotlands-biodiversity-strategy-2022-2045>



it guides development, activities and use of the marine and coastal environment, including potential enhancement⁵⁷.

- 2.68 NPF4, published in February 2023, introduced a change in national planning policy by giving significant weight to the global nature crisis in decision making on development proposals. The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy highlights that loss of species and the degradation of our natural environment calls for urgent action. In response to these policy drivers, General Policy 9a: Nature crisis gives significant weight in decision making on development and activity proposals to the global nature crisis.

Context: Protected sites

- 2.69 In order to protect internationally and nationally identified important natural features under different types of legislation, marine and coastal areas have been designated. Local Nature Conservation Sites have also been identified in the Orkney Local Development Plan (see Table 11 and Maps 7–8). Information on Orkney’s designated sites, including their qualifying features and site condition, can be accessed on SiteLink⁵⁸.

Table 11: Types of designated sites in Orkney

International sites:	
Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas	Special Protection Areas (SPAs), designated for birds, and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) taken together are commonly known as European sites. They are designated and protected in Scottish law through the requirements of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. These Regulations are referred to as the ‘Habitats Regulations’ and cover the requirements for protected European sites as well as those for ‘European Protected Species’.
Ramsar sites	Internationally important wetland areas are protected under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. For Ramsar sites, the Scottish Government has chosen as a matter of policy to apply the same considerations to their protection as if they were SPAs and SACs. Refer to Map 7 for all site locations.

⁵⁷ Marine Restoration and Enhancement. <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/land-and-sea-management/managing-coasts-and-seas/marine-enhancement>

⁵⁸ SiteLink. NatureScot. <https://sitelink.nature.scot/home>



National sites: Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas Sites of Special Scientific Interest Seal haul-out sites Seal conservation areas	Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas (Nature Conservation MPAs) are regions of the sea and coast where nationally important species, habitats and geomorphology are protected. Nature Conservation MPAs are designated under the Scottish and UK Marine Acts and complement marine components of sites designated under other legislation to form a network of MPAs⁵⁹. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are notified for biological features, including coastal and marine birds, as well as geological or geomorphological features and extend from land to Mean Low Water Springs. Refer to Map 7 for site locations. Seal haul-out sites are designated in the Seals (Designation of Haul-Out Sites) (Scotland) Order 2014 through powers under section 117 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. They are locations on land where seals come ashore to rest, moult or breed and which have been designated by Scottish Ministers to provide additional protection for seals from intentional or reckless harassment. Refer to Map 8 for site locations. Orkney is a Seal Conservation Area designated by Scottish Ministers under Section 118 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.
Regional/local sites: Geological Conservation Review	Geological Conservation Review (GCR) sites contain geological and geomorphological features of national and international importance. There are sixteen GCR sites in Orkney, eleven of which have statutory protection through designation as SSSIs. However, five GCR sites have no protective SSSI designation status and are known as unnotified GCR sites.

⁵⁹ Scotland's Marine Protected Area network. NatureScot.
<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/protected-areas/marine-protected-areas/scotlands-marine-protected-area-network>



Local Nature Conservation Sites	Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) are non-statutory sites identified by local authorities for their locally important natural heritage interest. Some of Orkney's LNCS have a coastal and/or intertidal component. Refer to the Orkney Local Development Plan and supporting guidance for site locations and associated planning policy.

- 2.70 Plan users should refer to the Conservation and Management Advice documents for relevant designated sites within the Marine Protected Area network, which include the site conservation objectives, advice to support management, and best practice advice⁶⁰.
- 2.71 During the lifetime of this Plan, Orkney Islands Marine Region: Marine Enhancement and Restoration Guidance may be adopted to support the implementation of General Policy 9: *Nature*.

Context: Protected Species

- 2.72 Wildlife in Scotland is protected by a range of national and international legislation designed to protect rare and vulnerable species as well as their breeding and resting places. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994 afford protection to certain species listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive which are called 'European Protected Species' (EPS). Marine EPS whose natural range incorporates the Orkney Islands marine region include European otter and cetaceans (whales, porpoises and dolphins).
- 2.73 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the primary legislation which protects birds, animals, plants and certain habitats in Scotland. The 1981 Act makes it an offence to either intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy, obstruct or disturb any such place the animals in Schedule 5 use for shelter and protection. It also protects the animals listed in Schedule 5 from being taken, killed or injured, either intentionally or recklessly. Schedule 5 species present in Orkney waters include basking shark and fan mussel.

⁶⁰ Scotland's register of European sites. SiteLink, NatureScot: <https://sitelink.nature.scot/home>



Context: Priority Marine Features

- 2.74 The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment⁶¹ notes that the broadscale seabed habitats are dominated by coarse sediment (52%), sublittoral sand (24%) and circalittoral rock (13%); these habitats support a variety of biodiversity, including Priority Marine Features (PMFs)⁶².
- 2.75 PMFs are species and habitats which have been identified as being of conservation importance to Scotland, and they are protected under relevant legislation. PMFs range from flame shell beds in coastal waters to the cold-water coral reefs in deeper seas and mobile species such as minke whale and basking shark. Appendix 5 identifies the PMFs recorded within the Orkney Islands marine region. National records of PMF locations are on National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi).

⁶¹ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

⁶² Priority marine features in Scotland's seas. NatureScot. <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/priority-marine-features-scotlands-seas>



General Policy 9: Nature

General Policy 9a: Nature crisis

When considering proposals for development and/or activities, significant weight in decision making should be given to the global nature crisis.

General Policy 9b: Marine enhancement and positive effects for biodiversity

Proposals for development and/or activities should:

- i. contribute, where appropriate, to the enhancement and/or restoration of the coastal and/or marine environment utilising best practice assessment and implementation methods.
- ii. have regard to the biodiversity enhancement and positive effects for biodiversity policy provisions in the National Planning Framework.
- iii. have regard to the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Marine Enhancement and Restoration Guidance, where available.

General Policy 9c: Protected areas

Internationally designated sites

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities that could affect a European site (Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) must comply with the relevant legislation.

Nationally designated sites

- ii. Proposals for development and/or activities that could affect a Site Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) must comply with the relevant legislation for these protected areas.
- iii. Proposals for development and/or activities that could affect a Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area must comply with the relevant legislation for these protected areas.

Seal haul-out sites

- iv. Proposals for development and/or activities that could affect a designated seal haul-out site should demonstrate that they will not result in harassment of seals. Regard should be given to the Harassment at Seal Haul-out Sites: Guidance*.

*See: [Guidance on Haul-outs, Scottish Government](#)



Local Nature Conservation Sites

- v. Proposals for development and/or activities that could affect a Local Nature Conservation Site should have regard to the Orkney Local Development Plan.

General Policy 9d: Priority Marine Features

i. Assessment of impacts on Priority Marine Features

Proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate that they have considered, where possible, how any significant adverse impacts on Priority Marine Features have been avoided, minimised and/or appropriately mitigated.

ii. Impacts on the national status of Priority Marine Features

Proposals for development and/or activities should have regard to the relevant policy provisions in the National Marine Plan and Priority Marine Feature Guidance**.

**[Priority Marine Feature Guidance, NatureScot](#)



Table 12: General Policy 9 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

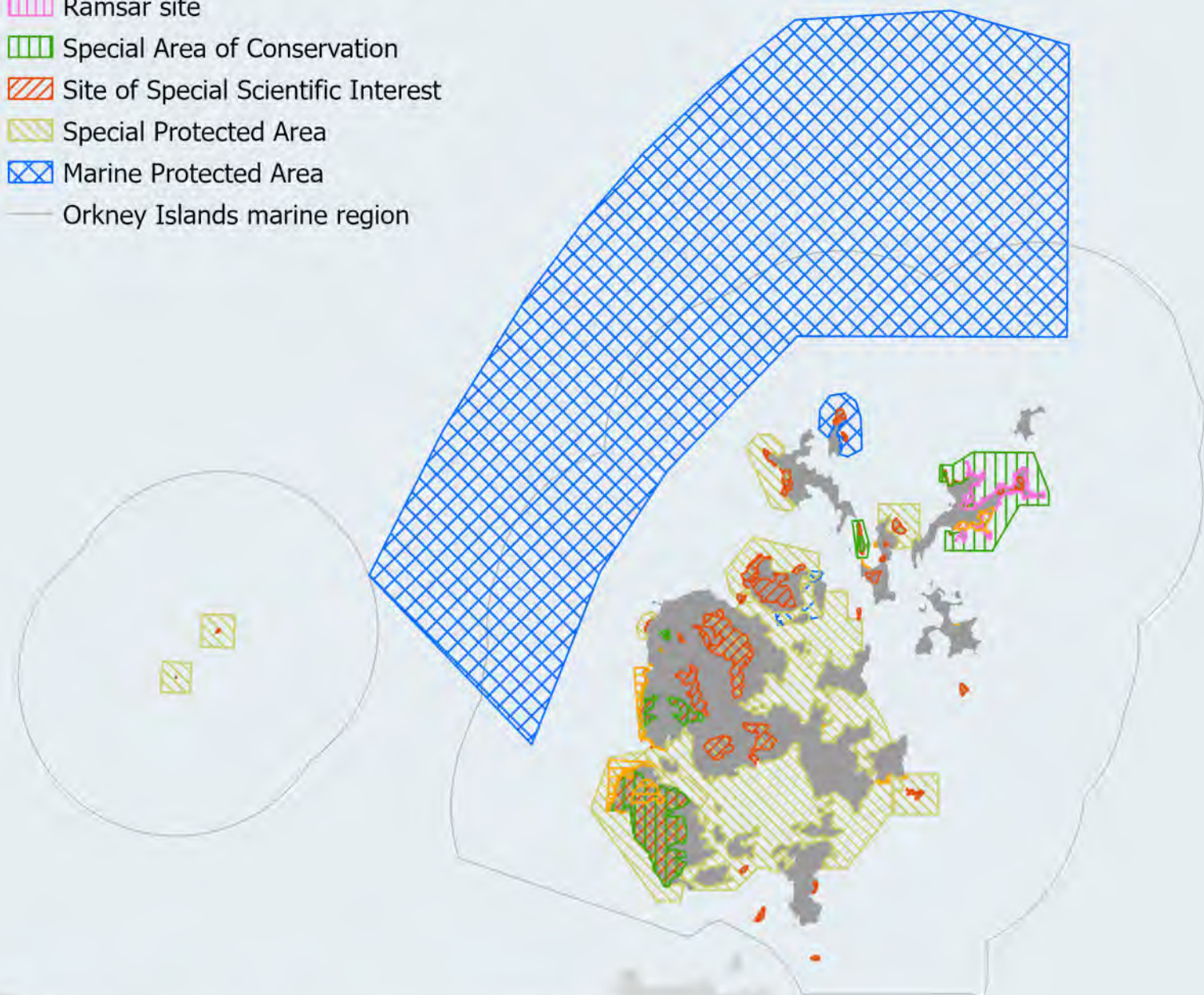
Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	2, 7 and, 9
Indirect contribution to objectives:	6 and, 8
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 5
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 9
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 3
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 9 A–C



Map 7: International and national nature conservation sites

Key

- Geological Conservation Review site
- Ramsar site
- Special Area of Conservation
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Special Protected Area
- Marine Protected Area
- Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPi. Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)

0 4 8 12 16 Nautical Miles

0 5 10 20 Kilometers



Contains NatureScot data under the Open Government Licence v3.0. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2025). Licence Number 100021621. Not to be used for navigation.

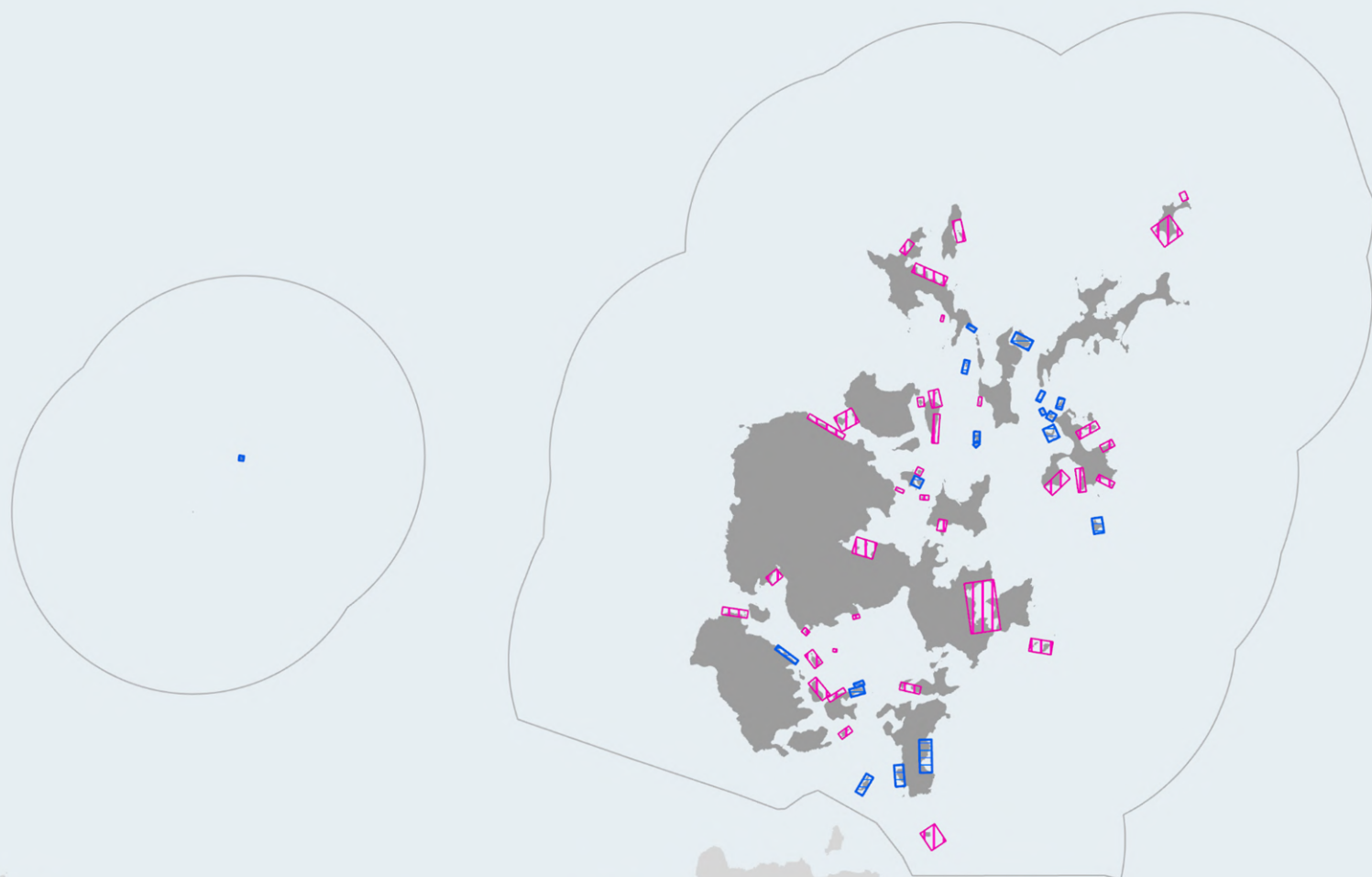
Map 8: Seal haul-out sites

Key

 Breeding colony seal haul-out

 Seal haul-out

 Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPi. Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)

0 4 8 12 16 Nautical Miles

0 5 10 20 Kilometers



Contains information from Scottish Government (Marine Scotland) & Sea Mammal Research Unit licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2025). Licence number 100021621. Not to be used for navigation.

General Policy 10: Seascape and Landscape

Policy intent

To protect and enhance the distinctiveness and qualities of seascape and landscape.

Context

- 2.76 Orkney's coastline contains outstanding seascape and landscape, ranging from shallow sandy bays to dramatic high cliffs, to partially enclosed sounds, reflecting a strong physical and visual interplay between land and sea (see Map 9). This is well represented among the many Special Qualities of the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area (see Map 10), in particular its 'spectacular coastal scenery' and the fact that 'land and water [are experienced] in constantly changing combinations under the open sky'⁶³.
- 2.77 Each island in Orkney has its own seascape and landscape character, which creates variety and contributes to both an individual and a collective sense of identity, as outlined in the Coastal Character Assessment – Orkney and North Caithness⁶⁴.
- 2.78 The distinctiveness of Orkney's islands and waters creates a corresponding variety of seascapes and landscapes worthy of protection. Not only are they part of the spectacular scenery, they also contribute significantly to a sense of place, wellbeing and quality of life, as well as being a major economic asset for Orkney.
- 2.79 Marine and coastal development and activities, for example offshore wind, harbours and aquaculture, can have significant effects on the character and qualities of Orkney's landscape and seascape. General Policy 10 aims to help decision makers and developers manage impacts on seascapes and landscapes, safeguard the integrity of National Scenic Areas and appropriately managing impacts on Wild Land Areas.

⁶³ The special qualities of the National Scenic Areas. SNH Commissioned Report No.374. 2010.

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/naturescot-commissioned-report-374-special-qualities-national-scenic-areas>

⁶⁴ Coastal Character Assessment - Orkney and North Caithness. 2016. NatureScot.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20220516045502/https://www.nature.scot/doc/coastal-character-assessment-orkney-and-north-caithness>



General Policy 10: Seascape and Landscape

General Policy 10a: Seascape and landscape

Development and/or activities should be located, sited and designed to avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on the landscape, townscape and seascape characteristics and sensitivities identified in the Orkney and North Caithness Landscape Character Assessment*, and should have regard to the natural and/or historic features that contribute to the quality of seascape and landscape.

*[Coastal Character Assessment - Orkney and North Caithness | NatureScot](#)

General Policy 10b: National Scenic Area

Development and/or activities that would affect the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area should demonstrate that:

- i. the objectives of the designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised; or
- ii. any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance.

General Policy 10c: Wild Land Area

Development and/or activities affecting the Hoy Wild Land Area should have regard to the National Planning Framework.



Table 13: General Policy 10 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

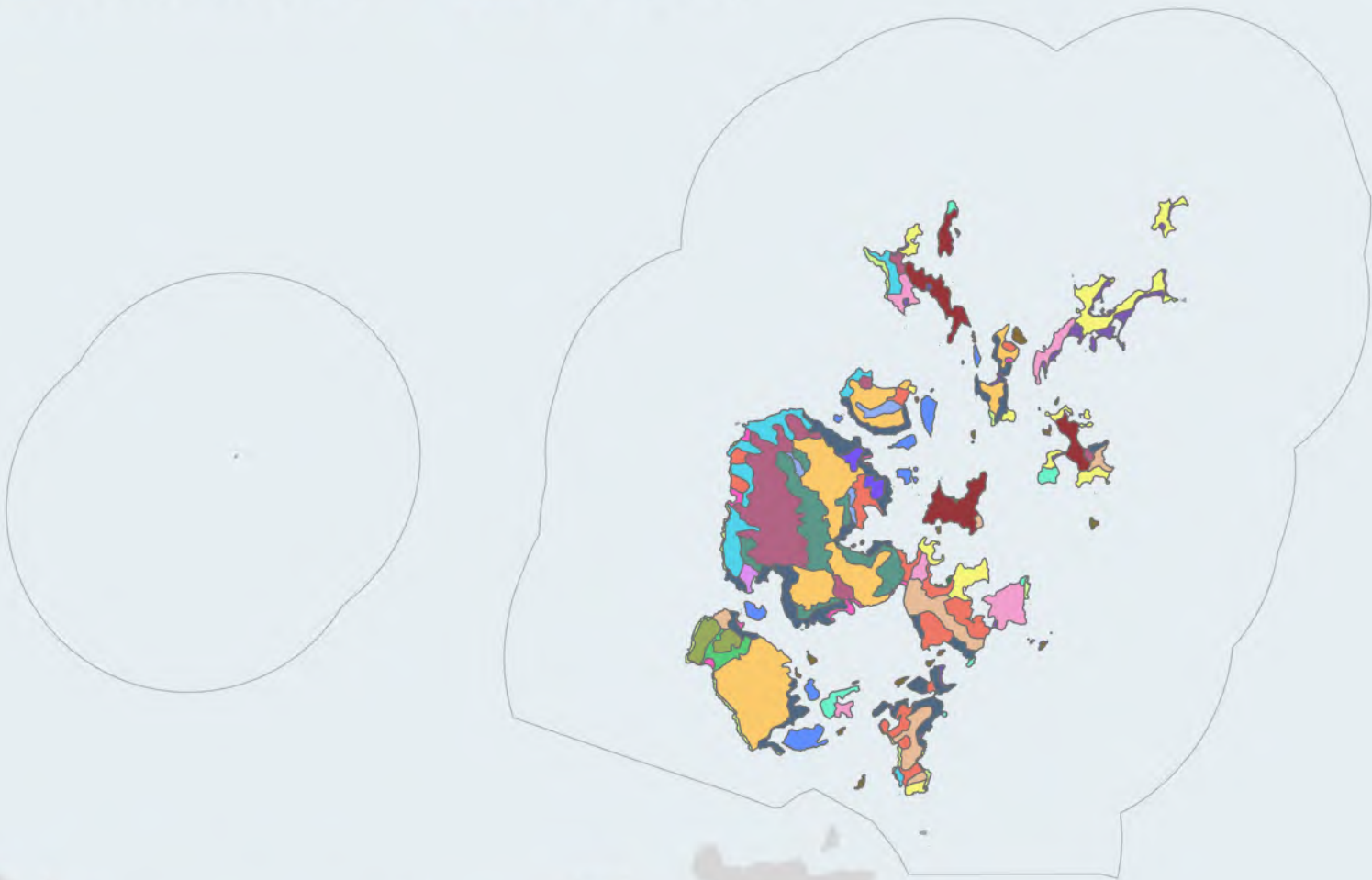
Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	2 and, 6
Indirect contribution to objectives:	5 and, 8
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 2.8
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan	GEN 7
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 4
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 9G



Map 9: Landscape character types

Key

Cliffs	Isolated Coastal Knolls	Rocky Coastal Pasture
Coast with Sand	Loch Basin	Rolling Hill Fringe
Coastal Basin	Low Island Pastures	Rugged Hills
Coastal Hills and Heath	Low Moorland	U-Shaped Valley
Coastal Plain	Moorland Hills	Undulating Island Pasture
Enclosed Bays	Peatland Basin	Whaleback Islands
Holms	Plateau Heath and Pasture	Orkney Islands marine region
Inclined Coastal Pasture	Ridgeline Islands	

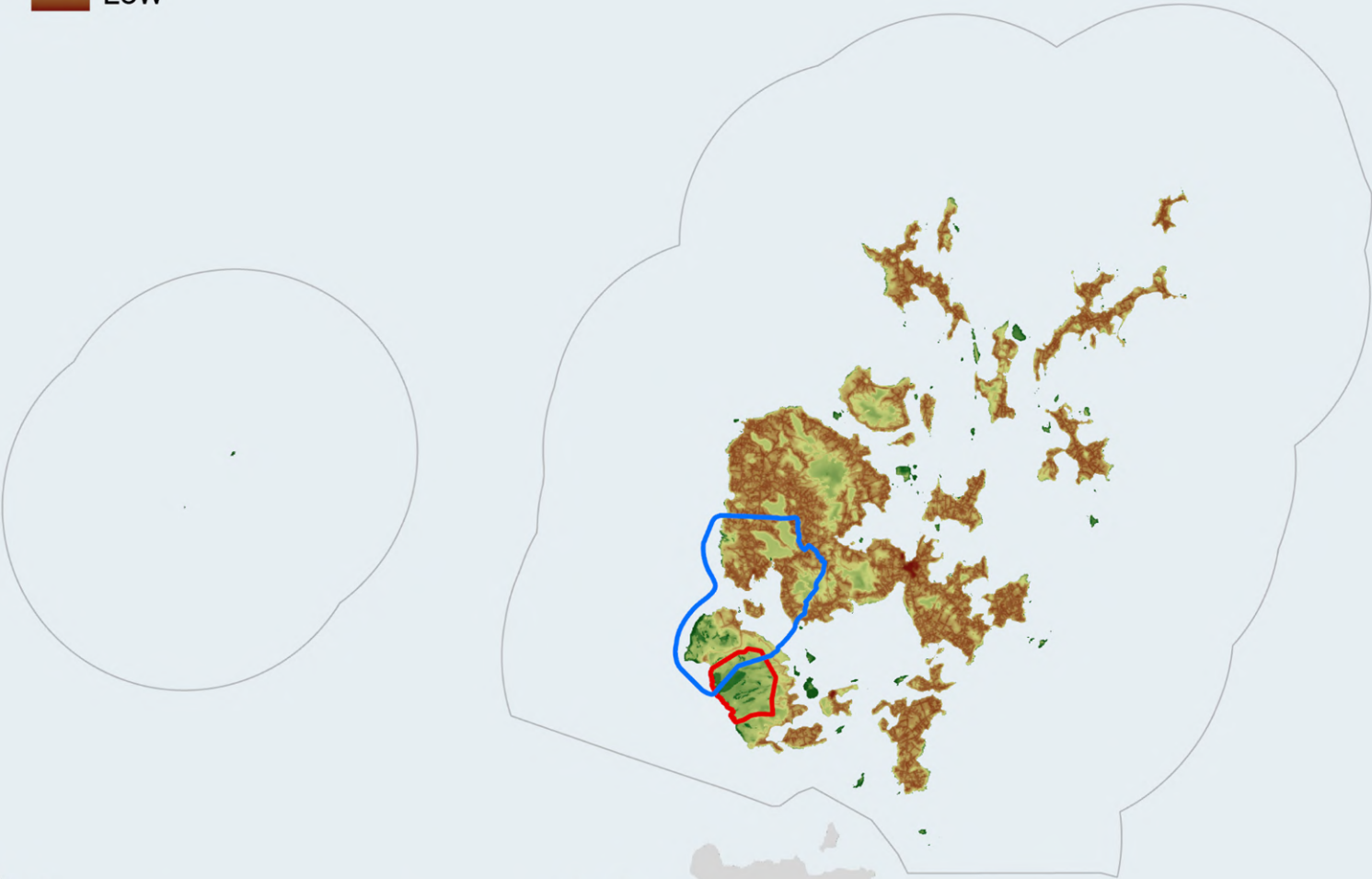


Map is indicative. For further information please view the latest 'Landscape Character Assessment', published by NatureScot.

Map 10: National Scenic Area and Wild Land Area

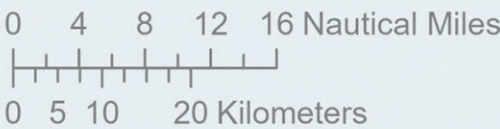
Key

- National Scenic Area
- Wild Land Area
- Orkney Islands marine region
- NatureScot Relative Wildness
 - High
 - Low



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on [NMPi](#). Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)



Contains NatureScot data under the Open Government Licence v3.0. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2025). Licence Number 100021621. Not to be used for navigation.

General Policy 11: Surface and Underwater Noise, and Vibration

Policy intent

To protect local communities and marine species from adverse noise and vibration impacts.

Context

- 2.80 Coastal and marine development and activities can have associated noise, vibration and pressure wave impacts. As the number and variety of marine developments, activities and uses increases, addressing the cumulative impacts of anthropogenic noise and vibration will be a significant issue for marine planning and decision making.

Local communities

- 2.81 Construction and operational noise and/or vibration, both surface and underwater, caused by development, activities, or use, can impact on local communities. For example, surface fish farm electricity generators or harbour piling activity can affect the enjoyment of an area by residents or people wishing to walk, swim or dive. Planning Advice Note (PAN) 1/2011 provides guidance on how the planning system helps to prevent and limit the adverse effects of noise⁶⁵.

Noise sensitive species

- 2.82 Surface and underwater noise and vibration is a growing pressure for many marine species worldwide. For example, blasting, drilling, piling, and acoustic devices, used in marine development and activities can disturb a variety of marine and coastal species.
- 2.83 European Protected Species, such as porpoise and orca, and Priority Marine Features, such as mackerel and flapper skate, are sensitive to underwater noise, as are seals. In addition, fish and invertebrates of biodiversity and commercial importance can also be affected by underwater noise^{66,67}. Impacts

⁶⁵ Planning Advice Note 1/2011: planning and noise. Scottish Government.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-advice-note-1-2011-planning-noise/pages/6/>

⁶⁶ Sound Exposure Guidelines for Fishes and Sea Turtles. Popper et al. 2014

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279347068_Sound_Exposure_Guidelines

⁶⁷ Impacts of noise on the behavior and physiology of marine invertebrates: A meta-analysis. Murchy, K.A et al 2019. <https://asa.scitation.org/doi/pdf/10.1121/2.0001217>



vary with different frequencies and depending on the nature and duration of the activity⁶⁸.

- 2.84 Around Orkney's marine waters, there has been little comprehensive study of the quantity and levels of underwater noise; this was identified as a data gap in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. As new research and information becomes available, General Policy 11 will be updated to reflect this.
- 2.85 Due to Orkney's extensive military past, old munitions are still occasionally found; these tend to be dealt with by way of controlled explosion on safety grounds. There is a Marine environment: unexploded ordnance (UxO) clearance Joint Position Statement⁶⁹. This position statement sets out how the UK Government and devolved nations expect potential applicants to approach marine licensing for these activities and provides guidance on how best to undertake applications for UxO clearance activities.

⁶⁸ Good Practice Guide for Underwater Noise Measurement. National Measurement Office, Marine Scotland, The Crown Estate, Robinson, S.P., Lepper, P. A. and Hazelwood, NPL Good Practice Guide No. 133. 2014. <https://eprintspublications.npl.co.uk/6121/1/mgpg133.pdf>

⁶⁹ UK Government, (2025) Marine environment: unexploded ordnance clearance Joint Position Statement. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-environment-unexploded-ordnance-clearance-joint-position-statement/marine-environment-unexploded-ordnance-clearance-joint-position-statement>



General Policy 11: Surface and Underwater Noise, and Vibration

General Policy 11a: Local communities

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities should include sufficient measures to avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse noise and/or vibration impacts on the local communities; and
- ii. A Noise Impact Assessment* may be required where the nature of the proposal or its location suggests that significant effects are likely.

*[Assessment of noise: technical advice note: Scottish Government](#)

General Policy 11b: Noise sensitive species

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities that could cause noise, vibration and/or pressure wave impacts should include an assessment of the likely noise, vibration and/or pressure wave effects at an early stage of a proposal, to determine whether a noise, vibration and/or pressure wave management plan is required.
- ii. Proposals for development and/or activities that could affect European Protected Species must comply with the relevant legislation.



Table 14: General Policy 11 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	2 and, 6
Indirect contribution to objectives:	10
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 2.12
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 13
National Planning Framework 4	Policies 11 e), 12 d) and 23 e)
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	N/A



General Policy 12: Marine Litter and Waste

Policy intent

To encourage, promote and facilitate sustainable waste management and the prevention and removal of coastal and marine litter.

Context

- 2.86 Public understanding of the impacts of marine litter has grown exponentially over recent years. The problem is mainly caused by a range of persistent, slowly degrading materials such as plastics, microplastics, metals and glass, which can circulate across great distances. In the Orkney Islands marine region and around the world, by far the most commonly found litter at sea and washed ashore is plastic,^{70, 71} which forms around 75% of all marine debris globally⁷² (see Map 11).
- 2.87 Litter poses a threat to a wide range of wildlife in the form of ingestion, entanglement and smothering, which already results in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of seabirds and marine mammals globally each year,⁷³ including species in Orkney⁷⁴. Marine debris can also pose a navigational hazard, is unsightly, and is an economic burden on affected communities. Most plastic debris found in the ocean enters via land-based sources, with tributaries and burns transporting litter from further inland to the marine environment⁷⁵. However, in Orkney, there is no clear evidence on the sources of marine litter.
- 2.88 Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government published an updated Marine Litter Strategy in 2022⁷⁶ as part of its overall approach to marine planning

⁷⁰ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020.
<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

⁷¹ Marine litter policy. Scottish Government.
<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/marine/marine-environment/litter>

⁷² Marine Debris: Understanding, Preventing and Mitigating the Significant Adverse Impacts on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity. Technical Series No.83. Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
<https://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-83-en.pdf>

⁷³ Factsheet: Marine pollution. United Nations Ocean Conference. 2017.
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Ocean_Factsheet_Pollution.pdf

⁷⁴ Plastic particles in fulmar stomachs in the North Sea. OSPAR Intermediate Assessment. 2017.
<https://oap.ospar.org/en/ospar-assessments/intermediate-assessment-2017/pressures-human-activities/marine-litter/plastic-particles-fulmar-stomachs-north-sea/>

⁷⁵ "Where does the plastic in our oceans come from?" Our World in Data. 2021.
<https://ourworldindata.org/ocean-plastics>

⁷⁶ A Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland Marine Scotland.
<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2022/09/marine-litter-strategy-scotland-2/documents/marine-scotland-marine-litter-strategy-scotland/marine-scotland-marine-litter-strategy-scotland/govscot%3Adocument/marine-scotland-marine-litter-strategy-scotland.pdf>



and management. The National Litter and Flytipping Strategy sets out a refreshed approach to tackling litter and flytipping in order to protect and enhance Scotland's environment⁷⁷. In support of the Scottish Government's commitment to reduce marine litter, General Policy 12 aims to put in place measures to avoid and minimise the risk of development and activities contributing to marine litter in the Orkney Islands marine region. Implementing waste management measures and the waste reduction hierarchy⁷⁸ will help to generate less waste and ensure that waste is disposed of in ways that do not harm the marine environment. Public authorities are also encouraged to proactively engage in local litter reduction and monitoring schemes, including appropriate involvement in community organised events such as Orkney's 'Bag the Bruck'. The Orkney Harbour Authority participate in the Fishing For Litter scheme, which provides free waste disposal facilities for fishers to dispose of litter collected during fishing⁷⁹.

- 2.89 Marine waste refers to waste streams generated from marine development and activities, which require licensed disposal.
- 2.90 Many wider initiatives to address marine litter and waste in Orkney are being addressed through other measures, strategies and management plans, and users of this Plan should consider these accordingly. These include but are not limited to:
- The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL)⁸⁰, which strictly prohibits the discharge of all litter into the sea.
 - The Port Waste Management Plan operated by Orkney Islands Council Marine Services⁸¹, which ensures that all ship-generated waste and cargo residue is controlled at all of the authority's piers and harbours.

⁷⁷ National Litter and Flytipping Strategy. Scottish Government 2023.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-litter-flytipping-strategy/>

⁷⁸ Applying the waste hierarchy: guidance. Scottish Government. 2017.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-applying-waste-hierarchy/pages/3/>

⁷⁹ Orkney Islands Marine Environment Unit. Fishing for Litter.

<https://orknymeui.co.uk/insights/fishing-for-litter>

⁸⁰ International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL). International Maritime Organisation 1973.

[https://www.imo.org/en/about/conventions/pages/international-convention-for-the-prevention-of-pollution-from-ships-\(marpol\).aspx](https://www.imo.org/en/about/conventions/pages/international-convention-for-the-prevention-of-pollution-from-ships-(marpol).aspx)

⁸¹ Port Waste Management Plan. Orkney Island Council Marine Services. 2024.

<https://www.orkneyharbours.com/documents/port-waste-management-2024>



General Policy 12: Marine Litter and Waste

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities that are likely to create a significant risk of contributing to marine litter should include measures to avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate these risks.
- ii. Where appropriate, proposals for development and/or activities should consider including a waste minimisation and management plan that sets out appropriate waste management measures for construction, operation and decommissioning phases, in accordance with the principles of the waste reduction hierarchy.
- iii. Where appropriate, waste generated by development and/or activities should be disposed of through licensed facilities.
- iv. When exercising functions capable of affecting the Orkney Islands marine region, public authorities should take reasonable and proportionate measures to avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate the risk of contributing to coastal and marine litter and, where appropriate, implement the waste reduction hierarchy.

Table 15: General Policy 12 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	6
Indirect contribution to objectives:	2
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 1.17
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 11
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 12
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 1 viii



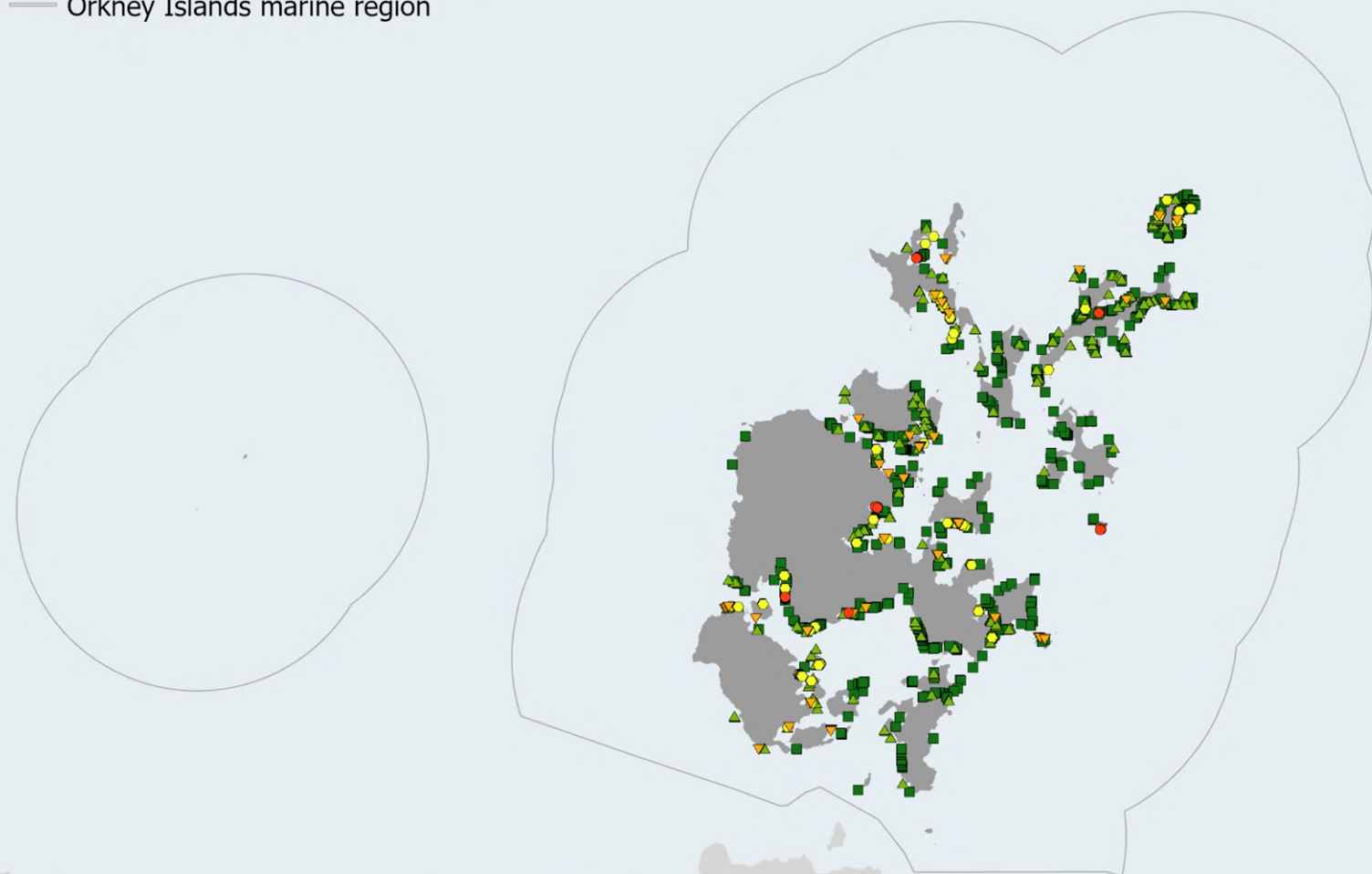
Map 11: SCRAPbook coastal litter survey

Key

Litter Presence

- Low densities; single items or minor accumulations
- ▲ Medium densities; significant accumulations in localised areas
- Appearing widespread with significant accumulations
- ▼ Major accumulations in localised areas
- Major and widespread accumulations

— Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPi. Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)

0 4 8 12 16 Nautical Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers



General Policy 13: Non-native and Invasive Non-native Species

Policy Intent

To minimise the risk posed by non-native and invasive non-native species and associated effects on the marine environment and economy.

Context

- 2.91 Non-native species (NNS) are those that have been intentionally or unintentionally introduced outside their native range as a consequence of human activity. Once established, if these species then threaten biodiversity and/or cause economic damage, they are referred to as 'invasive' non-native species (INNS). Impacts of INNS include, but are not limited to, competition with native species over resources, changes to habitat and/or water quality, and transmission of disease. All these factors can be exacerbated by climate change.
- 2.92 The Great Britain Invasive Non-Native Species Strategy⁸² provides an overarching framework to minimise the risk posed by INNS in Great Britain and reduce their negative impacts. The first principle in tackling this issue is prevention. The Scottish Government's Non-Native Species: Code of Practice⁸³, and the references contained therein, provides guidance on the various control orders and agreements that may be required, including information on pathways for the potential spread of INNS.
- 2.93 Locally, the Ballast Water Management Policy for Scapa Flow (2017)⁸⁴ sets out a management strategy to address the introduction and spread of INNS, which will be instrumental in mitigating the impact of, and adapting to, any non-native species discovery in local marine waters around the key harbour areas.
- 2.94 Pathways for the introduction and spread of INNS include renewable energy and aquaculture development, shipping and marine litter. Good biosecurity practice should consider the risk of planned development and activities

⁸² The Great Britain Invasive Non-native Species Strategy 2030. DEFRA, The Scottish Government, Llywodraeth Cymru. 2015.

<https://www.nonnativespecies.org/about/gb-strategy/the-great-britain-invasive-non-native-species-strategy/>

⁸³ Non-native Species: Code of Practice. Scottish Government. 2012.

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2012/08/non-native-species-code-practice/documents/00398608-pdf/00398608-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00398608.pdf#:~:text=Why%20control%20non-native%20species?%20Non-native%20species%20can:%20%E2%80%A2>

⁸⁴ Ballast Water Management. Orkney Islands Council Harbour Authority.

<https://www.orkneyharbours.com/services/ballast-water-management>



establishing new pathways for the spread of INNS⁸⁵. The Clean Check Dry campaign is broadly applicable for a range of water users as an additional biosecurity measure⁸⁶.

- 2.95 Invasive non-native stoats pose a significant threat to Orkney's native coastal wildlife communities, many of which are already under threat. As stoats are excellent swimmers and can cross open sea to a distance of 3km, they put seabird populations of national importance, such as puffin, Arctic tern and red-throated diver, at risk on currently stoat-free islands. The Orkney Native Wildlife Project⁸⁷ is working to safeguard native wildlife through the eradication of stoats from the islands and will prepare a biosecurity plan to safeguard Orkney's native wildlife into the future.

⁸⁵ Scotland's National Marine Plan. Scottish Government. 2015.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-national-marine-plan/>

⁸⁶ 'Check Clean Dry' campaign. GB Non-Native Species Secretariat.

<https://www.nonnativespecies.org/what-can-i-do/check-clean-dry/>

⁸⁷ Orkney Native Wildlife Project. <https://www.orkneynativewildlife.org.uk/project/stoats-in-orkney>



General Policy 13: Non-native and Invasive Non-native Species

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate that the potential risks of introducing or spreading non-native species (NNS)/invasive non-native species (INNS) have been adequately considered, having regard to the NatureScot Marine Biosecurity Planning Guidance*. A site-specific biosecurity plan may be required.
- ii. Appropriate prevention measures should be put in place when:
 - a. moving, maintaining and cleaning equipment or boats;
 - b. moving and/or introducing fish and shellfish and other farmed species such as seaweed;
 - c. introducing structures suitable for settlement of aquatic NNS/INNS or which facilitate the movement of terrestrial NNS/INNS, including to islands; or
 - d. undertaking habitat enhancement or restoration activities.
- iii. Proposals for development and/or activities in areas where NNS/INNS are known to exist should include necessary measures or a biosecurity plan approved by the consenting authority or regulator that seeks to minimise the risk of spreading the NNS/INNS or identifies ways to eradicate the organisms and prevent their reintroduction. Where appropriate, measures within a biosecurity plan should include surveying and ongoing monitoring in areas where NNS/INNS are known to exist, and any subsequent spread of NNS/INNS should be notified to the Marine Directorate.

* [NatureScot Marine Biosecurity Planning Guidance](#)

Table 16: General Policy 13 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	2
Indirect contribution to objectives:	4
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 5.8
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	GEN 10
National Planning Framework 4	N/A
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life Strategic Priority: Thriving Economy
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Section 13.5



General Policy 14: Amenity, Wellbeing and Quality of Life of Local Communities

Policy Intent

To protect and enhance the amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities.

Context

- 2.96 Sustainable economic development in island communities can deliver many socio-economic benefits improving community wellbeing and quality of life. Orkney is valued by local communities as a unique and special place to live and work. There are many factors that contribute to the quality and enjoyment of a place and the resulting sense of community wellbeing. Studies of marine spatial planning processes⁸⁸ have shown that capturing wider values, including cultural values linked to, for example family and village history, together with the biodiversity qualities of a region, is of vital importance to coastal communities. General Policy 14 aims to ensure that consideration is given to safeguarding the amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities. During the lifetime of this Plan, Orkney Islands Marine Region: Amenity, Wellbeing and Quality of Life Guidance may be adopted to help guide the implementation of this policy.
- 2.97 The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, identifies outcomes for planning including improving the health and wellbeing of people living in Scotland. Building a Wellbeing Economy is now a national policy priority in Scotland⁸⁹ and is core to the National Strategy for Economic Transformation⁹⁰.
- 2.98 General Policy 14 supports a place-based approach to planning, development and community engagement⁹¹. A place-based approach is about understanding the potential of a place and coordinating action to improve outcomes, with community participation at the heart of the process. It is about understanding the issues, interconnections and relationships in a place and

⁸⁸ Bente Sundsvold and Claire W. Armstrong 'Found in translation: identifying ecosystem services through public consultation statements in a marine spatial planning process' (2019) 15:1 *Ecosystems and People* 102.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/26395916.2019.1596982>

⁸⁹ Wellbeing Economy Governments (WEGo). Scottish Government.

<https://www.gov.scot/groups/wellbeing-economy-governments-wego/>

⁹⁰ Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation. Scottish Government. 2022.

<https://www.gov.scot/news/scotlands-national-strategy-for-economic-transformation/>

⁹¹ Our Place. Scottish Government. <https://www.ourplace.scot/>



coordinating action and investment to improve the quality of life for that community.

- 2.99 Amenity, in planning terms, refers to the positive elements that contribute to the overall character and/or enjoyment of an area by residents, visitors and other users.
- 2.100 Identifying the factors that contribute to the amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities is essential, but challenging, to address in marine planning policy and decision making, particularly doing so in a way that can integrate place-based perspectives linked to local knowledge⁹². It is therefore important to engage effectively with local communities when preparing proposals for development and activities that could have significant effects, both beneficial and adverse, on their amenity, wellbeing and quality of life. This engagement can help to identify relevant factors that contribute towards the amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities, and how these factors can be affected by development or activity proposals.
- 2.101 Marine and coastal recreation can contribute not only to human health and wellbeing, but also significantly to the economy⁹³. Thus, the quality of the marine environment and its natural capital links directly to the socio-economic benefits provided to society⁹⁴.

⁹² Our Place. Scottish Government. <https://www.ourplace.scot/>

⁹³ Emily Stebbings, Eleni Papathanasopoulou, Tara Hooper, Melanie C. Austen, Xiaoyu Yan, 'The marine economy of the United Kingdom' (2020) 116 *Marine Policy* 103905.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X19307390>

⁹⁴ Emily Stebbings, Eleni Papathanasopoulou, Tara Hooper, Melanie C. Austen, Xiaoyu Yan, 'The marine economy of the United Kingdom' (2020) 116 *Marine Policy* 103905.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X19307390>



General Policy 14: Amenity, Wellbeing and Quality of Life of Local Communities

General Policy 14a: Engaging local communities

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate that local community stakeholders have been appropriately engaged, and listened to, at an early stage in the development process when assessing impacts on the amenity, well-being and quality of life of local communities and, where appropriate, opportunities for enhancement measures.
- ii. Co-creation, with local community stakeholders, of appropriate mitigation to address impacts on amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities is encouraged, and where appropriate, measures to enhance the wellbeing and quality of life of local communities are encouraged.

General Policy 14b: Delivering benefits for places and local communities

Proposals for development and/or activities should:

- i. maximise opportunities to deliver amenity, wellbeing and quality of life benefits for local communities, where possible.
- ii. demonstrate that regard has been given to the Six Qualities of Successful Places*, where applicable.

General Policy 14c: Amenity

Proposals for development and/or activities should:

- i. avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate, significant adverse effects on amenity due to factors including, but not limited to, waste, noise, air quality, light and odour; and
- ii. be designed to a high standard and quality, so that the nature and scale of the development and/or activities contribute positively to the character and sense of place of the area in which they are proposed to be located.

General Policy 14d: Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities guidance

Proposals for development and/or activities should have regard to the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Amenity, Wellbeing and Quality of Life Guidance, where available.

*[National Planning Framework 4: Annex D – Six Qualities of Successful Places](#)



Table 17: General Policy 14 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	5, 6 and, 10
Indirect contribution to objectives:	2 and, 4
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 7
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Policy Rec & Tourism 5
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 14
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 12A



Blank Page



Section 3: Sector Policies

Introduction

- 3.1 Sector policies are relevant to the determination of authorisation or enforcement decisions for a particular type of development or activity, for example fish farming or renewable energy generation. The sector policies provide a policy framework to assist public authorities, including regulators, decision makers and planners, to make decisions on sustainable development and activities that take place within, or that affect, the Orkney Islands marine region. Having a suite of sector policies helps ensure that the Plan contributes to government priorities and local sustainable development objectives.
- 3.2 As stated in General Policy 1, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, activities and use of the marine environment, when it is consistent with the policies and objectives of this Plan. This approach aligns with Scotland's National Marine Plan. It should also help to deliver sustainable economic development by providing greater certainty to businesses and investors utilising marine space and resources in the Orkney Islands marine region.
- 3.3 The sector policies identify, by economic sector, the relevant environmental, social and economic factors that should be considered by decision makers and applicants. Development and/or activity proposals should give consideration to their potential impacts on existing marine users, developments and activities. Where relevant, the sector policies identify how such potential impacts should be addressed e.g. Sector Policy 1: *Commercial fishing* identifies the requirements for assessing impacts from other development and/or activity types on commercial fishing opportunities. Some development types, for example an offshore windfarm, will have to consider several sector policies: the renewable energy, cables, harbours and commercial fisheries policies, for example. Therefore, proposals for development and/or activities should have regard to all the relevant sector policies.
- 3.4 The sector policies can help to guide applicants preparing proposals for development and activities.
- 3.5 Section 1 provides relevant information on how to use the Plan's policy framework.
- 3.6 General policies are contained in Section 2 of the Plan.

Policy structure

- 3.7 Each policy has an introductory section detailing the intent and context for the policy, including key information about the economic sector that is particularly relevant to Orkney. The policy is then presented in a clearly defined policy box. The associated text for each policy includes supporting information that should be taken into account in relevant decision making.
- 3.8 Each policy is supported by an information box that outlines:
- the contribution of the policy to the Plan objectives;
 - relevant information in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment; and
 - the policy's alignment with other key marine and land-use plans.
- 3.9 Where appropriate, the Plan policies are supported by spatial information in map form or reference to other relevant spatial information (see Section 1 for details on the use of spatial information and data).
- 3.10 Appendix 1, which is not exhaustive, identifies relevant licence and consent regimes administered by public authorities to manage development and activities in the Orkney Islands marine region. These decision-making regimes are the primary mechanism for implementing the Plan's objectives and policies.
- 3.11 A summary of the wider relevant legislation, policies and guidance that should be considered alongside this Plan is provided in Appendix 2, which is not exhaustive.



Sector Policy 1: Commercial Fishing

Policy Intent

To support and enable a thriving and sustainable commercial fishing sector.

Context

- 3.12 Commercial fishing makes a significant contribution towards national food security and to the economy of Orkney. It is an important source of income, particularly in the more remote and fragile island communities⁹⁵. Additionally, fishing is culturally and historically significant to Orkney communities and is closely tied to community identity and quality of life.
- 3.13 In the Orkney Islands marine region, commercial fishing is predominately undertaken by inshore creel boats under 10 metres, fishing mainly brown crab. Dive boats, dredgers and jiggers also form part of the inshore fishing fleet⁹⁶. Lobster, velvet and green crab, scallop, whelk and periwinkle are also important commercial shellfish species. Shoreside seafood processing makes a significant contribution to the Orkney economy.
- 3.14 The seas around Orkney support significant populations of commercially important species of finfish, with fishing targeting both demersal and pelagic stocks in the waters adjacent to Orkney. These fisheries rely on a healthy marine environment for productive nursery and spawning grounds. There is vessel monitoring system (VMS) and fishing intensity spatial data on National Marine Plan interactive, which shows the key areas used by vessels over 12 metres.
- 3.15 Scotland's Fisheries Management Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's approach to manage sea fisheries in Scotland in partnership with our stakeholders through 'co-management' and in a way that balances environmental, social, and economic interests⁹⁷. An Inshore Fisheries Management Improvement (IFMI) Programme of work is also underway to develop more agile and responsive inshore fisheries management in

⁹⁵ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Scotland's fisheries management strategy 2020 to 2030: delivery plan update 2025. Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-fisheries-management-strategy-2020-2030-delivery-plan-update-2025/>

Scotland. A call for evidence for the new framework was recently published and consultation is planned for Q1 2026⁹⁸.

- 3.16 The Orkney Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (ORIFG) aims to improve the management of inshore fisheries, in the Orkney territorial waters (0–12 nautical mile zone) and to give commercial inshore fishermen a strong voice in wider marine management. The Scottish Government, through its Marine Directorate, is responsible for fisheries management within the Orkney Islands marine region. Fisheries Management Plans are being prepared as required under the Fisheries Act 2020 and the Joint Fisheries Statement⁹⁹. The National Marine Plan states that Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (RIFGs) should work with all local stakeholders, including Marine Planning Partnerships, to agree joint fisheries management measures.
- 3.17 RIFGs currently have no powers to implement statutory fisheries management measures, though they are encouraged to implement voluntary measures that stem from their management plans. However, some measures require implementation by the Scottish Government through legislation.
- 3.18 The Orkney Fisheries Association (OFA) represents local members from inshore fishing vessels in the whitefish, nephrops, scallop and creel sectors, as well as processors and wholesalers.
- 3.19 Fishing has widespread impacts on the marine environment, affecting marine productivity and biodiversity. The degree of impact depends on the amount of fishing taking place, the efficiency and selectivity of gear, the approach taken to targeting species, and the nature and sensitivity of species and habitats affected. The degree of impact is also related to natural ecosystem dynamics. Commercial fisheries exert pressures on target and non-target fish populations, both directly through fishery removals, and indirectly by removing predators, prey, competitors and essential habitats¹⁰⁰.
- 3.20 Inshore commercial fishing in Orkney is predominately carried out from small locally owned vessels providing direct income for remote and economically fragile island communities. When assessing proposals for development and/or activities, regard should be given to the potential socio-economic impacts on the livelihoods of fishermen and associated fragile island communities (e.g. potential adverse effects on local services and exacerbating risks of depopulation).

⁹⁸ Inshore Fisheries Management Improvement: call for evidence analysis report. 2025. Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/inshore-fisheries-management-improvement-ifmi-call-evidence-analysis-report/>

⁹⁹ Sea Fisheries – Fisheries Management Plans. Scottish Government. 2020. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/sea-fisheries/fisheries-management-plans/>

¹⁰⁰ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>



- 3.21 Given its widespread nature, commercial fishing has the potential to interact significantly with a number of other economic sectors. Fishing activity in Orkney is year-round but follows seasonal trends, and given the dynamic and mobile nature of many fisheries, it is often very difficult to accurately predict precisely where activity will take place from year to year. Fishers will let grounds rest and rely on unfished nursery areas for a healthy fishery.
- 3.22 It can be beneficial when proposers of marine development or activities consult at an early stage with the ORIFG, OFA and affected fishers in the site-selection, design and planning process for their proposals. This early engagement can help to avoid, minimise and/or mitigate significant adverse impacts on commercial fishing opportunities, and impacts on nursery, spawning and feeding areas for commercially fished species.



Sector Policy 1: Commercial Fishing

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts:
 - a. on commercial fishing opportunities, taking into account seasonality and the year-round operation of the affected fishery;
 - b. on nursery, spawning and feeding areas for commercially fished species, and associated habitats and species;
 - c. due to displacement, including related impacts on the wider marine environment, on fish stocks and the use of fuel by fishing vessels;
 - d. on safe access to marine space for fishing vessels, including the seabed, water column and sea surface, and navigational access to and from landfall areas, e.g. ports, harbours or slipways; and
 - e. on the social and economic importance of fishing, in particular to fragile island communities.
- ii. Proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate appropriate consideration of the cultural importance of fishing in the area, and any impacts the proposal may have on this.
- iii. Orkney Regional Inshore Fisheries Group, Orkney Fisheries Association and/or fishers that use an area that could be affected by a proposed development and/or activity should be consulted at an early stage in the site-selection, design and planning process.



Table 18: Sector Policy 1 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	9
Indirect contribution to objectives:	5 and, 10
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 6.2
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Chapter 6
National Planning Framework 4	N/A
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Sustainable Communities Strategic Priority: Thriving Economy Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	N/A



Sector Policy 2: Aquaculture

Policy Intent

To support and enable a thriving and sustainable aquaculture sector.

Context

Finfish and shellfish farming

- 3.23 Finfish and shellfish farming make an important contribution towards food production and food security in Scotland and the UK. The Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture describes the Scottish Government's long-term aspirations to 2045 for the finfish, shellfish and seaweed farming sectors, and the wider aquaculture supply chain¹⁰¹.
- 3.24 Salmon farming has been established in Orkney for many years, providing significant employment and wider socio-economic benefits to island communities¹⁰². Fish farming jobs and the economic value added to local supply chains support the sustainability of island communities, particularly in more remote and economically fragile locations.
- 3.25 Finfish and shellfish farming development and/or activities can have significant impacts on the marine environment; associated environmental pressures are identified in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment¹⁰³. It is therefore important that these potential impacts and risks are carefully managed to safeguard the marine environment in Orkney. The degree of environmental impact depends on the type, scale, location and mitigation associated with a specific fish farming development or activity.
- 3.26 Marine fish farming, out to 12 nautical miles, requires planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 'the 1997 Act'. Fish farming is defined in the 1997 Act, for purposes of development, as 'the breeding, rearing or keeping of fish or shellfish (which includes any kind of sea urchin crustacean or mollusc)'. Marine fish farms may also require a marine licence (for equipment and moorings), an environmental licence (for farm discharges into the water environment), authorisation to operate as an

¹⁰¹ Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/vision-sustainable-aquaculture/>

¹⁰² Scottish fish farm production surveys. <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-fish-farm-production-surveys/>

¹⁰³ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>



Aquaculture Production Business, and a seabed lease from Crown Estate Scotland (CES).

- 3.27 There has been significant expansion of salmon farming development and activities in Orkney over recent decades, including new fish farms and increases in equipment size and production, and/or biomass, at existing fish farm sites (see Maps 12–13). This has increased the cumulative impacts on the marine environment and other marine users from these developments and activities. It is therefore important that the location, scale, siting and design of fish farm development and activities be appropriately managed to safeguard the marine environment and the interests of other marine users, with due consideration to cumulative impacts.
- 3.28 Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance¹⁰⁴ should inform decision making on proposals for finfish farming development in Orkney. The guidance identifies the significance of environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure features, and the potential sensitivity of these features, or receptors, to finfish farming development and activities.
- 3.29 Scapa Flow Aquaculture Water Quality Impact Modelling Assessment – Development Management Guidance (2018)¹⁰⁵ provides a predictive far-field modelling assessment of current and proposed finfish fish farms in Scapa Flow. The assessment approach provides a better understanding of the water quality impacts of nutrient dispersion arising from existing and planned fish farms, including cumulative impacts.
- 3.30 The salmon farming industry is moving towards larger cages, higher biomass sites, and the siting of fish farms in higher energy locations to benefit from improved waste dispersal and to reduce adverse interactions with other marine users. It is anticipated that current technical innovation in the sector will enable finfish farm development in locations further offshore. These innovations have the potential to reduce future development pressure in more sensitive near-shore locations. There is also potential for the development of multitrophic, semi-closed and closed-containment aquaculture.
- 3.31 There are marine shellfish farming sites for Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*) cultivation in the Orkney Islands marine region.

¹⁰⁴ Orkney Islands marine region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/orkney-islands-marine-region-finish-farming-spatial-guidance>

¹⁰⁵ Scapa Flow Aquaculture Water Quality Impact Modelling Assessment - Development Management Guidance. Intertek and Orkney Islands Council. 2018.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/development-planning-land/development-management-guidance/aquaculture-water-quality-impact-modelling-assessment/>



- 3.32 During the lifetime of this Plan, Orkney Islands Marine Region: Shellfish Farming Spatial Guidance may be adopted to help guide the sustainable development of the sector in Orkney.

Seaweed cultivation

- 3.33 Seaweed cultivation is not part of marine fish farming under the land-use planning system; the construction of a seaweed farm is a marine licensable activity requiring a marine licence. Proposals for a seaweed farm should align with the Marine Directorate Seaweed Cultivation Policy Statement 2017¹⁰⁶. More detail on the various regulatory requirements and legislation are outlined in information available from the Seaweed Review Steering Group¹⁰⁷. Appendix 6 provides information on wild seaweed harvesting.
- 3.34 Integrated sites (e.g. shellfish and seaweed) are supported by the Seaweed Cultivation Policy Statement 2017 and will require both planning permission and a marine licence to be obtained independently for each development or activity.
- 3.35 During the lifetime of this Plan, Orkney Islands Marine Region: Seaweed Cultivation Spatial Guidance may be adopted to help guide the sustainable development of the sector in Orkney.

¹⁰⁶ Seaweed cultivation policy statement. Scottish Government. 2017.
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/seaweed-cultivation-policy-statement-2017/>

¹⁰⁷ Seaweed Review Steering Group. Scottish Government.
<https://www.gov.scot/groups/seaweed-review-steering-group/>



Sector Policy 2: Aquaculture

Sector Policy 2a: Safeguarding the operation of active aquaculture sites

Proposals for development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on the operation of active aquaculture sites.

Sector Policy 2b: Finfish and shellfish farming

- i. Proposals for finfish and shellfish farming development and/or activities should have regard to:
 - a. The Orkney Local Development Plan;
 - b. The National Marine Plan;
 - c. The National Planning Framework; and
 - d. any Marine Directorate or SEPA licensing requirements and guidance.
- ii. Proposals for finfish and shellfish farming development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on:
 - a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity;
 - b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including the national status of Priority Marine Features;
 - c. seal haul-out sites;
 - d. wild salmonid fish populations due to sea lice and/or escapes (applies to finfish farming only);
 - e. water quality, biological carrying capacity and the benthic environment;
 - f. historic environment assets;
 - g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, port and harbour infrastructure/operations, active aquaculture sites, marine cable routes and pipelines, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities; and
 - h. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light, access, vibration, odour and litter impacts.



- iii. Proposals for finfish and shellfish development and/or activities should ensure appropriate measures are included to prevent the introduction and spread of non-native species.
- iv. New finfish farms should not bridge Disease Management Areas, although boundaries may be revised by the Marine Directorate to take account of any changes in fish farm location, subject to the continued management of risk.
- v. Appropriate planning conditions and, where necessary, a financial bond or a letter of credit will be concluded to ensure that decommissioning and site restoration arrangements will be implemented following cessation of the operation.
- vi. Proposals for finfish farming development should have regard to the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance.
- vii. Proposals for shellfish farming development should have regard to the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Shellfish Farming Spatial Guidance, where available.

Sector Policy 2c: Seaweed cultivation

- i. Proposals for seaweed cultivation development and/or activities should demonstrate that:
 - a. regard has been given to the most up-to-date Scottish Government Seaweed Cultivation Policy Statement;
 - b. only seaweed species native to Orkney will be grown;
 - c. appropriate measures are included to prevent the introduction and spread of non-native species;
 - d. where seaweed is grown for human consumption, cultivators have sited farms at an appropriate distance from sewage outfalls and other potential sources of pollution; and
 - e. there will be no artificial enrichment of the marine environment to aid production.



- ii. Proposals for seaweed cultivation development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on:
 - a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity;
 - b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including the national status of Priority Marine Features;
 - c. seal haul-out sites;
 - d. water quality and the benthic environment;
 - e. historic environment assets;
 - f. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, port and harbour infrastructure/operations, active aquaculture sites, marine cable routes and pipelines, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities; and
 - g. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light, access, vibration, odour and litter impacts.
- iii. Proposals for seaweed cultivation development and/or activities should have regard to the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Seaweed Cultivation Spatial Guidance, where available.



Table 19: Sector Policy 2 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

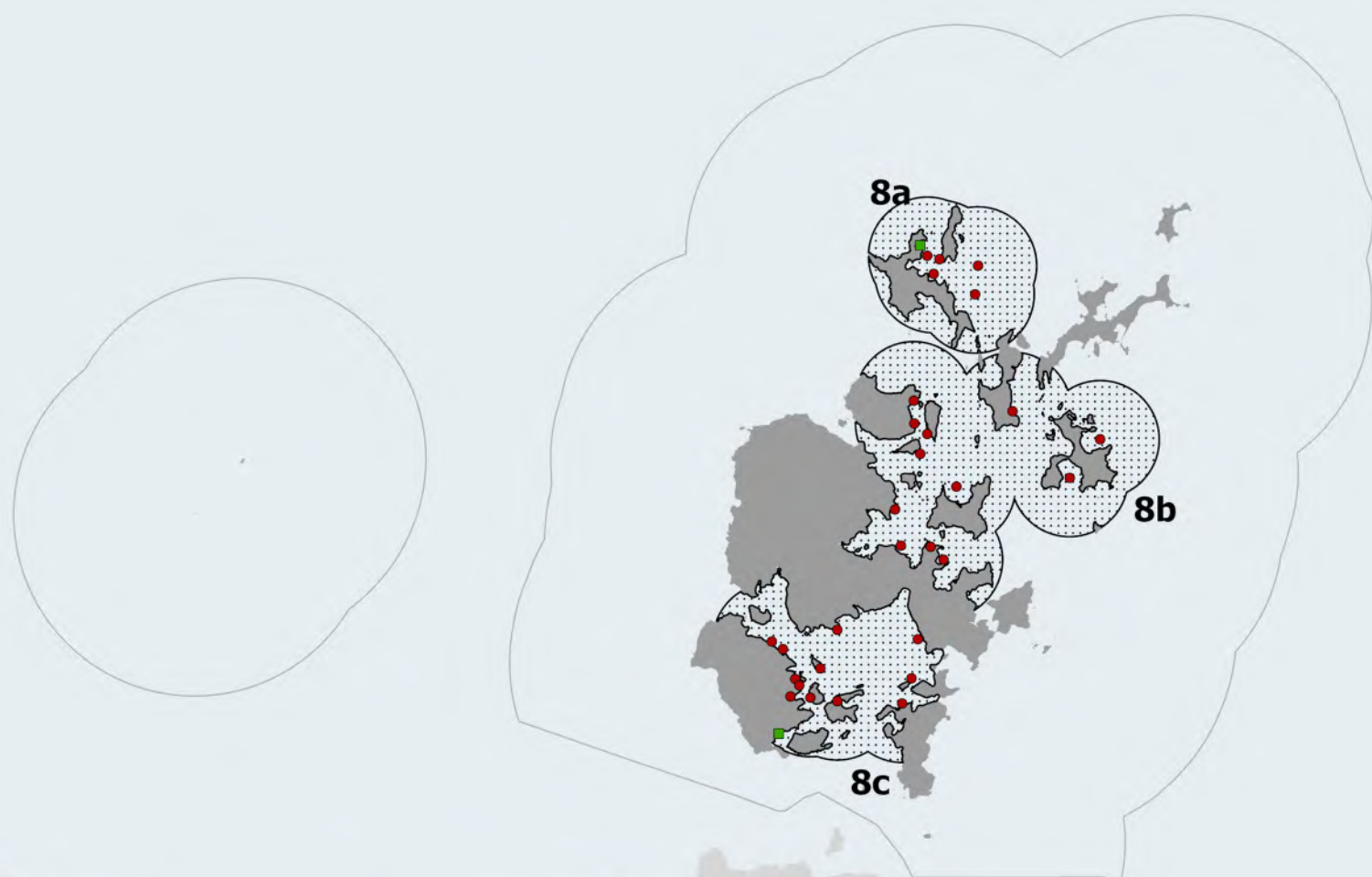
Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	1, 7, 8 and, 9
Indirect contribution to objectives:	2
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 6.3
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Chapter 7
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 32
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Sustainable Communities Strategic Priority: Thriving Economy Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 12D, Aquaculture Supplementary Guidance



Map 12: Active aquaculture sites and disease management areas

Key

- Finfish aquaculture site
- Shellfish aquaculture site
- ▨ Disease management areas
- Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. For further information on aquaculture within Orkney's region, developers are advised to refer to www.aquaculture.scotland.gov.uk and NMPI. Disease Management Areas are available on NMPI.

To view this data on NMPI, [click here](#)

0 4 8 12 16 Nautical Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers

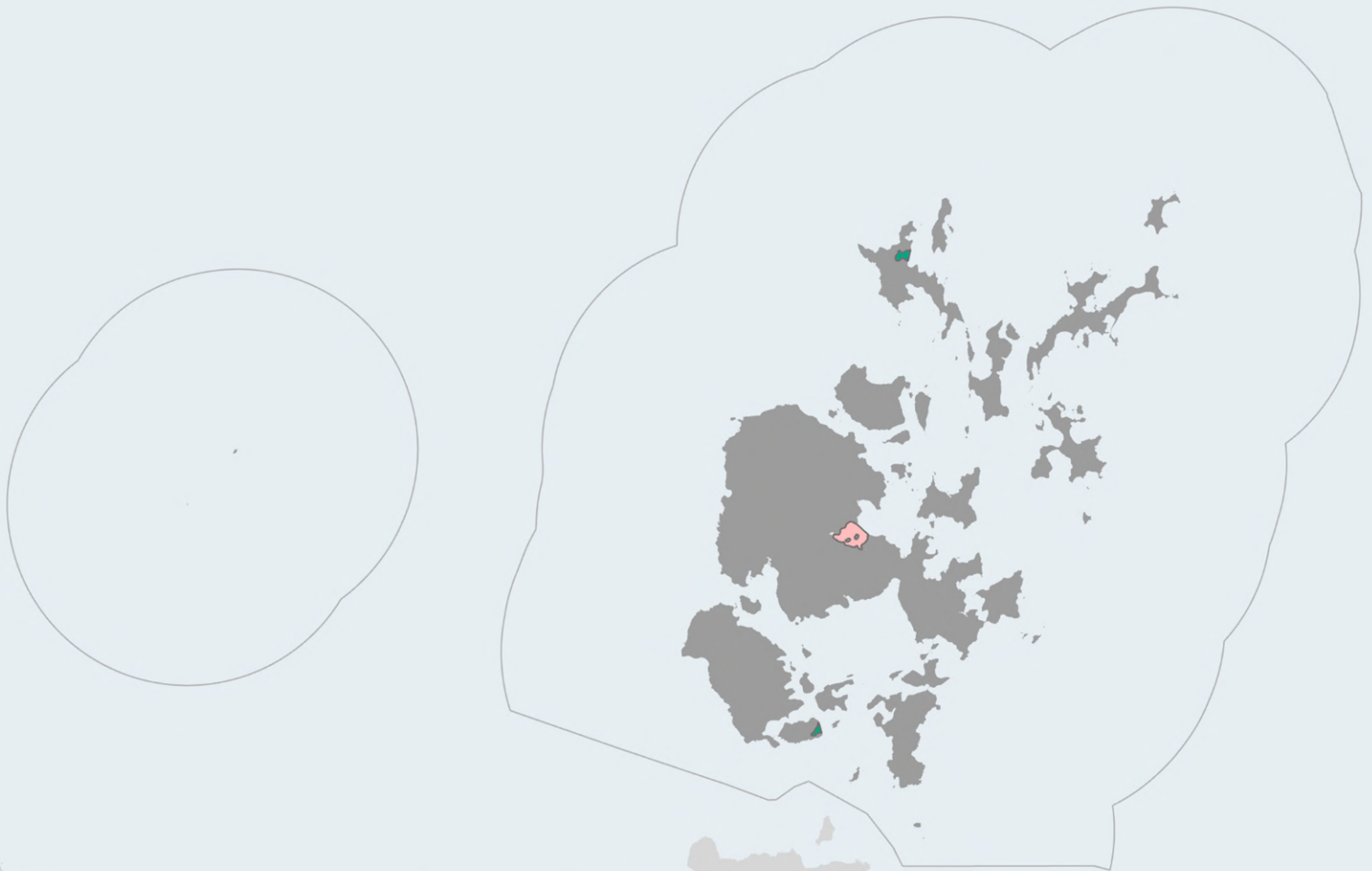


Contains information from Marine Scotland licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. Contains OS Data © Crown copyright and database right (2025). Licence Number 100021621. Not to be used for navigation.

Map 13: Aquaculture water environment designations

Key

-  Carrying capacity - Category 3 areas
-  Shellfish water protected areas
-  Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPi. Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)

0 4 8 12 16 Nautical Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers



Sector Policy 3: Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries

Policy Intent

To support and enable a thriving and sustainable shipping, ports, harbours and ferries sector.

Context

- 3.36 Orkney's piers and harbours provide vital infrastructure for local communities and the economy. They support economic sectors and activities including oil and gas, ship-to-ship transfer, cruise tourism, renewable energy, ferry services, marine transportation, commercial fishing, aquaculture and marine recreation.
- 3.37 Port and harbour development and/or activities and shipping can have significant impacts on the marine environment; associated environmental pressures are identified in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment¹⁰⁸. It is therefore important that these potential impacts and risks be carefully managed to safeguard the marine environment in Orkney. The degree of environmental impact depends on the type, scale, location and mitigation associated with a specific harbour development or activity.
- 3.38 Port and harbour developments can enable transformative social and economic benefits for island communities, creating jobs, supporting local skills development and local supply chains. Large scale developments can also have significant onshore impacts on adjacent island communities including in relation to roads, housing markets, infrastructure, and community services and facilities. It is therefore important that these factors are assessed and appropriately mitigated, and social, economic and environmental benefits for local communities are maximised.
- 3.39 The Orkney County Council Act 1974 enables Orkney Islands Council to exercise jurisdiction as a Statutory Harbour Authority and defines the areas in which the authority is empowered. These are Scapa Flow and its approaches, Wide Firth, and Shapinsay Sound, as well as Stromness, Flotta Oil Terminal and Kirkwall. The Orkney Islands Council Order Confirmation Act 1978 and the Orkney Islands Council Harbour Revision Order 1989 extended jurisdiction to include 12 additional piers and harbours in the North Isles.
- 3.40 There are currently 29 piers and harbours under the jurisdiction of Orkney Harbour Authority. Orkney harbours include many components that contribute

¹⁰⁸ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>



to national strategic significance, including the vast 324.5 km² sheltered natural harbour of Scapa Flow (see Maps 14–17). Commercial ports, and associated harbour infrastructure, are located at the Hatston Terminal, Kirkwall Harbour, Lyness, Stromness Harbour/Copland's Dock, Scapa Pier, St Margaret's Hope and the Flotta Oil Terminal. St Margaret's Hope is a Trust Port providing harbour facilities for ferry transport, inshore fishing and aquaculture.

- 3.41 Scapa Flow is one of the principal locations in Europe for ship-to-ship (STS) operations for the transfer of crude and fuel oils. There are 15 designated anchor berths in Scapa Flow, including four STS berths.
- 3.42 National Transport Strategy 2 sets out a vision for Scotland's transport system including that the Scottish Government will continue to ensure that this transport system works for island communities and delivers island connectivity, recognising the importance of ferry and air services to overall journeys¹⁰⁹. Orkney communities rely on lifeline passenger and freight ferry services between Scrabster and Stromness, and Aberdeen, Kirkwall and Lerwick. A passenger and freight service operates from St Margaret's Hope to Gill's Bay in Caithness. Orkney Ferries operates a fleet of inter-isle ferries connecting the Outer-North, Inner-North and South Isles to Orkney's Mainland. In the summer months, a tourist ferry also operates from Westray to Papa Westray.
- 3.43 The Orkney Harbours Masterplan: Phase 1 (2020)¹¹⁰ outlines the indicative growth aspirations for ports and harbours operated by the Orkney Harbour Authority and has been adopted by Orkney Islands Council as Planning Policy Advice. This masterplan identifies development proposals for new pier infrastructure at Hatston and a new deep water quay facility at Deepdale, Scapa Flow, identified in Map 14, which are national developments identified in NPF4.
- 3.44 The European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet)¹¹¹ is a network of organisations supported by the EU's integrated maritime policy. These organisations work together to observe the sea, process the data according to international standards and make that information freely available as interoperable data layers and data products, such as up-to-date shipping density information.

¹⁰⁹ National Transport Strategy 2. Transport Scotland. 2020.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-2/>

¹¹⁰ Orkney Harbours Masterplan Phase 1. Orkney Islands Council Harbour Authority. 2020.

<https://www.orkneyharbours.com/documents/orkney-harbours-masterplan-phase-1>

¹¹¹ The European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet).

https://emodnet.ec.europa.eu/en/about_emodnet



Sector Policy 3: Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries

Sector Policy 3a: Safeguarding navigation, harbour infrastructure and operations

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities should avoid and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on:
 - a. navigational safety;
 - b. existing, or planned (i.e. routes associated with developments currently within the statutory consenting system), shipping and/or ferry routes*;
 - c. Harbour Area operations;
 - d. maritime access to and use of pier and harbour infrastructure, including marinas;
 - e. harbours of refuge;
 - f. designated ship-to-ship anchorages;
 - g. anchor berths and other anchorages, as identified on the UK Hydrographic Office Charts, including the associated 1500m sensitive areas for safe vessel manoeuvring; and
 - h. the Flotta Terminal Safeguarded Area.

*See [European Marine Observation and Data Network \(EMODnet\) \(europa.eu\)](https://www.europa.eu/europa/en/programmes/european-marine-observation-and-data-network/index_en.htm)
- ii. The assessment of potential impacts on factors identified in (i) above should take into account vessel movements and harbour-related operations in all weather and tidal conditions.
- iii. Development and/or activities that would have significant adverse effects on factors identified in (i) above, but which cannot be avoided or appropriately mitigated, should not be permitted.
- iv. Proposals for development and/or activities should avoid, or appropriately mitigate, significant adverse impacts on the efficient use of shipping and/or ferry routes, including consideration of impacts on fuel costs, emissions, journey duration and frequency.
- v. Proposals for development and/or activities should avoid, or appropriately mitigate, significant adverse impacts due to displacement of shipping and/or ferry traffic on other marine users and/or the environment.



Sector Policy 3b: Commercial ports and national developments

Marine development and/or activities should not be permitted where they would restrict access to, or future expansion of, commercial ports or existing or proposed ports and harbours that are identified as national developments in the National Planning Framework.

Sector Policy 3c: Scapa Flow north and east safeguarded area

The north and east coast of Scapa Flow, from Stromness to St Mary's, within an area 1,500m from the shore, is a strategically important area for potential future harbour development and/or activities in the longer term. The Orkney Harbour Authority should be consulted on proposed development and/or activities within this area to enable compatibility with current and future harbour development, activities and/or operations.

Sector Policy 3d: Port and harbour development and/or activities

- i. Proposals for port and harbour development and/or activities should have regard to:
 - a. The Orkney Local Development Plan;
 - b. The National Marine Plan; and
 - c. The National Planning Framework.
- ii. Proposals for port and harbour development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on:
 - a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity;
 - b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including the national status of Priority Marine Features;
 - c. seal haul-out sites;
 - d. water quality and the benthic environment;
 - e. historic environment assets;
 - f. coastal processes including those caused by erosion, flooding and wider coastal change;
 - g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, port and harbour infrastructure/operations, marine cable routes and pipelines, active aquaculture sites, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities; and
 - h. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light,



- iii. Any dredged material associated with port, harbour or shipping development and/or activities should, where appropriate, be reused for coastal protection, landscape, recreation, and/or ecological enhancement, or where this is not appropriate, such dredge material should be deposited in an appropriate dredge spoil deposit site(s).
- iv. Climate change related risks and impacts, including those associated with sea level rise projections, should be taken into account in the design of port and harbour development and/or activities, to ensure that they remain viable and resilient to a changing climate over their lifetime.

Table 20: Sector Policy 3 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

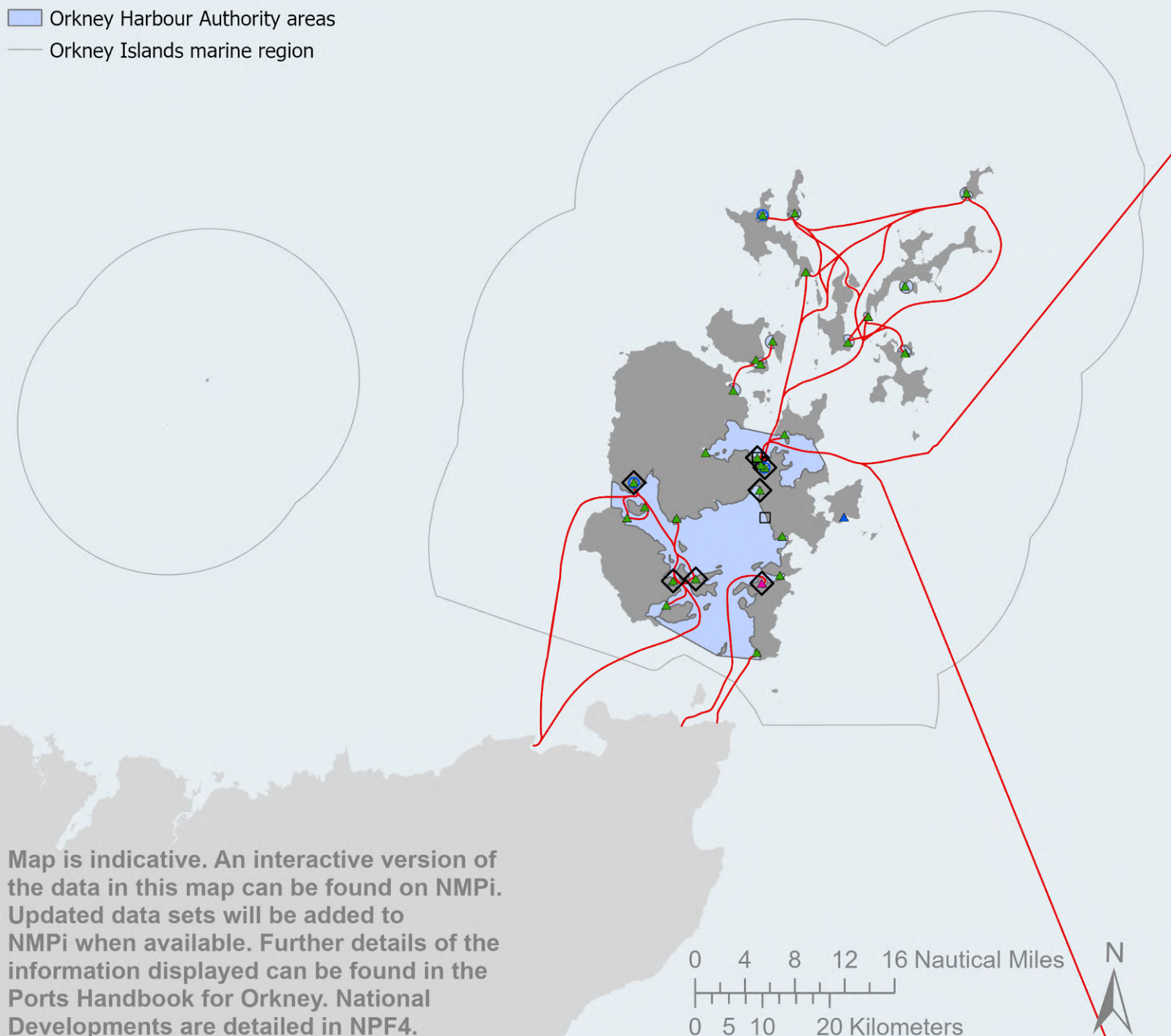
Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	1, 8 and, 9
Indirect contribution to objectives:	6
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 6.4
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Chapter 13
National Planning Framework 4	Annex B
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Sustainable Communities Strategic Priority: Thriving Economy Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policies 7b ii & 12E



Map 14: Harbour areas, harbour infrastructure and ferry routes

Key

- ▲ Geo Slipway, Deerness
- ▲ Orkney Harbour Authority Piers & Harbours
- ▲ St Margaret's Hope Pier and Harbour Infrastructure
- ◊ Commercial Ports
- National developments
- Marinas
- Indicative Ferry Routes
- St Margaret's Hope pier jurisdiction
- Orkney Harbour Authority areas
- Orkney Islands marine region

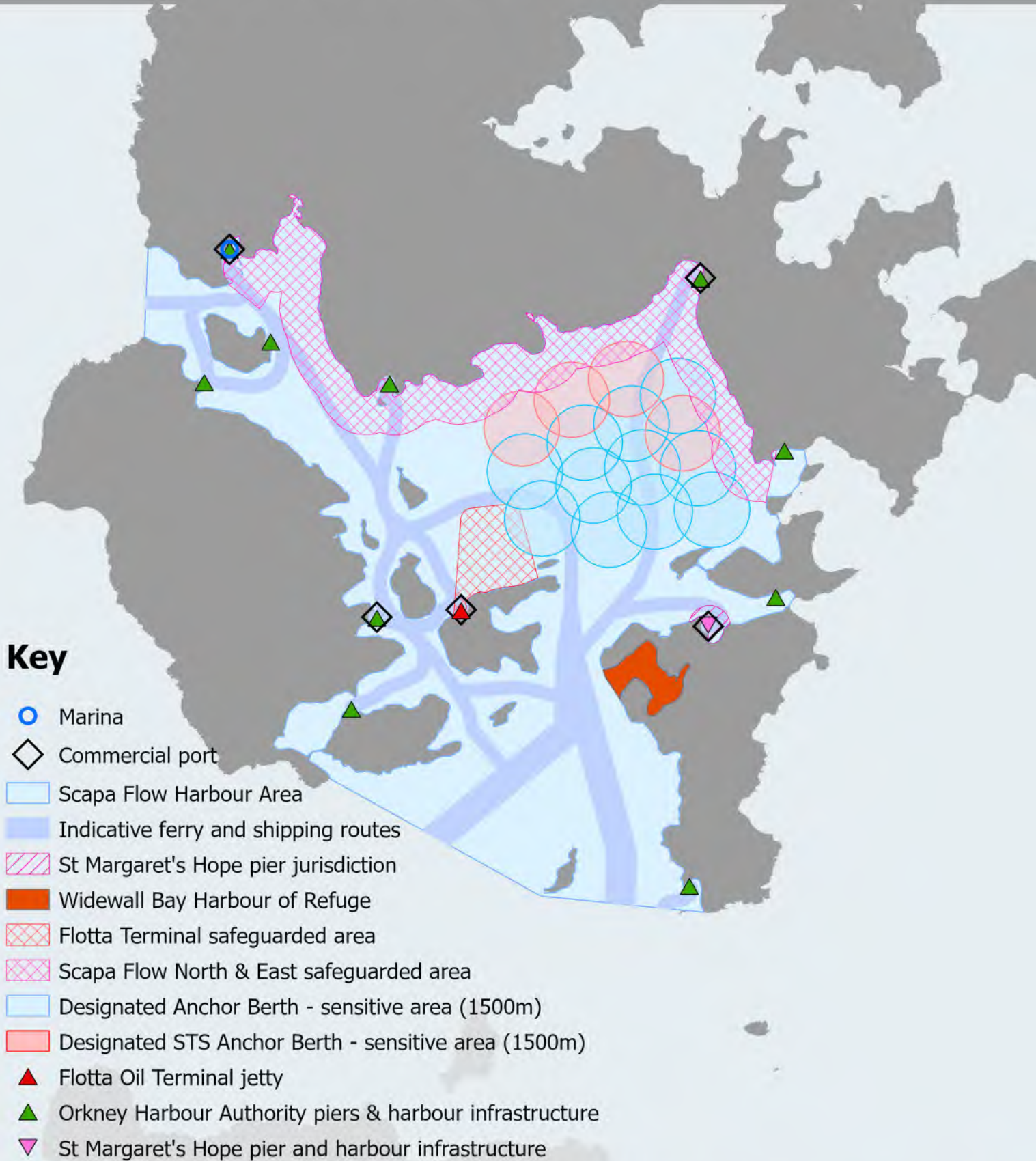


Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPI. Updated data sets will be added to NMPI when available. Further details of the information displayed can be found in the Ports Handbook for Orkney. National Developments are detailed in NPF4.

To view this data on NMPI, [click here](#)

Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2025). Licence Number 100021621. For reference purposes only. Not to be used for navigation.

Map 15: Scapa Flow harbour infrastructure and operations



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPI. Updated data sets will be added to NMPI when available.

To view this data on NMPI, [click here](#)

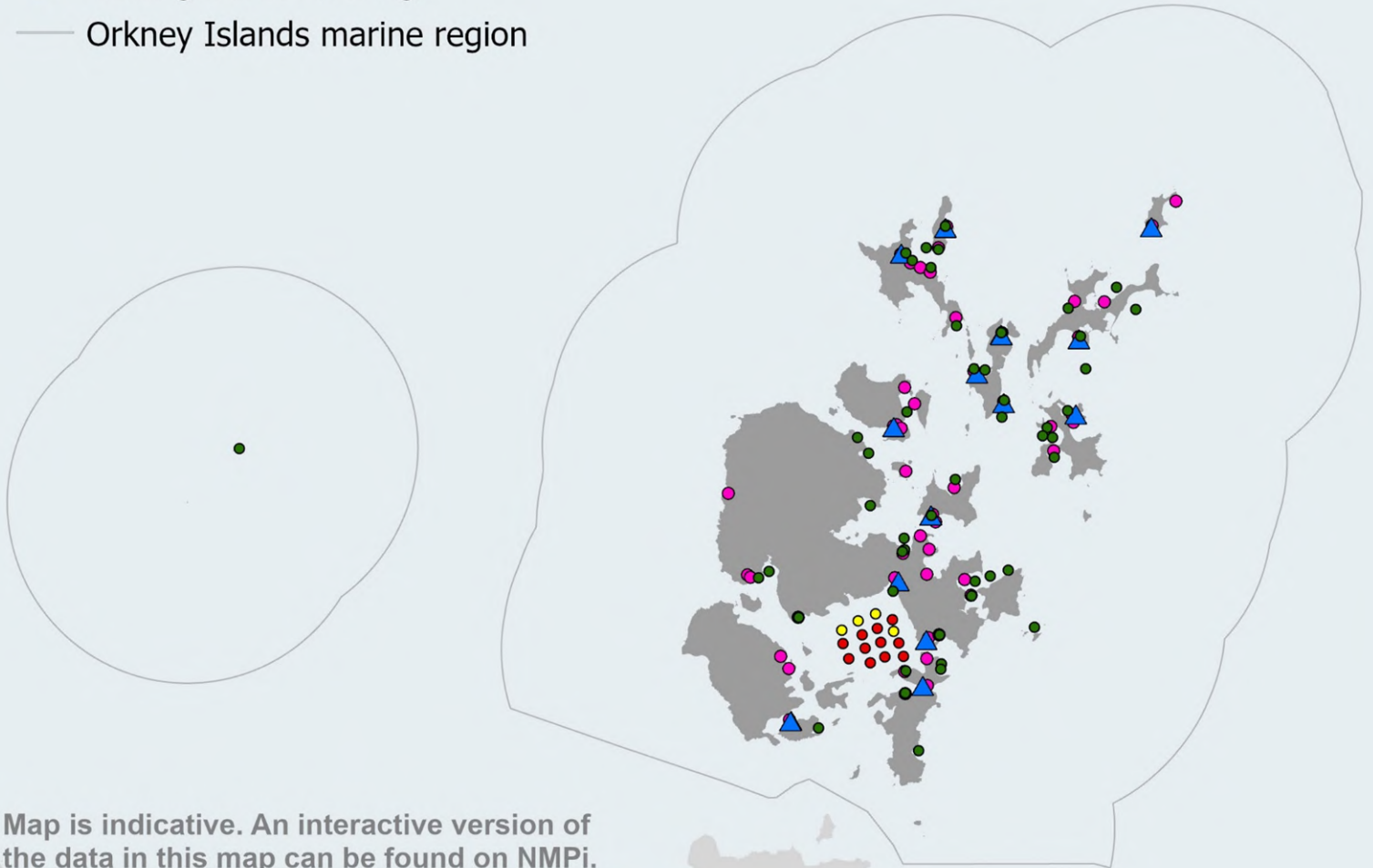
0 1 2 3 4 Nautical Miles
0 1.5 3 6 Kilometers



Map 16: Anchorages

Key

- Designated anchor berth (Scapa Flow)
- Designated STS anchor berth (Scapa Flow)
- Other anchorages
- Anchorages listed in the Clyde Cruising Club (CCC) Sailing Directions and Anchorages publication
- ▲ Visiting Yacht Moorings*
- Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPi. Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

*Visiting Yacht Moorings are seasonal and only deployed May-October. Some VYMs may also be included in CCC anchorages. For more information on recreational anchorages please refer to the current edition of the Orkney and Shetland volume of the CCC Sailing Directions and Anchorages.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)

0 4 8 12 16 Nautical Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers



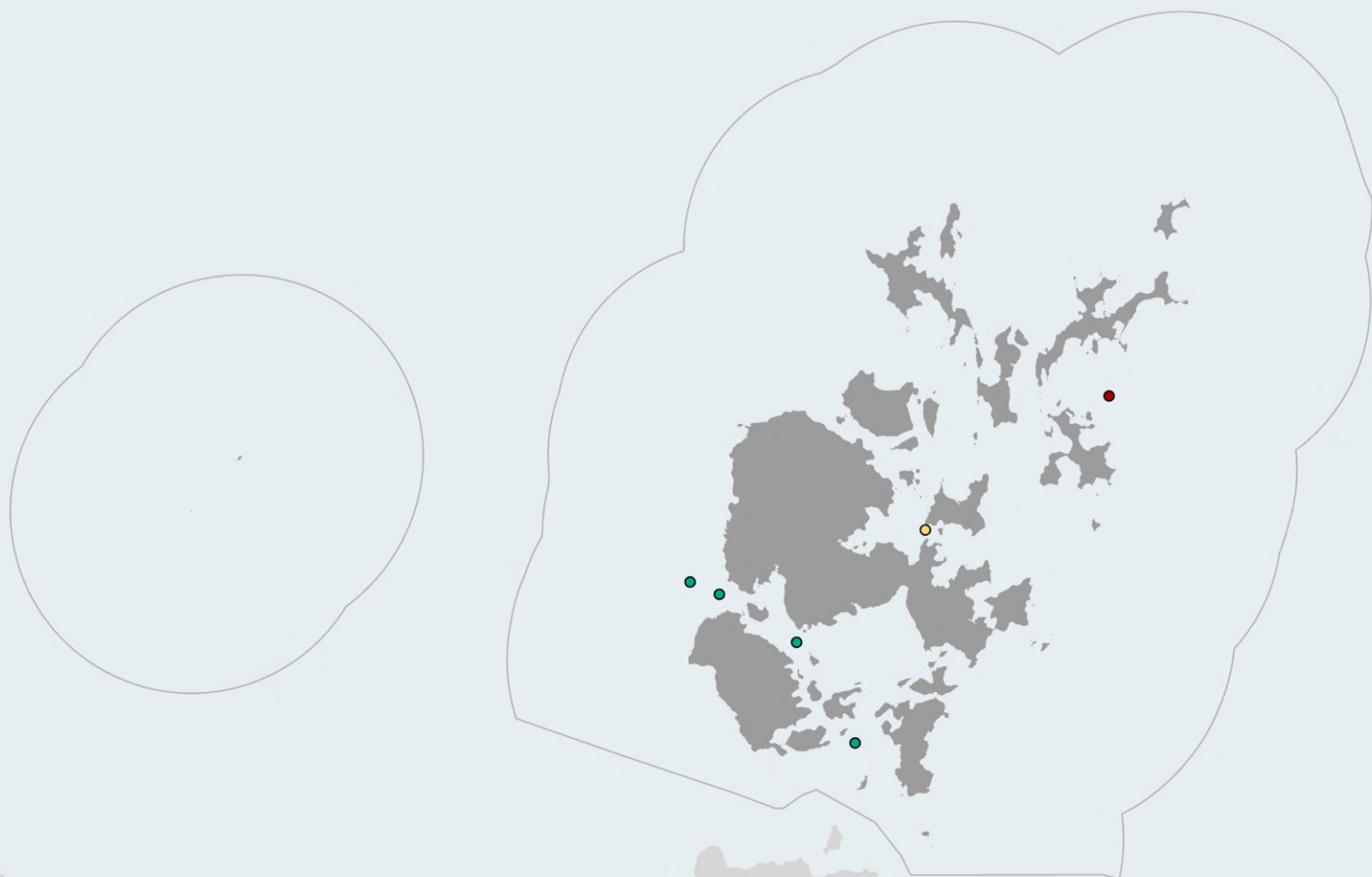
Map 17: Dredge spoil deposit sites

Key

Dredge Spoil Deposit Sites

- Closed
- Disused
- Open

— Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPi. Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)

Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2025). Contains information from Scottish Government licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. Licence number 100021621. Not to be used for navigation.

Sector Policy 4: Pipeline, Electricity and Telecommunications Infrastructure

Policy Intent

To support and enable sustainable pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure, and safeguard this critical infrastructure to ensure a safe and reliable network.

Context

- 3.45 Pipelines and electricity and telecommunications cables provide critical infrastructure to support the economic and social wellbeing of Orkney, Scotland and the UK. Within the Orkney Islands marine region, this infrastructure is vital for electricity transmission and distribution, telecommunications, the supply of potable water and removal of wastewater, and the transportation of hydrocarbons.
- 3.46 Sector Policy 4 only applies to public authority decisions where proposals fall within devolved competencies. Offshore oil and gas licensing is reserved to the UK Government including the construction and decommissioning of hydrocarbons pipelines; Sector Policy 4 will not be applied to these licensing decisions.
- 3.47 Scotland's National Marine Plan includes policies on the factors that should be taken into account by electricity and telecommunications network and cable owners, and public authority decision makers, when reaching decisions on development and/or activities including, the laying, protection, replacement, maintenance and decommissioning of submarine cables.
- 3.48 Electricity transmission is the transportation of electricity from generating plants to where it is required at centres of demand. The electricity transmission network, or grid, transports electricity at high voltages through overhead lines, underground cables and subsea cables. The transmission network connects large-scale generation, primarily renewables, to central and southern Scotland and the rest of the UK. A 220kV electricity transmission cable between Dounreay in Caithness and Warebeth in Orkney was given consent in 2019.
- 3.49 The electricity distribution network is connected into the transmission network. The voltage is lowered by transformers at electricity substations, and the power is then distributed to homes and businesses through overhead lines, underground cables and subsea cables.
- 3.50 Distribution cables typically carry voltages below 33kV whereas transmission cables typically carry 132kV and above. Distribution and transmission electricity cables can have different design, installation and protection requirements, which vary with location and substrate type.



- 3.51 Cable and pipeline development and/or activities can have significant impacts on the marine environment; associated environmental pressures are identified in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment¹¹². It is therefore important that these potential impacts and risks be carefully managed to safeguard the marine environment in Orkney. The degree of environmental impact depends on the type, scale, location and mitigation associated with a specific cable or pipeline development or activity.
- 3.52 Electricity and telecommunications cables need to be safeguarded from adverse interactions with other marine users (see Map 18). The operation, maintenance and development of the electricity network in Orkney should achieve security of supply, contribution to net-zero commitments, and the highest possible quality and safety standards. Cable owners aim to minimise risks to all marine users and the marine environment. Submarine cables should be appropriately protected, whilst achieving successful seabed user coexistence, in accordance with the National Marine Plan.
- 3.53 The Submarine Telegraph Act 1885 (the 1885 Act) applies to cables in UK waters and was most recently amended by the Merchant Shipping Act 1995. The 1885 Act aims to protect cables by, amongst other things, making it an offence to damage a cable, and restricting vessels and fishing activities within certain distances of cables.
- 3.54 As well as undertaking appropriate protection measures for their cables and for other marine users, cable owners provide information via cable awareness projects such as KIS-ORCA¹¹³. Cable information is given freely to fishermen and other seabed users so that they can avoid potential snagging of cables. After a new cable is laid, the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) issues a notice to mariners and identifies the cable on the relevant charts¹¹⁴.
- 3.55 Crude oil is imported to the Flotta Oil Terminal via a 30-inch subsea pipeline from several offshore installations in the Flotta Catchment Area.
- 3.56 There are island communities in Orkney that have potable water supplied via subsea pipeline. Wastewater treatment facilities discharge wastewater via outfall pipes into the marine environment in Orkney. These infrastructures need to be safeguarded from adverse interactions with other marine users (see Map 18).

¹¹² The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

¹¹³ KIS-ORCA Offshore Renewable and Cable Awareness. <https://kis-orca.org/>

¹¹⁴ MGN 661 (M+F) Navigation - safe and responsible anchoring and fishing practices. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mgn-661-mf-navigation-safe-and-responsible-anchoring-and-fishing-practices/mgn-661-mf-navigation-safe-and-responsible-anchoring-and-fishing-practices>



- 3.57 The European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC) provides facilities in Orkney for testing wave and tidal renewable energy devices that include 11kV cables running from an onshore substation to open-sea testing berths (see Map 18).
- 3.58 There are significant offshore wind, wave and tidal energy resources within the Orkney Islands marine region and potential for future commercial-scale renewable energy projects. The Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind Energy identifies Plan Option areas within and adjacent to the Orkney Islands marine region for commercial-scale offshore wind development. The agreements for lease within these Plan Options areas have been issued by Crown Estate Scotland via the ScotWind leasing round¹¹⁵. Such projects are likely to require grid connections, electricity and communications cables linking devices to shore.
- 3.59 There is potential for commercial-scale renewable energy projects to connect to shore via privately owned subsea cables for the purposes of producing zero fossil carbon fuels in Orkney. Existing oil and gas infrastructure has the potential to be repurposed to support the zero fossil carbon fuel sector (see Sector Policy 6). The key consenting requirements are outlined in Appendix 1, which is not exhaustive.
- 3.60 Electricity and telecommunications cables, and pipelines, in the Orkney Islands marine region are identified in Map 18.

¹¹⁵ Scotwind. Crown Estate Scotland.

<https://www.crownestatescotland.com/scotlands-property/offshore-wind/scotwind-leasing-round>



Sector Policy 4: Pipeline, Electricity and Telecommunications Infrastructure

Sector Policy 4 is to be applied to relevant proposals for development and/or activities that require authorisation from a public authority under devolved competencies.

Sector Policy 4a: Pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure development and/or activities

- i. Proposals for pipeline, electricity and/or telecommunications development and/or activities including the laying, protection, replacement, maintenance and decommissioning of pipelines, electricity and/or telecommunication cables, and/or the development of associated onshore and/or marine infrastructure, should have regard to:
 - a. The Orkney Local Development Plan;
 - b. The National Marine Plan; and
 - c. The National Planning Framework.
- ii. Network and cable owners should engage with public authority decision makers, appropriate statutory bodies, marine users and local communities at an early stage to avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate impacts on the historic and natural environment, existing development and/or infrastructure assets, and other marine users.
- iii. Proposals for new or replacement pipeline or cable development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on:
 - a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity;
 - b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including the national status of Priority Marine Features;
 - c. seal haul-out sites;
 - d. water quality and the benthic environment;
 - e. historic environment assets;
 - f. coastal processes, including those caused by erosion, flooding and wider coastal change; and
 - g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations, active aquaculture sites, tourism, recreation, sport and leisure activities.
 - h. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, access, vibration, odour and litter impacts.



Sector Policy 4b: Safeguarding existing pipeline, electricity and telecommunications cable infrastructure

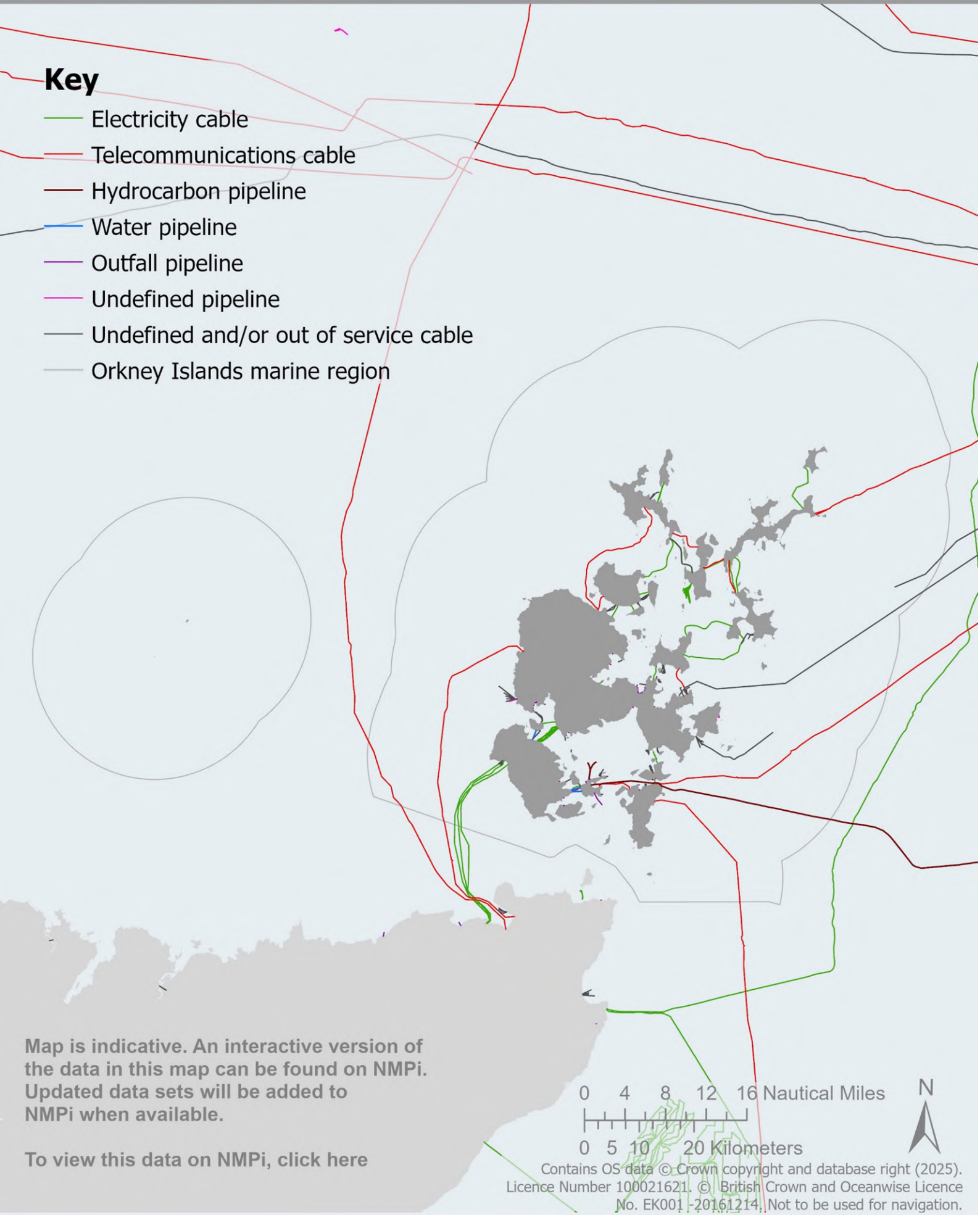
- i. Proposals for development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate adverse impacts on pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure.

Table 21: Sector Policy 4 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	1, 8 and, 10
Indirect contribution to objectives:	2 and, 3
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 6.6
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Chapter 14
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 11
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Sustainable Communities Strategic Priority: Thriving Economy Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	N/A



Map 18: Cables and pipelines



Sector Policy 5: Offshore Wind, Wave and Tidal Renewable Energy Generation

Policy Intent

To support and enable thriving and sustainable offshore wind, wave and tidal renewable energy generation.

Context

- 3.61 Orkney waters are amongst the most energy-rich localities in Europe, with significant wind, wave and tidal renewable energy resources. Renewable energy developments can create significant economic opportunities for Orkney and Scotland, promoting inclusive economic development and a just transition to net zero (see Map 19).
- 3.62 This Plan aims to contribute to the achievement of Scottish and UK energy and climate change policy objectives and targets and minimise the potential adverse effects on the environment and other marine users from offshore wind, wave and tidal energy development and activities in Orkney waters.
- 3.63 Renewable energy generation development and activities can have significant impacts on the marine environment; associated environmental pressures are identified in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment¹¹⁶. It is therefore important that these potential impacts and risks be carefully managed to safeguard the quality and productivity of the marine environment in Orkney. The degree of environmental impact depends on the type, scale, location and mitigation associated with a specific renewable energy development or activity.
- 3.64 Renewable energy developments can enable transformative social and economic benefits for island communities, creating jobs, supporting local skills development and local supply chains. Large scale developments can also have significant onshore impacts on adjacent island communities including roads, housing markets, infrastructure, and community services and facilities. It is therefore important that these factors are assessed and appropriately mitigated, and environmental social and economic benefits for local communities are maximised.

¹¹⁶ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020.
<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>



- 3.65 The Scottish Government has prepared guidance on the Decommissioning of Offshore Renewable Energy Installations in Scottish waters or in the Scottish part of the Renewable Energy Zone under The Energy Act 2004¹¹⁷.
- 3.66 The Orkney Renewable Energy Forum¹¹⁸ represents the diverse supply chain businesses supporting the renewables sector in Orkney.
- 3.67 Sector Policy 6 addresses development and activities for hydrogen and other zero fossil carbon fuels.

Context: Wind energy

- 3.68 Offshore wind energy will play a pivotal role in Scotland's energy system over the coming decades to help tackle the Climate Emergency¹¹⁹. The Scottish Government has set a net-zero greenhouse gas emissions target for 2045, with interim targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction of 75% by 2030 and 90% by 2040, against 1990 baseline levels. These targets are a major driver for offshore wind and wider renewable energy development and decarbonisation.
- 3.69 The Sectoral Plan for Offshore Wind Energy¹²⁰ sets the strategic vision and objectives for future commercial-scale offshore wind development in Scotland. This Plan has identified two Plan Option areas for future commercial-scale offshore wind development, North 1 (N1) and North East 2 (NE2), within the Orkney Islands marine region, along with a wider suite of Plan Option areas across the North of Scotland. The agreements for lease within these Plan Options areas have been issued by Crown Estate Scotland via the ScotWind leasing round¹²¹. The National Marine Plan contains policies for commercial scale offshore wind development and activities.
- 3.70 Since early 2020, EMEC has been investigating and examining options for a national floating wind test centre located to the west of Orkney. This proposal aims to create the capability to test floating platforms, turbines, cables, mooring systems and other components in metocean conditions that meet the

¹¹⁷ Decommissioning of Offshore Renewable Energy Installations in Scottish waters or in the Scottish part of the Renewable Energy Zone under The Energy Act 2004. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/offshore-renewable-energy-decommissioning-guidance-scottish-waters/>

¹¹⁸ Orkney Renewable Energy Forum. <https://www.oref.co.uk/>

¹¹⁹ The Global Climate Emergency - Scotland's Response: Climate Change Secretary Roseanna Cunningham's statement. 2019. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/global-climate-emergency-scotlands-response-climate-change-secretary-roseanna-cunninghams-statement/>

¹²⁰ Sectoral marine plan for offshore wind energy. Scottish Government. 2020. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/sectoral-marine-plan-offshore-wind-energy/?msclid=66ae4153a5fe11ec919ac55a0fe68143>

¹²¹ ScotWind. Crown Estate Scotland. <https://www.crownestatescotland.com/scotlands-property/offshore-wind/scotwind-leasing-round>



needs of UK floating offshore wind projects anticipated for ScotWind, Innovation and Targeted Oil & Gas (INTOG) and the Celtic Sea leasing rounds¹²². This proposal will need to be considered carefully at the project level with reference to the relevant legislation, including through the Habitats Regulations Appraisal process to ascertain that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites, or if this is not the case, that there are no alternative solutions and are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest for the proposal to proceed.

- 3.71 National Planning Framework 4 Policy 11 b) states that development proposals for wind farms in National Parks and National Scenic Areas will not be supported. The Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area (Map 10) includes significant marine areas, therefore, the relevant national planning policy is reflected in this Plan in Sector Policy 5 a) iii.

Context: Wave and tidal energy

- 3.72 At the time of writing, the draft Plan Option areas for wave and tidal energy development have been identified in the Sectoral Marine Plans for Offshore Wind, Wave and Tidal Energy in Scottish Waters: Consultation Draft¹²³. The National Marine Plan contains policies for wave and tidal energy development and activities.
- 3.73 Orkney is a global leader in wave and tidal energy research and development. EMEC was established in 2003 and provides a unique facility for testing wave and tidal renewable energy devices in Orkney. Wave and tidal energy, or marine renewable energy, can diversify and expand renewable energy generation to make a significant contribution to meeting net-zero targets and increase the current economic benefits to Orkney communities.
- 3.74 EMEC provides test and demonstration sites for wave and tidal energy devices. There are currently five test sites in Orkney:
- Billia Croo grid-connected wave energy test site, Stromness, Mainland Orkney.
 - Fall of Warness grid-connected tidal energy test site, off the island of Eday.
 - Caldale Hydrogen Production Plant, on Eday.
 - Scapa Flow scale wave test site, off St Mary's Bay.

¹²² White Paper: The need for a National Floating Wind Test Site. EMEC. 2023.

<https://www.emec.org.uk/white-paper-details-needs-case-for-uk-national-floating-wind-test-centre/>

¹²³ Draft Sectoral Marine Plans for Offshore Renewable Energy in Scottish Waters: Consultation Paper. Scottish Government. 2013.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/draft-sectoral-marine-plans-offshore-renewable-energy-scottish-waters-consultation/documents/>



- Shapinsay Sound scale tidal test site, off Head of Holland.

3.75 At each of the EMEC grid-connected test sites, there are subsea cables which run from each test berth at sea to a substation onshore, where electricity generated on-site can then be fed into the UK National Grid.



Sector Policy 5: Offshore Wind, Wave and Tidal Renewable Energy Generation

Sector Policy 5a: Offshore wind energy

- i. When considering proposals for offshore wind energy development and/or activities, public authority decision makers should have regard to:
 - a. net economic impact, including local social and economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities;
 - b. the scale of the contribution to renewable energy targets and the effect on greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets; and
 - c. cumulative impacts, taking into account the cumulative impact of existing and consented development and/or activities.
- ii. Proposals for offshore wind energy development and/or activities should avoid, minimise or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on:
 - a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity;
 - b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including the national status of Priority Marine Features;
 - c. seal haul-out sites;
 - d. water quality and the benthic environment;
 - e. historic environment assets;
 - f. coastal processes including those caused by erosion, flooding and wider coastal change;
 - g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations, marine cable routes and pipelines, active aquaculture sites, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities;
 - h. aviation and defence interests;
 - i. telecommunications, radar and broadcasting installations; and
 - j. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light, access, vibration, shadow flicker and litter impacts.
- iii. Proposals for offshore wind farms will not be supported in the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area.



Sector Policy 5b: Wave and tidal energy

- i. When considering proposals for wave and tidal energy development and/or activities, public authority decision makers should have regard to:
 - a. net economic impact, including local social and economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities;
 - b. the scale of contribution to renewable energy targets and effect on greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets; and
 - c. cumulative impacts, taking into account the cumulative impact of existing and consented energy development.
- ii. Proposals for wave and tidal energy development and/or activities should avoid, minimise or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on:
 - a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity;
 - b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including the national status of Priority Marine Features;
 - c. seal haul-out sites;
 - d. water quality and the benthic environment;
 - e. historic environment assets;
 - f. aviation and/or defence interests;
 - g. coastal processes including those caused by erosion, flooding and wider coastal change;
 - h. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations, marine cable routes and pipelines, active aquaculture sites, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities; and
 - i. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light, access, vibration and litter impacts.



Table 22: Sector Policy 5 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

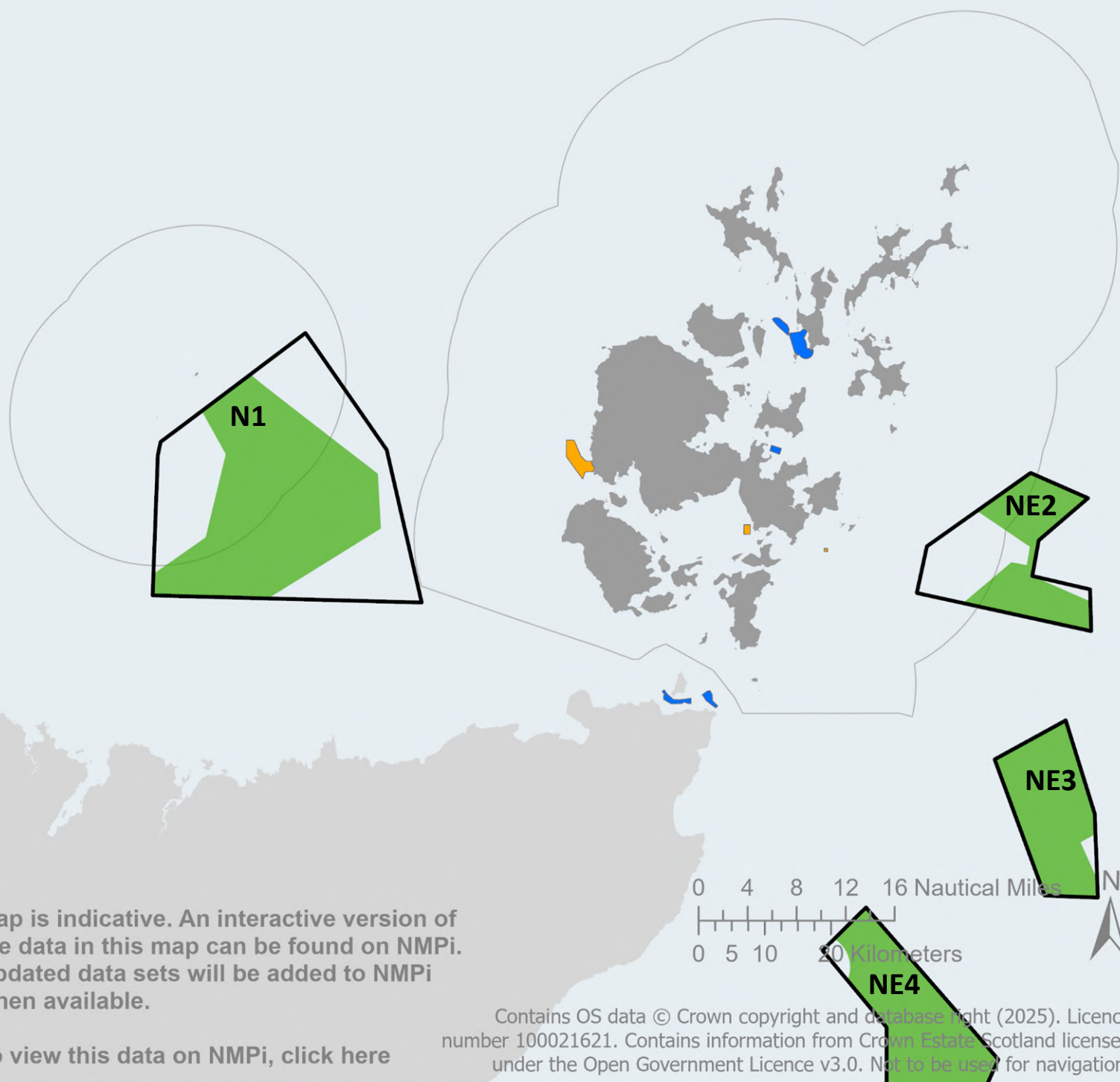
Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and, 8
Indirect contribution to objectives:	5
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
State of the Environment Assessment baseline information:	Section 6.5
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Chapter 11
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 11
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Sustainable Communities Strategic Priority: Thriving Economy Strategic Priority: Climate Emergency Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life Strategic Priority: Innovation, Research and Development
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 7C, Supplementary Guidance: Energy



Map 19: Offshore wind, wave and tidal energy sites

Key

- Wave energy lease sites
- Tidal energy lease sites
- Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind: Plan Options
- ScotWind option agreements
- Orkney Islands marine region



Sector Policy 6: Zero Fossil Carbon Fuels, and Oil and Gas Transition

Policy Intent

To support and enable a thriving and sustainable zero fossil carbon fuels sector and a just transition for the oil and gas sector.

Context

- 3.76 Zero fossil carbon fuels, including, but not limited to, green hydrogen, ammonia, biofuels and e-fuels, are likely to play an important role in the decarbonisation of heating, transport and industrial processes. The abundant wind, wave and tidal renewable energy resources in the North of Scotland can be used to produce zero fossil carbon fuels to supply growing European markets.
- 3.77 Matters concerning the development of a sustainable zero fossil carbon fuels sector and a just transition for oil and gas are likely to intersect with multiple areas of regulatory consent and stakeholder interest. Accordingly, while the policy intent is consistent with and builds upon existing frameworks and strategic objectives, its application is specifically intended to support public authority decision-makers where proposals fall within devolved competencies
- 3.78 The Orkney Hydrogen Strategy¹²⁴ aims to develop a sustainable hydrogen economy in Orkney to help meet net-zero targets, create local jobs, and develop a local supply chain and a more resilient local energy system. The strategy seeks to establish Orkney as the global exemplar in green hydrogen integration, supporting a robust rural net-zero economy.
- 3.79 Orkney has been a demonstration region for numerous green hydrogen demonstration projects. These projects, including Surf 'n' Turf and Building Innovative Green Hydrogen in Isolated Territories, have produced hydrogen from renewable sources, including community-owned wind energy and tidal energy installations.
- 3.80 Zero fossil carbon fuel production can provide an energy storage solution when renewable energy generation is exceeding demand or is curtailed by limited grid capacity. These fuels can help to maximise green energy utilisation, enhance the economic viability of affected renewable energy projects and support island sustainability.

¹²⁴ Orkney Hydrogen Strategy – The Hydrogen Islands 2019-2025. Orkney Islands Council.
<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/wvfuup1/hydrogen-strategy.pdf>



- 3.81 The higher cost of electricity transmission charges for renewable energy projects in the North of Scotland is expected to be a major driver for the production of zero fossil carbon fuels from renewable energy developments in and around Orkney waters. It is anticipated that renewable energy generation projects will export electricity to the grid and consider the option of using generated electricity to produce zero fossil carbon fuels. Offshore renewable energy developments may need to connect to shore via privately owned subsea and/or onshore cables for the purposes of producing zero fossil carbon fuels in Orkney.
- 3.82 The Flotta Oil Terminal is a strategically important industrial asset that imports crude oil via a subsea pipeline from several offshore installations in the Flotta Catchment Area. The terminal operator and their partners have explored diversification options to enable a transition to low and zero fossil carbon fuel production and distribution activities¹²⁵. The Flotta Oil Terminal is a Control of Major Accident Hazards site¹²⁶.
- 3.83 Looking ahead, Orkney has extensive harbour, oil and gas infrastructure that has potential to be repurposed to produce and distribute zero fossil carbon fuels.
- 3.84 Orkney Harbour Authority aims to play a key role in decarbonisation by enabling a transition from hydrocarbons to zero fossil carbon fuels for shipping and ports. This shift to greener fuels will require a stepped transition from Low Sulphur Fuel Oil and Marine Gasoil to Liquid Natural Gas, leading to future hydrogen and/or ammonia carbon free fuelling for shipping.
- 3.85 Scapa Flow is one of the principal locations in Europe for ship-to-ship operations for the transfer of crude and fuel oils, Liquid Natural Gas and Liquid Petroleum Gas (see Map 20). These operations are licenced by the MCA under the terms of the Merchant Shipping (Ship-to-Ship Transfers) Regulations 2010.

¹²⁵ Flotta. North Sea Transition Authority. 2025. <https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/the-move-to-net-zero/projects/flotta/>

¹²⁶ Control of Major Accident Hazards. Health and Safety Executive. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/comah/>



Sector Policy 6: Zero Fossil Carbon Fuels, and Oil and Gas Transition

Sector Policy 6 is to be applied to relevant proposals for development and/or activities that require authorisation from a public authority under devolved competencies.

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities for the production and/or distribution of zero fossil carbon fuels, including associated cable and/or pipeline infrastructure, and/or the development of associated onshore and/or marine infrastructure, should have regard to:
 - a. The Orkney Local Development Plan;
 - b. The National Marine Plan; and
 - c. The National Planning Framework.
- ii. Proposals to repurpose existing oil and gas infrastructure for the production and/or distribution of zero fossil carbon fuels should be consistent with the objectives and policies of this Plan, the Orkney Local Development Plan, the National Marine Plan and the National Planning Framework 4.
- iii. Proposals for pipeline and/or electricity cable development and/or activities for the purpose of producing and/or distributing zero fossil carbon fuels that include the laying, replacement, maintenance and decommissioning of pipelines, electricity and/or telecommunication cables should have regard to Sector Policy 4.



Table 23: Sector Policy 6 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

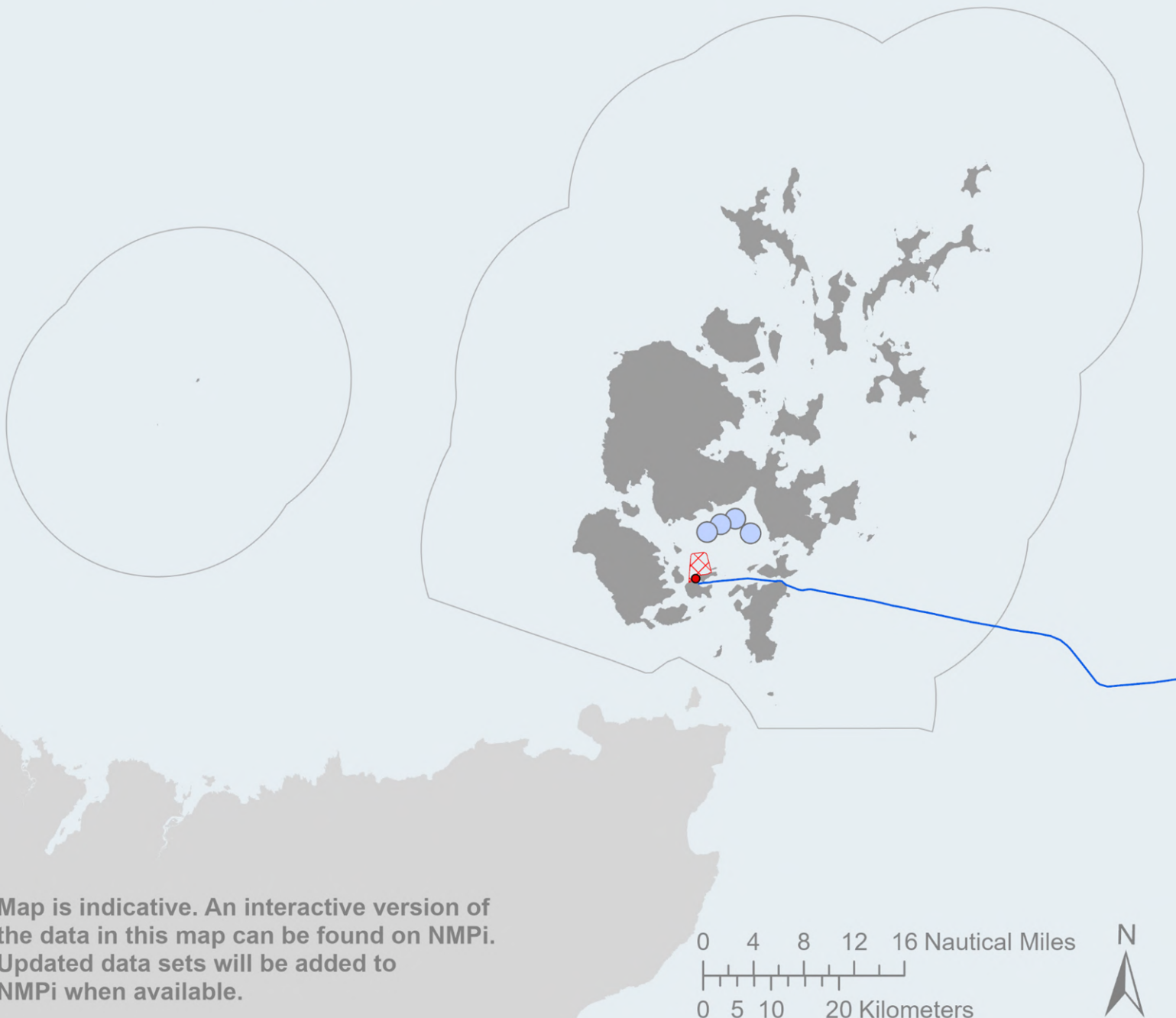
Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	1 and, 3
Indirect contribution to objectives:	4
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 6.7
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Chapter 9
National Planning Framework 4	Policies 1 and 11
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Sustainable Communities Strategic Priority: Thriving Economy Strategic Priority: Climate Emergency Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life Strategic Priority: Innovation, Research and Development
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	N/A



Map 20: Oil and gas infrastructure

Key

- Flotta Oil Terminal
- Flotta Oil Terminal Pipeline
- Designated STS Anchor Berth - Sensitive Area (1500m)
- ▨ Flotta safeguarded area
- Orkney Islands marine region



Map is indicative. An interactive version of the data in this map can be found on NMPi. Updated data sets will be added to NMPi when available.

To view this data on NMPi, [click here](#)

Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2025).
Licence number 100021621. © British Crown and Oceanwise
Licence No. EK001 - 20161214. Not to be used for navigation.

Sector Policy 7: Tourism, Recreation, Leisure and Sport

Policy Intent

To support and enable a thriving and sustainable tourism, recreation, leisure and sport sector.

Context: Tourism

- 3.86 The many special qualities of Orkney make it a world-class tourist and leisure destination. There are numerous islands with unique characteristics to explore, and a diverse range of opportunities for marine recreation, sport and leisure.
- 3.87 Tourism is an important economic driver in Orkney, providing a wide range of employment opportunities whilst bringing significant money into the local economy through visitor spending¹²⁷.
- 3.88 Orkney's environmental quality, natural and cultural heritage, and historic environment underpin the success of the tourism sector. It is therefore important to protect these special qualities and assets to ensure the long-term sustainability of tourism and recreation, and the associated benefits enjoyed by local communities. As identified in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment, tourism infrastructure, development and activities can have significant impacts on the environment¹²⁸. It is therefore important that these impacts be carefully managed to safeguard the quality and productivity of the coastal and marine environment in Orkney.
- 3.89 Sustainable tourism requires investment in infrastructure and can provide an incentive for conservation and environmental enhancement investments that benefit the wider community¹²⁹.

¹²⁷ Orkney Islands Visitor Survey. Orkney Islands Council and VisitScotland. 2020.

<https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/regions/orkney#statistics>

¹²⁸ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/development-planning-land/development-management-guidance/aquaculture-water-quality-impact-modelling-assessment/>

¹²⁹ Enabling conditions for an equitable and sustainable blue economy. Cisneros-Montemayor *et al.* 2021.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-021-03327-3#:~:text=%20Enabling%20conditions%20for%20an%20equitable%20and%20sustainable,global%20development%205%2C%20and%20high-level%20policies...%20More%20>



Context: Recreation, leisure and sport

- 3.90 Coastal and marine recreation, leisure and sport provide significant wellbeing benefits to local communities and visitors. Popular activities include, for example, paddle sports, recreational boating, surfing, diving, recreational fishing, swimming, coastal walking, birdwatching and competitive sport. This includes both formal and informal activities undertaken by individuals, clubs and commercial ventures.
- 3.91 Orkney's attractive coastal scenery, wildlife, historic assets and beaches are some of the many assets enjoyed by those engaging in marine and coastal recreational, leisure and sport activities. Clean and healthy seas and coastlines are fundamentally important to the enjoyment of these activities. Spending time in the coastal and marine environment has also been shown to enhance mental wellbeing and physical health, leading to an improved quality of life.¹³⁰
- 3.92 Orkney's coastal infrastructure and facilities, including the core path network¹³¹, anchorages (see Map 21), and the many marine access points, including marinas, piers and slips (see Map 14), are key to enabling a diverse range of recreational uses and are important assets that need to be safeguarded and enhanced.
- 3.93 Sector Policy 7 aims to ensure that tourism, recreation, leisure and sport development, activities and/or use protect and, where appropriate, enhance the environment in which they operate. In addition to this policy, tourism recreation, leisure and sport development and/or activities will be assessed in accordance with other relevant policies in the Plan (e.g. harbour infrastructure developments for tourism will also be assessed under Sector Policy 3). Furthermore, this policy aims to avoid or reduce adverse impacts on tourism, recreation, sport and leisure uses.
- 3.94 Further information on tourism, recreation, leisure and sport in Orkney is provided in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment¹³². The Orkney Coastal and Marine Recreational Survey¹³³

¹³⁰ Evidence Statement – SD1712: The well-being and human health benefits of exposure to the marine and coastal environment. DEFRA. 2019.

https://www.smmr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SD1712_well-being-and-human-health-benefits.pdf

¹³¹ The Orkney Core Paths Plan. Outdoor Access - Orkney Islands Council.

<https://oic.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=462f21e42d74428984b868be3a8c57c2>

¹³² The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

¹³³ The Orkney Coastal and Marine Recreational Survey.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/marine-and-coastal-recreation-survey-report/>



provides spatial information on recreation, sport and leisure uses in the Orkney Islands marine region.



Sector Policy 7: Tourism, Recreation, Leisure and Sport

Sector Policy 7a: Tourism, recreation, leisure and sport development and/or activities

- i. Proposals for tourism, recreation, leisure and sport development and/or activities should have regard to:
 - a. The Orkney Local Development Plan;
 - b. The National Marine Plan; and
 - c. The National Planning Framework.
- ii. Proposals for tourism, recreation, leisure and sport development and/or activities should avoid, minimise or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on:
 - a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity;
 - b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including the national status of Priority Marine Features;
 - c. seal haul-out sites;
 - d. water quality and the benthic environment;
 - e. historic environment assets;
 - f. coastal processes including those caused by erosion, flooding and wider coastal change;
 - g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations, marine cable routes and pipelines, active aquaculture sites, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities; and
 - h. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light, access, vibration and litter impacts.
- iii. Proposals for tourism, recreation, leisure and sport development and/or activities should follow relevant codes of best practice and guidance, including, but not limited to, the Marine Wildlife Watching Code, the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, biosecurity practices and marine litter/waste guidance.
- iv. To maximise the benefits from existing infrastructure, proposals for tourism, recreation, leisure and sport development and/or activities should demonstrate that they have considered the potential to utilise appropriate existing infrastructure and/or facilities, including shared use with complementary activities and sectors.



Sector Policy 7b: Safeguarding tourism, recreation, leisure and sport uses

- i. Proposals for development and/or activities should consider options to avoid, minimise or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on tourism, recreation, leisure and sport uses.
- ii. Proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate engagement and/or consultation with relevant tourism, recreation, leisure and sport bodies and/or users to ensure that the measures proposed to avoid, minimise and/or mitigate adverse impacts on tourism, recreation, sport and leisure uses are appropriate.

Table 24: Sector Policy 7 links to Plan objectives, State of the Environment Assessment and other plans

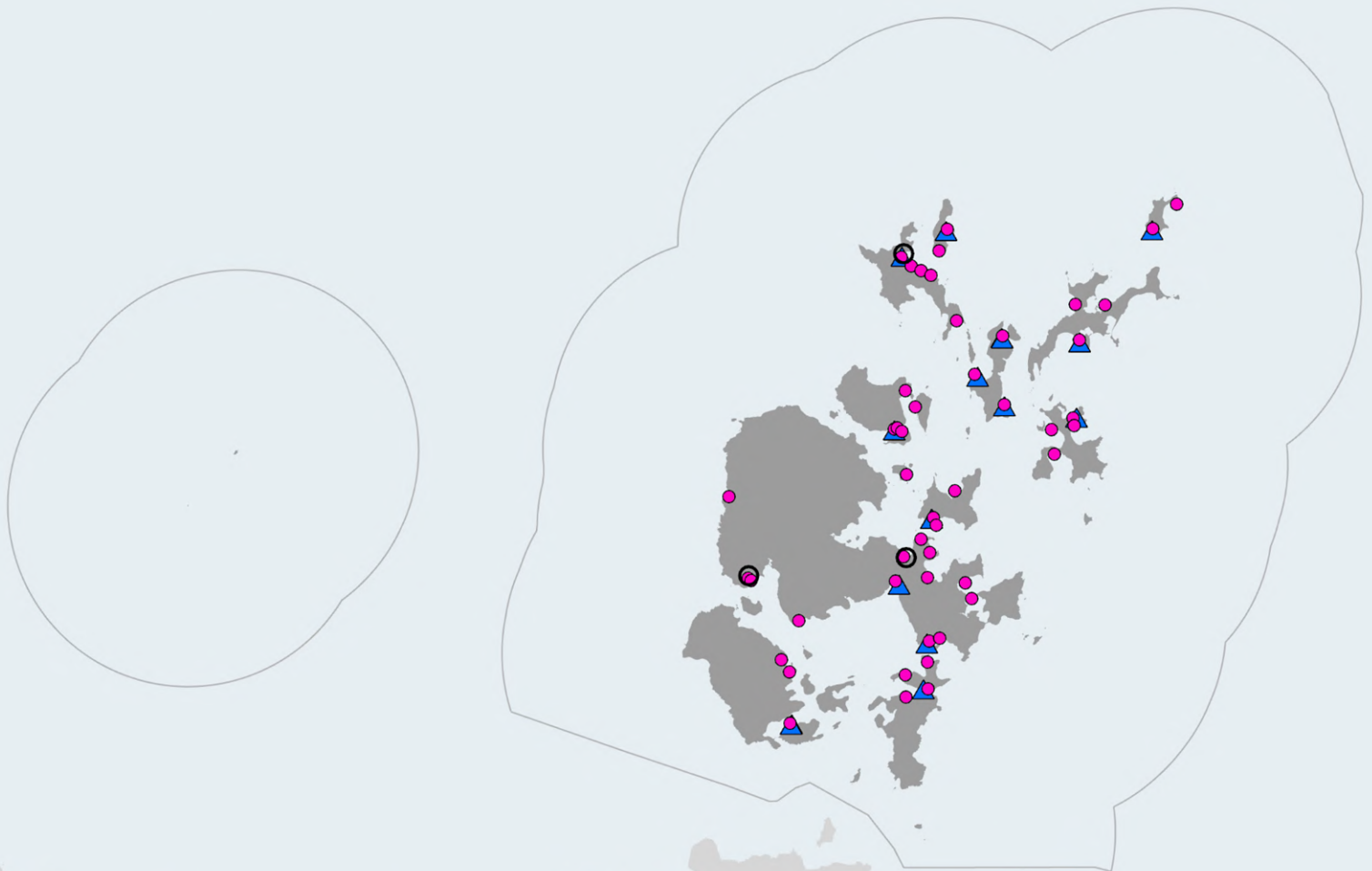
Contribution to Regional Marine Plan objectives	
Direct contribution to objectives:	1, 2, 6, 7 and, 10
Indirect contribution to objectives:	5
Assessment of the condition of the Orkney Islands marine region	
Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment baseline information	Section 6.9
Alignment with other marine and land-use plans	
National Marine Plan 2015	Chapter 12
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 30
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (Indicative)	Strategic Priority: Sustainable Communities Strategic Priority: Thriving Economy Strategic Priority: An Outstanding Environment and Quality of Life
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Policy 10A



Map 21: Recreational anchorages, Visiting Yacht Moorings and Marinas

Key

- Anchorages listed in the Clyde Cruising Club (CCC) Sailing Directions and Anchorages publication
- ▲ Visiting Yacht Moorings
- Marinas
- Orkney Islands marine region



***Visiting Yacht Moorings are seasonal and only deployed May-October. Some VYMs may also be included in CCC anchorages. For more information on recreational anchorages please refer to the current edition of the Orkney and Shetland volume of the CCC Sailing Directions and Anchorages.**

To view this data on NMPI, [click here](#)

0 4 8 12 16 Nautical Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers



Blank Page



Section 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Plan

- 4.1 In accordance with the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, the Plan will be kept under review and a report detailing this review will be published a minimum of every five years from the date of the Plan's adoption. The Plan will be kept under review with regards to the effects of the policies and their effectiveness in securing the Plan's objectives. This review process will be informed by monitoring and evaluation of the Plan's effectiveness using an appropriate framework and indicators.
- 4.2 This Plan includes a vision and an aim, guiding principles, objectives, and general and sector policies that support the delivery of sustainable development in the Orkney Islands marine region. It provides a policy framework to enable public authority decision makers to determine authorisation and enforcement decisions and make other decisions capable of affecting the marine environment. Decision making, compliance and enforcement are essential to the effective implementation of the Plan¹³⁴, and these functions rely on the participation of regulating authorities, developers and other plan users.
- 4.3 It is necessary to analyse and assess the extent to which the Plan's vision, aim and objectives are being met. This process of monitoring and evaluation will require the identification of relevant indicators and the collection of associated data. The Maritime Spatial Planning Programme on evaluating marine spatial plans¹³⁵ provides guidance on setting indicators for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The setting of criteria and indicators will be guided by the objectives of the Plan and will be informed by the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment¹³⁶.

¹³⁴ Step 8. Implementing the plan – MSP GLOBAL 2030.
<https://www.mspglobal2030.org/resources/key-msp-references/step-by-step-approach/implementing-the-plan/>

¹³⁵ A Guide to Evaluating Marine Spatial Plans. Marine Spatial Planning Global.
<https://www.mspglobal2030.org/resources/key-msp-references/evaluating-marine-spatial-plans/>

¹³⁶ The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment. 2020.
<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>



Blank Page



Appendix 1: Licensing and Consenting Decisions

- A1.1 Table A1 outlines licensing and consenting requirements, or authorisation and enforcement decisions, for marine development and activities. It is intended for guidance purposes only and does not provide an exhaustive list of all relevant licensing and consenting requirements and associated processes.
- A1.2 Public authorities are required to take any authorisation or enforcement decision in accordance with the appropriate regional marine plan, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise¹³⁷. Table A1 identifies the key authorisation and/or enforcement decisions that implement the Plan policies. The key types of assessment that may be required to inform licence or consent applications are identified.
- A1.3 Legislation, plans, strategies and policies relevant to marine development and activities are provided in Appendix 2, which is not exhaustive.

Table A1: Licensing and consenting for marine development or activities

Licence or consent type	Responsible body
Marine licence	Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT)
CAR licence	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
Planning permission and related consents	Planning Authority (Orkney Islands Council for the Orkney Islands local authority area)
Works licence	Orkney Islands Council
Scheduled Monument Consent	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
Licence to carry out prohibited works, operations, etc. on controlled sites	Ministry of Defence (MOD)

¹³⁷ Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/marine-scotland-act/>



Licence or consent type	Responsible body
European Protected Species licence	NatureScot (Scottish Natural Heritage)/MD-LOT
Seabed lease	Crown Estate Scotland (CES)
Section 36 Electricity Act consent	MD-LOT
Related assessments that may be required for obtaining a licence or consent for development and/or activities	
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Planning Authority/MD-LOT/Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.
Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA)	MD-LOT/Planning Authority

Disclaimer Table A1 is intended for guidance purposes only and does not provide an exhaustive list of all relevant licensing and consenting requirements and associated processes.

For further guidance, refer to the Orkney Islands Council planning permission guidance notes for the submission of marine-related development applications¹³⁸ and Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government's Guidance for Marine Licence Applicants¹³⁹.

It is strongly advised that applicants consult with the appropriate licensing or consenting authorities as early as possible to determine the appropriate licence or consent requirements and to identify key stakeholders (including other marine users) and their relevant responsibilities.

¹³⁸ Aquaculture - planning applications information and guidance. Orkney Islands Council.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/planning/application-types/aquaculture/>

¹³⁹ Marine environment: licensing and consenting requirements. Scottish Government.

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/marine-licensing-and-consent/?msclkid=66a52045b42311ec98a4b568b715bc95>



Appendix 2: Relevant Legislation, Plans, Strategies and Policies

A2.1 Table A2 outlines the key legislation, plans, strategies and policies relevant to development, activities, and use in the Orkney Islands marine region. It does not provide an exhaustive list of all relevant legislation, plans, strategies and policies.

Table A2: Relevant legislation, plans, strategies and policies

Legislation	
Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009	Establishes the requirement for marine policy to be developed at the UK level.
Marine (Scotland) Act 2010	Establishes the requirement for a national marine plan and provision for regional marine plans and provides for marine licensing inside 12 nautical miles.
Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015	Establishes the Scottish Marine Regions boundaries.
Islands (Scotland) Act 2018	Establishes, among other things, that Orkney Islands Council can be a sole delegate for the functions relating to regional marine plans.
Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020	Direction under section 12 and 13 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 delegating to the Orkney Islands Council the delegable functions relating to regional marine planning with respect to the Orkney Islands marine region.
Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and Planning (Scotland) Act 2019	The main planning law in Scotland is the Town and Country Planning Act (Scotland) 1997 as amended by The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.
The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994	The Habitats Regulations (as amended) cover the requirements for (i) protecting sites that are internationally important for threatened habitats and species – known as special areas of conservation in respect of the habitats and species protected under the Habitats Regulations and special protection areas in respect of bird species, known collectively as European sites and (ii) establish a legal framework for animal species requiring strict protection – i.e. European protected species.



Legislation	
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	The 1981 Act (as amended) applies to Scotland's terrestrial environment and inshore waters (within 12 nautical miles of land). Part 1 of the Act details many offences in relation to the killing and taking of wild birds, other animals and plants. It also contains offences in relation to non-native species.
Invasive Alien Species Regulation 1143/2014	The Invasive Alien Species Regulation was retained in Scots Law under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, and amended by the Invasive Non-Native Species (EU Exit) (Scotland) (Amendment etc.) Regulations 2020. It imposes strict restrictions on a list of species known as 'species of special concern'.
The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a means of drawing together, in a systematic way, an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects arising from a proposed development.
The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017	All developments falling within a description in Schedule 1 to the 2017 EIA Regulations require an EIA.
The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017	Developments of a type listed in Schedule 2 to the 2017 EIA Regulations will require an EIA if they are likely to have a significant effect on the environment, due to factors such as their size, nature or location.
Plan, strategy or policy	
UK Marine Policy Statement	Provides a framework for preparing marine plans and taking decisions affecting the marine environment.
Scotland's National Marine Plan	Sets out national objectives and policies to support sustainable development of Scotland's seas.
National Planning Framework 4	The National Planning Framework 4 is a long-term plan for Scotland that sets out where development and infrastructure is needed.
The National Plan for Scotland's Islands	Provides a framework for action in order to meaningfully improve outcomes for island communities.
Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation	Sets out the priorities for Scotland's economy as well as the actions needed to maximise the opportunities of the next decade to achieve the vision of a wellbeing economy.



Plan, strategy or policy	
A Blue Economy Vision for Scotland / Delivering Scotland's Blue Economy approach	Sets out the long-term ambition for Scotland's blue economy to 2045. It demonstrates how much Scotland values the marine environment and its significance. This is captured in six outcomes sitting across a range of environmental, social and economic ambitions.
Climate Change Plan	Sets out the Scottish Government's pathway to new and ambitious targets set by the Climate Change Act 2019.
Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029	Sets out the actions that the Scottish Government and partners will take to respond to the impacts of climate change.
Scottish Marine Litter Strategy 2022	A strategy to develop measures to minimise the amount of litter entering the marine and coastal environment.
Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) 2019	Outlines how a duty of care for our historic environment will come into existence whenever a decision will affect the historic environment.
Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind Energy 2020	Aims to identify sustainable plan options for the future development of commercial-scale offshore wind energy in Scotland, including deep-water wind technologies, and covers both Scottish inshore and offshore waters.
Draft Sectoral Marine Plans for Offshore Wind, Wave and Tidal Energy in Scottish Waters 2013	The Wave and Tidal elements of this plan are the current guidance for these types of development. The wind sectoral plan has been updated, as per the plan in the row above.
Orkney Local Development Plan 2017	Sets out a vision and spatial strategy for the development of land in Orkney over the next ten to twenty years. The plan contains the land-use planning policies which Orkney Islands Council will use for determining applications.
Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture	Sets out the Scottish Government's long-term aspirations to 2045 for the finfish, shellfish and seaweed farming sectors, and the wider aquaculture supply chain.
Marine Tourism: Giant Strides 2020-25	A strategy for Scotland's marine tourism sector which aims to take 'giant strides' towards supporting communities, the environment and economic growth around Scotland's coasts, lochs and waterways.
Aquaculture Code of Practice: Containment of and Prevention of Escape of Fish on Fish Farms in relation to Marine Mammal Interactions	Sets out standards expected from Aquaculture Production Businesses in Scotland in order to provide for the containment of fish on fish farms and to prevent their escape in relation to marine mammal interactions.



Plan, strategy or policy	
Orkney Harbours Masterplan – Phase 1 – Planning Policy Advice	Provides a structured framework for the physical development and transformation of Orkney's harbours over a 20-year period.

Disclaimer: Table A2 is intended for guidance purposes only and does not provide an exhaustive list of all relevant legislation, plans, strategies and policies, nor does it provide legal interpretation of legislation referred to therein.

The onus remains with the applicant to ensure that they comply with the relevant legal requirements.



Appendix 3: National Marine Plan interactive

National Marine Plan interactive: User guide

What is the National Marine Plan interactive?

- A3.1 The National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi) is an online mapping tool developed by Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government to assist in the development and delivery of national and regional marine planning. It contains environmental, social and economic data for Scottish inshore waters (out to 12 nautical miles) and offshore waters (12–200 nautical miles).
- A3.2 NMPi is not a static system, and data sets, new statistics and other details are added when available. Users of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan are encouraged to refer to NMPi for up-to-date spatial data and maps.

How do I access information on NMPi?

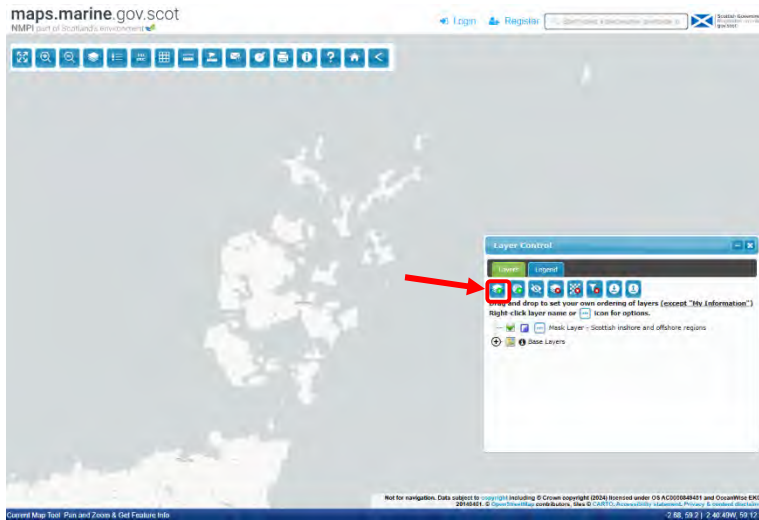
- A3.3 NMPi is accessed online at <http://maps.marine.gov.scot/> or via an internet search for 'NMPi Scotland'. Data can be viewed via the 'View layers to add/remove' button.
- A3.4 Layers can then be selected by navigating the folders or by searching for a keyword in the search bar (e.g. 'Marine Protected Areas'). To add the selected layers to the interactive map, select the layer(s) you wish to add and click the 'Add/Remove Layers' button.
- A3.5 Tick the layers that you want to view in the 'Layer Control' window, and they will appear on the map. You can now zoom in to view the spatial information in more detail, view the origin of the data under the context menu () , or add more data layers by following the same process.
- A3.6 The maps within this Plan contain hyperlinks to display the specific map data within NMPi where available. Data on NMPi is maintained by the data holder and may be updated or amended as required.



Example: Viewing seagrass locations

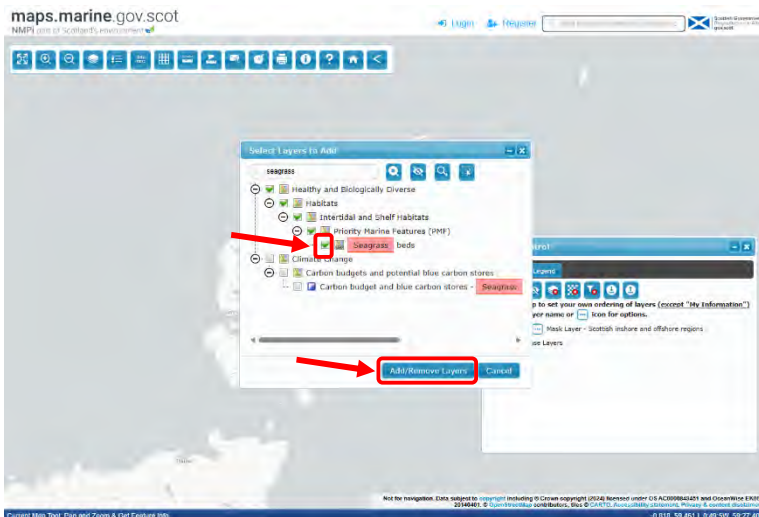
Step 1

Click 'View layers to add/remove'.



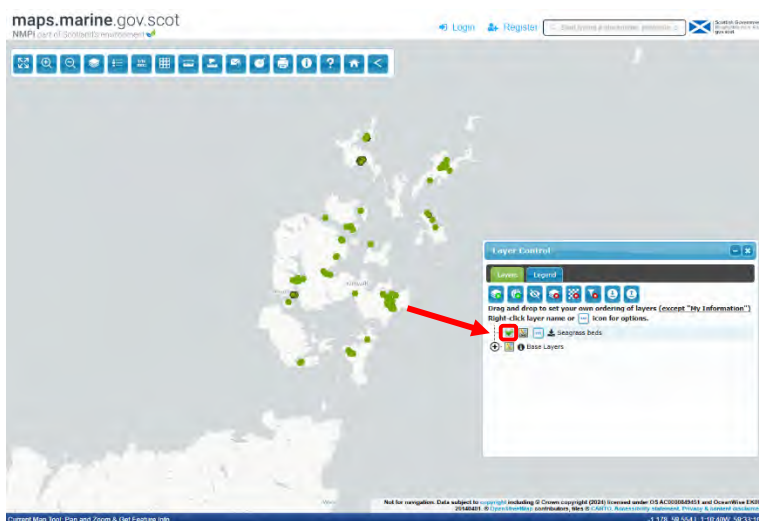
Step 2

Navigate the layer folders or search with a keyword in the search bar (e.g. 'Seagrass'). Tick the layers you would like to add and click 'Add/Remove Layers'.



Step 3

Tick the layers you would like to view and they will be added to the map.



Appendix 4: Natural Capital and Marine Ecosystem Services

Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

- A4.1 Natural capital is the stock of renewable and non-renewable natural resources (e.g. plants, animals, air, water, soils and/or minerals) that combine to yield a flow of benefits to people, that are often referred to as ecosystem services.
- A4.2 Ecosystem services are processes by which the environment produces resources that are utilised by humans, such as clean air, water, food, energy and materials. A well-functioning marine ecosystem supports these vital ecosystem services.
- A4.3 Ecosystem services deliver a variety of goods, such as food resources and services, and waste assimilation and treatment, which have value to human society above and beyond just maintaining ecosystem functioning¹⁴⁰. A summary of the benefits of marine ecosystem services is shown in Figure A1¹⁴¹.
- A4.4 Benefits are the changes in human wellbeing or welfare that result from the consumption or use of goods and services or from knowing something exists. These benefits can be classified as:
- *Provisioning services*: these create benefits through the provision of products from nature, such as food, water and raw materials.
 - *Regulating services*: benefits arise through the moderation of natural phenomena, for example sequestering carbon, removing pollutants from the air and regulating water flows.
 - *Cultural services*: non-material, experiential benefits provided through interaction with nature, for example recreation, tourism and aesthetic experiences.
 - *Supporting services*: cross-cutting services that underpin the production of all other ecosystem services, for example soil formation, nutrient cycling, provision of habitat and seed dispersal.

¹⁴⁰ Frid *et al.* (2011) *The Ecosystem Approach to Marine Planning and Management*: Chapter 4. (Eds: Kidd, Plater & Frid). Earthscan, London.

¹⁴¹ Natural capital, ecosystem services and the Blue Economy – Scotland's Marine Assessment. Marine Scotland. 2020.

<https://marine.gov.scot/sma/assessment-theme/natural-capital-ecosystem-services-and-blue-economy>



A4.5 The concepts of natural capital and ecosystem services have developed significantly over the past decade, gaining traction globally as a robust means of linking the underlying functioning and ecology of ecosystems to multiple benefits enjoyed by society. In 2021, the partial asset value of UK marine natural capital assets was £211 billion¹⁴². In 2018, the natural economy in Scotland contributed £29.1 billion gross value added to the Scottish economy (just over a fifth of its total).



Figure A1: Examples of marine ecosystem benefits © NatureScot

¹⁴² Marine accounts, natural capital, UK. Office for National Statistics 2021.
<https://www.beta.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/marineaccountsnaturalcapitaluk/2021>

Oceans of Value

- A4.6 Oceans of Value is a project led by the Scottish Wildlife Trust that used a natural capital approach to assess key habitats and species within the Orkney Islands marine region¹⁴³. The project was developed to investigate whether natural capital assessments could be applied to the marine environment at a Scottish marine region scale. This approach was the first of its kind and focused on the value of ecosystem services provided by the marine environment in Orkney.
- A4.7 The Oceans of Value Natural Capital Assessment of the Orkney Marine Region Area¹⁴⁴ provides a natural capital assessment and case study evaluations. This report provides a first-stage assessment of ecosystem services by habitat within the Orkney Islands marine region.

¹⁴³ Oceans of Value, Natural Capital Assessment of the Orkney Marine Region Area. Scottish Wildlife Trust.
<https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Orkney-Marine-Natural-Capital-Assessment-Final-Report-compressed-1.pdf>

¹⁴⁴ Oceans of Value Natural Capital Assessment of the Orkney Marine Region Area. Scottish Wildlife Trust.
<https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Orkney-Marine-Natural-Capital-Assessment-Final-Report-compressed-1.pdf>



Appendix 5: Priority Marine Features

Table A3: Priority Marine Features in the Orkney Islands marine region

To view the latest Priority Marine Feature records, visit National Marine Plan Interactive (<https://marinescotland.atkinsgeospatial.com/nmpi/>)

Broad habitat
1 Blue mussel beds
2 Flame shell beds
3 Horse mussel beds
4 Intertidal mudflats
4 Kelp and seaweed communities on sublittoral sediment
5 Kelp beds
6 Low or variable salinity habitats
7 Maerl beds
8 Native oysters
9 Seagrass beds
10 Tide-swept algal communities
11 Tide-swept coarse sands with burrowing bivalves
Low or limited mobility species
1 Northern feather star – <i>Leptometra celtica</i>
2 Fan mussel – <i>Atrina fragilis</i>
3 Ocean quahog – <i>Arctica islandica</i>
Mobile species
1 European spiny lobster – <i>Palinurus elephas</i>
2 European eel – <i>Anguilla anguilla</i>
3 Atlantic salmon – <i>Salmo salar</i>
4 Sea lamprey – <i>Petromyzon marinus</i>
5 Sea trout – <i>Salmo trutta</i>
6 Sparling – <i>Osmerus eperlanus</i>
7 Angler fish – <i>Lophius piscatorius</i>
8 Atlantic halibut – <i>Hippoglossus hippoglossus</i>
9 Atlantic herring – <i>Clupea harengus</i>
10 Atlantic mackerel – <i>Scomber scombrus</i>
11 Cod – <i>Gadus morhua</i>
12 Greenland halibut – <i>Reinhardtius hippoglossoides</i>
13 Horse mackerel – <i>Trachurus</i>
14 Ling – <i>Molva molva</i>
15 Norway pout – <i>Trisopterus esmarkii</i>
16 Round-nose grenadier – <i>Coryphaenoides rupestris</i>
17 Saithe – <i>Pollachius virens</i>
18 Sandeels – <i>Ammodytes marinus</i> and <i>Ammodytes tobianus</i>
19 Sand goby – <i>Pomatoschistus minutus</i>
20 Whiting – <i>Merlangius merlangus</i>
21 Basking shark – <i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>
22 Common skate – <i>Dipturus batis complex</i>
23 Porbeagle shark – <i>Lamna nasus</i>
24 Spiny dogfish – <i>Squalus acanthias</i>
25 Atlantic white-sided dolphin – <i>Lagenorhynchus acutus</i>



Mobile species	
26	Bottlenose dolphin – <i>Tursiops truncatus</i>
27	Fin whale – <i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>
28	Harbour porpoise – <i>Phocoena phocoena</i>
29	Killer whale – <i>Orcinus orca</i>
30	Long-finned pilot whale – <i>Globicephala melas</i>
31	Minke whale – <i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>
32	Northern bottlenose whale – <i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>
33	Risso's dolphin – <i>Grampus griseus</i>
34	Short-beaked common dolphin – <i>Delphinus delphis</i>
35	Sowerby's beaked whale – <i>Mesoplodon bidens</i>
36	Sperm whale – <i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>
37	White-beaked dolphin – <i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>
38	Harbour seal – <i>Phoca vitulina</i>
39	Grey seal – <i>Halichoerus grypus</i>
40	Otter – <i>Lutra lutra</i>



Appendix 6: Wild Seaweed Harvesting

- A6.1 There is a growing interest in small-scale wild seaweed harvesting in Orkney. Hand harvesting of seaweed for any form of monetary or other reward from Crown foreshore or seabed in Scotland requires a licence from Crown Estate Scotland (CES). CES issues licenses for hand harvesting, as well as Foreshore Harvesting Options for larger-scale nearshore harvesting¹⁴⁵. Permission from the owner is always required whether wild seaweed is harvested from Crown or private foreshore.
- A6.2 At the time of writing this Plan, large-scale commercial seaweed harvesting does not take place in Orkney. A marine licence from Marine Directorate–Licensing Operations Team may be required to remove seaweed from the seabed using a vessel or vehicle.
- A6.3 Removals from the seabed by hand, that is where no vehicle or vessel is used do not require a marine licence. Within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), consent may be required from NatureScot to harvest seaweed from the foreshore, depending on the Operations Requiring Consent for a given SSSI. At the time of writing, the sector is almost entirely based on harvesting of wild seaweed, predominately undertaken by small and micro-scale enterprises¹⁴⁶.
- A6.4 The Scottish Crown Estate Act 2019¹⁴⁷ stipulates that the manager of a Scottish Crown Estate asset must not grant a right to remove wild kelp from the seabed in specific circumstances detailed in section 15 of the Act.

¹⁴⁵ Licensing of wild seaweed harvesting. Crown Estate Scotland.

<https://www.crownestatescotland.com/scotlands-property/aquaculture/licensing-of-wild-seaweed-harvesting>

¹⁴⁶ Potential scale of Scottish seaweed-based industries: research paper. Scottish Government. 2022.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/understanding-potential-scale-seaweed-based-industries-scotland/>

¹⁴⁷ Wild kelp - restrictions on removal: questions and answers. Scottish Government. 2020.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/wild-kelp---restrictions-on-removal-questions-and-answers/#:~:text=Hand%20removal%20of%20seaweed%20for,not%20require%20a%20marine%20licence>



Appendix 7: Glossary and Acronyms

Appendix 7a

Table A4: Glossary

Term/phrase	Definition
Activity/activities	Any activity/activities that require authorisation from a public authority and falls within devolved competencies, e.g. 'licensable marine activities' identified under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and activities licensed under the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011.
Adaptation	Adaptation refers to adjustments in ecological, social or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts.
Amenity	Amenity refers to the positive elements that contribute to the overall character and/or enjoyment of an area by residents, visitors and other users.
Authorisation or enforcement decision	The determination of any authorisation or any decision relating to enforcement as detailed and further expanded upon in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, section 15. Appendix 1, which is not exhaustive, contains relevant licensing and consent regimes, and associated processes, administered by public authorities to manage marine development and activities.
Benthic	Benthic refers to anything associated with or occurring on the bottom of a body of water.
Biodiversity	The variability in living organisms and the ecological complexes of which they are part. This includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (UN Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992).
Biodiversity enhancement	Biodiversity enhancement is an approach to development and/or activities that aims to leave biodiversity in a measurably better state than beforehand. This means protecting, restoring, or creating environmental features that are of greater biodiversity value than any losses associated with the original development and/or activity.



Term/phrase	Definition
Blue carbon	Carbon stored in marine habitats, e.g. seagrass beds.
Carbon sequestration	The process of capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide.
Co-creation	Engaging in an intentional relationship in order to make something together e.g. a mitigation measure.
Coexistence	Where multiple developments, activities or uses can exist alongside or close to each other in the same place and/or at the same time.
Community wealth building	A people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people.
Compliance	The conformance to the requirements of the specific management actions of marine plans by relevant ocean users.
Cultural heritage	An expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation. It can include customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values, and have aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual aspects.
Cumulative effect/impact	Additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other developments or the combined effect of a set of developments taken together.
Decarbonisation	Reducing the amount of gaseous carbon compounds released by buildings, activities or operations.
Developer	An entity that is taking forward an application for a proposed development and/or activity.
Development	Any construction, building, engineering, mining, other operation and/or works, e.g. planning permission or a works licence, that require authorisation from a public authority under devolved competencies. This can include new development, or alterations, extensions or changes in material use to existing development or land.
Devolved Competence	Matters within the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament and/or the executive competence of the Scottish Ministers.
Ecosystem services	The processes by which the environment produces resources utilised by humans, such as clean air, water, food, energy and materials.



Term/phrase	Definition
Ecosystem approach	The ecosystem approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way.
Effect(s)	An effect is the result or outcome of an action.
Enhancement	Enhancement measures are those that actually improve the condition of the development site (or an alternative site) after the development or activity is complete.
Guiding principles	A set of values that establishes a framework for expected behaviour and decision making.
Historic environment	The physical evidence for human activity that connects people with place, linked with the associations we can see, feel and understand.
Historic environment asset	A physical element of the historic environment, e.g. a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape, identified as having cultural significance.
Impact(s)	The influence of an action on something or someone.
Implementation	The process of using marine plans in decision-making or actions.
Just transition	A just transition is both the outcome – a fairer, greener future for all – and the process that must be undertaken in partnership with those impacted by the transition to net zero. Just transition is how we get to a net zero and climate resilient economy, in a way that delivers fairness and tackles inequality and injustice.
Marine and/or coastal user(s)	Legitimate users of the marine and/or coastal environment for purposes such as, but not limited to, fishing, aquaculture, shipping, transport, energy generation, utilities, recreation and other economic and/or community activities.
Mitigation	The act of reducing adverse effects or impacts.
Mitigation hierarchy	The mitigation hierarchy indicates the order in which the impacts of development and/or activities should be considered and addressed. These are: i. avoid: by removing the impact at the outset; ii. minimise: by reducing the impact so that it is as low as practicable through the project design process;



Term/phrase	Definition
	iii. mitigate: by taking measures to reduce unavoidable adverse impacts.
National development	National developments are developments of national importance identified in the National Planning Framework.
Natural capital	Natural capital is the stock of renewable and non-renewable natural resources (e.g. plants, animals, air, water, soils, minerals) that combine to yield a flow of benefits to people, that are commonly referred to as ecosystem services. The UK Natural Capital Committee (2017) defines natural capital as: ‘the elements of nature that directly or indirectly produce value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, minerals, the air and oceans, as well as natural processes and functions’.
Nature-based solutions	Nature-based solutions are actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human wellbeing and biodiversity benefits.
Net zero	Scotland has set a target to become ‘net zero’ by 2045. This means that the amount of greenhouse gas emissions put into the atmosphere and the amount taken out will add up to zero.
Orkney Islands marine region	The area defined at Article 8 of the Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015 (SSI 2015/193) within the boundaries of the Scottish marine area (that is within the seaward limits of Scottish territorial waters (0-12 nautical miles))
Positive effects for biodiversity	The development of land should contribute to securing positive effects for biodiversity, as detailed in the National Planning Framework, and this approach to planning is designed to help halt and reverse biodiversity loss and to invest in nature-based solutions, benefiting people and nature.
Precautionary principle	Defined in the UN Rio Declaration on Environment and Development 1992 as follows: ‘Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.’
Quality of life	The degree to which an individual is healthy, comfortable, and able to participate in or enjoy life events.



Term/phrase	Definition
Resilience (climate)	The capacity of environmental, social and economic systems to cope with a hazardous event, trend or disturbance, responding or reorganising in ways that maintain their essential function, identity and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning and transformation.
Sector	A sector is an area of the economy in which businesses share the same, or a related, business activity, product or service.
Special qualities	In relation to features of designated landscapes, e.g. a national Scenic Area.
Sustainable development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Synergistic benefits	Benefits that occur when the sum of two effects together is greater than the sum of the effects separately.
Use	Any legitimate use of the marine and/or coastal environment that is exercised under a public right and that does not require authorisation from a public authority, e.g. freedom of navigation for shipping or the exercise of public access rights for the purposes of recreation.
Wellbeing	The state of being comfortable, healthy or happy.
Wellbeing economy	Building an economy that is inclusive and that promotes sustainability, prosperity and resilience, where businesses can thrive and innovate, and that supports all of our communities across Scotland to access opportunities that deliver local growth and wellbeing.
Wild Land Area	Wildness is a quality which people experience by a perceptual response. Wild land areas are the most extensive areas where these qualities are best expressed.



Appendix 7b

Acronyms

CCAP	Coastal Change Adaptation Plan
CES	Crown Estate Scotland
COMAH	Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMEC	European Marine Energy Centre
EPS	European Protected Species
GCR	Geological Conservation Review
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
INNS	Invasive Non-Native Species
LNCS	Local Nature Conservation Sites
MARPOL	The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MD-LOT	Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSPACE	Marine Spatial Planning Addressing Climate Effects
NMPi	National Marine Plan interactive
NNS	Non-Native Species
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
OFA	Orkney Fisheries Association
ORIFG	Orkney Regional Inshore Fisheries Group
PMF	Priority Marine Feature
RBMP	River Basin Management Plans
RIFG	Regional Inshore Fisheries Group
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest



STS	Ship-to-ship
UN	United Nations
UxO	Unexploded ordnance
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System



This publication is available at www.orkney.gov.uk
Published by Orkney Islands Council 2025.



Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan **Consultation and Modifications Report**



Blank Page

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
1. Introduction	2
1.1. Background.....	2
1.2. The Purpose of the Consultation and Modifications Report	3
2. Overview of the Consultation	4
2.1. Consultation and engagement	4
2.2. Early engagement workshops and school workshops	7
2.3. OIRMP community consultation and engagement events	7
2.4. School and SmartSTEM Workshops.....	7
2.5. Business Regulatory Impact Assessment – Interviews with businesses.....	9
3. Consultation respondent profile	10
3.1. Overview	10
3.2. Respondents profile	10
4. Consultation Response Summary.....	12
4.2. Section 1: Introduction	12
4.3. Section 2: General Policies	14
4.4. Section 3: Sector Policies	24
4.5. Section 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Plan	29
4.6. Appendices	30
4.7. Supporting assessments.....	31
4.8. Any other comments or feedback (Q41)	34
5. Modifications	36
5.1. Overview	36
5.2. Summary of modifications.....	36
5.3. Modifications to the consultation draft plan	39
Appendix 1: Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan Consultation Response Form ...	59
Appendix 2: Orkney regional approach to Priority Marine Feature policy.....	73

Tables

Table 1 - Summary of consultation and engagement activities 4

Table 2 - Modifications to the consultation draft plan 40

Figures

Figure 1 - Consultation Responses received for the Plan 11

Figure 2 - Consultation response by Sector/Interest 11

Figure 3 - Responses to Question 13a..... 73

Acronyms

Term	Abbreviation
AA	Appropriate Assessment
AISE	Adverse Impact on Site Integrity
BRIA	Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment
CCAP	Coastal Change Adaptation Plan
CO	Conservation Objective
CRWIA	Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EqIA	Equality Impact Assessment
EMEC	European Marine Energy Centre
EPS	European Protected Species
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GP	General Policy
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HRA	Habitat Regulations Appraisal
ICIA	Island Communities Impact Assessment
IFMI	Inshore Fisheries Management Improvement
IROPI	Imperative reasons of overriding public interest
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSPACE	Marine Spatial Planning Addressing Climate Effects
NMP	National Marine Plan
NMP2	National Marine Plan 2
NMPi	National Marine Plan interactive
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
OIC	Orkney Islands Council
OIRMP	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
OMPAG	Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group
PMF	Priority Marine Feature
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SP	Sector Policy
SPA	Special Protection Area
UK	United Kingdom
UXO	Unexploded ordnance
WHS	World Heritage Sites

Executive Summary

The [Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Consultation Draft](#) (the Plan) was prepared by Orkney Islands Council (OIC) on behalf of the Scottish Ministers to guide decision making that will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, activities and use in the Orkney Islands marine region.

The Plan has been prepared through a process of stakeholder engagement and consultation as outlined in the Regional Marine Plan for the Orkney Islands: Statement of Public Participation. The Plan was deposited for consultation from 1 August 2024 and the consultation closed on 25 October 2024.

The consultation and stakeholder process included early engagement workshops, consultation events, school and SmartSTEM workshops as well as Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment interviews with relevant businesses. The consultation and engagement process provided valuable information and local knowledge that has informed the preparation of the final Plan and supporting assessments.

Since the consultation, the Plan and supporting assessments have been updated in response to comments received in response to the consultation. This report summarises this stakeholder feedback and comments received on the Plan and supporting assessments, and identifies the modifications made to the Plan.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The [Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan \(OIRMP\): Consultation Draft](#) (the Plan) was prepared by Orkney Islands Council (OIC) on behalf of the Scottish Ministers to guide decision making that will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, activities and use in the Orkney Islands marine region. The Plan provides a framework for decision making to help deliver the Plan's environmental, social, economic, marine ecosystem and community well-being objectives, including the provision of social and economic benefits for local communities and businesses. The Plan was developed through an inclusive process of partnership working and stakeholder participation.

The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 makes provision for the preparation and adoption of a national marine plan and regional marine plans. The United Kingdom (UK) Marine Policy Statement was adopted in 2011 and sets the framework for preparing marine plans and taking decisions affecting the marine environment.

Scotland's National Marine Plan (NMP 2015) was adopted in 2015 and provides a comprehensive overarching framework for all marine activity in both Scottish inshore waters (out to 12 nautical miles) and offshore waters (12 to 200 nautical miles).

The Plan was drafted in accordance with NMP 2015, the UK Marine Policy Statement and has been prepared in accordance with the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. The Plan does not replace or remove existing regulatory regimes or legislative requirements. It provides an overarching framework to be used when reaching decisions about proposed development and activities in, or that affect, the Orkney Islands marine region.

The Plan policies aim to support the implementation of the NMP, address local priorities and relevant matters identified in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment (2020). The policies express intent and guide the delivery of sustainable development in Orkney.

The Plan is accompanied by the following supporting assessments:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Environmental Report.
- Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) Record.
- Partial Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA).
- Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA).
- Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA).
- Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA).

1.2. The Purpose of the Consultation and Modifications Report

The Plan has been prepared through a process of stakeholder engagement and consultation as outlined in the Regional Marine Plan for the Orkney Islands: Statement of Public Participation¹.

This Consultation and Modifications Report sets out the process of consultation that took place in 2024 (Section 2), a consultation respondent profile (Section 3), a summary of the issues raised in response to the consultation (Section 4) and details of the modifications made to the Plan post consultation (Section 5).

The Consultation Response Form, which was used to invite comment on the consultation draft plan and supporting documents is presented in Appendix 1: Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan Consultation Response Form.

Orkney regional approach to Priority Marine Feature (PMF) policy, taken forward in response to Question 13a in the Consultation Response Form, is presented in Appendix 2: Orkney regional approach to Priority Marine Feature policy.

The feedback provided through the consultation, and summarised in this report, has informed the preparation of final Plan and supporting assessments.

¹ Orkney Islands Council (2024). Regional Marine Plan for the Orkney Islands: Statement of Public Participation. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/utgakqzc/regional-marine-plan-for-the-orkney-islands-statement-of-public-participation-june-2024.pdf>

2. Overview of the Consultation

2.1. Consultation and engagement

The consultation draft Plan and supporting assessments were deposited for public consultation from 1 August to 25 October 2024.

In accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, the consultation period for the Plan and SEA Environmental Report were advertised in relevant newspapers and submitted to the SEA Gateway for comment from the Consultation Authorities.

The aim of the consultation, and wider engagement process, was to engage a diverse audience as effectively as possible. This included targeting and designing engagement activities to each island community's circumstances to capture a diverse range of views and interests. This consultation and engagement process provided valuable information and local knowledge that has informed the preparation of the final Plan and supporting assessments.

OIC is committed to ensuring that local communities have the opportunity to engage directly with the plan-making process and have their voices heard.

Table 1 - Summary of consultation and engagement activities

Activity	Comments
Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group (OMPAG)	Meetings have been held with the OMPAG during 2021-24 to guide the development of the Plan. In addition, general and sector specific policy sub-group meetings were held with environmental, community and industry interests to inform the preparation of all the Plan policies, the results of which were reported back to the main advisory group and subject to further discussion and refinement.
Early engagement workshops and school engagement sessions 2021	A series of community engagement workshops were delivered across Orkney in 2021 to provide information and gather feedback to inform the preparation of the Plan. These workshops helped to raise awareness about Orkney's first regional marine plan and how to engage with the plan preparation process. Classroom engagement sessions were delivered in four schools across Orkney to supporting learning and engage

Activity	Comments
	young people in the regional marine planning process.
Westray Development Trust Conference 2023	A presentation and engagement stand at the Westray Development Trust Conference 2023. This enabled OIC Marine Planners to raise awareness of regional marine planning in Orkney and the upcoming consultation on the Plan.
Community consultation and engagement events 2024	During August to October 2024, nine community drop-in sessions were delivered across Orkney running from 11:00 to 19:00. Locations included Stronsay, Rousay, St Margaret's Hope, Shapinsay, Hoy, Stromness, Kirkwall, Sanday and Westray.
Online community consultation and engagement sessions 2024	Two online information and engagement sessions were delivered in August to October 2024.
Sharing & recording spatial data 2024	Building on feedback captured during the engagement process for the Coastal and Marine Recreation Survey in 2023, marine spatial data was captured and 'ground truthed' as part of the consultation and engagement events in 2024 to help address data gaps and capture local knowledge.
Stromness Museum Marine Plan Information Panel	An information panel about the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan was displayed at the 'Nature in a changing Climate' exhibition at the Stromness Museum. This included information on how to engage with the plan making process.
Engagement at Orkney Snorkel Trail launch event September 2024	An engagement stand was set up at the launch of the Orkney Snorkel Trail to engage stakeholders with the Plan making process. Event was hosted by the Stromness Museum and Scottish Wildlife Trust at the Firth Community Centre.
Social media campaign 2021-24	Regular updates through OIC and Scottish Government channels, including links to participate and access documents.
Radio campaign 2024	Multiple rounds of interviews with BBC Radio Orkney before and during the Plan consultation.

Activity	Comments
SmartSTEM Schools Workshops 2024	SmartSTEM Workshops were delivered by OIC Marine Planners with six student groups (P6 to S2) in June 2024 at Kirkwall Grammar School; an event aimed at raising awareness for careers in Science Technology Engineering and Maths. The workshops involved playing the Marine Spatial Planning Challenge Board Game with young people to explore marine planning scenarios and capturing the priorities of young people for marine management and planning in Orkney.
School workshops	Previous engagement with schools in 2021 demonstrated the desire for follow up sessions. OIC Marine Planners then ran subsequent sessions with four schools in 2024 during the draft Plan consultation period.
Business Regulatory Impact Assessment – Interviews with businesses	Six interviews were held with local businesses using a survey questionnaire to gather evidence about any potential positive and negative impacts on businesses as a result of implementing the Plan.
Information leaflet on the marine plan	A bespoke factsheet provided an overview of the key elements of the Plan and was distributed to across Orkney communities.
Orcadian advert	The Plan and Strategic Environment Assessment consultation was advertised in The Orcadian on the 25 July 2024. An information leaflet on the upcoming consultation events was distributed in the following week's newspaper.
Posters	Posters were put up in key areas around Mainland Orkney and the isles to raise awareness and display information and links to the relevant consultation documents. These activities were supported by the Island Development Trusts.

2.2. Early engagement workshops and school workshops

OIC Marine Planning delivered community engagement workshops in Stronsay, Sanday, Westray and Hoy in Spring/Summer 2022. This helped to engage local communities in the plan making process and outline the scope and purpose of the forthcoming marine plan.

In addition to the engagement outlined in the Statement of Public Participation, workshops were delivered with the Stronsay, Sanday, Westray and Hoy Community Schools.

These workshops were extremely useful to inform community understanding of the plan making process. They also highlighted the need to go above and beyond the statutory engagement requirements to ensure island communities do not feel left out of the process and ensure Local Ecological Knowledge was (and will continue to be) gathered.

Community engagement events took place in Kirkwall, Stromness and St Margaret's Hope in Spring/Summer 2022 to engage local communities in the plan making process and outline the scope and purpose of the forthcoming marine plan. Again, these were additional events to those outlined in the Statement of Public Participation.

2.3. OIRMP community consultation and engagement events

As part of the public consultation from 1 August to 25 October 2024, ten in-person community consultation events were delivered which ran through the day and into the evening in multiple locations throughout the Orkney Islands, see Table 1.

A high turnout was experienced for the consultation events, six of which on the ferry-linked isles as well as Kirkwall, Stromness, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope. Each event was set up in a location where local people visit as part of their day-to-day activities including local cafés or development trust centres, or youth clubs in order to capture passing local people of all ages. Short presentations and films were used to showcase the Orkney marine environment and highlight the Plan's relevance within each the local area.

Two further online community consultation and engagement sessions were delivered to maximise participation opportunities.

These events were advertised online, via email and in the printed press. Consultation information was available from the OIC website and was sent out in email alerts to the 360+ Orkney marine planning stakeholders.

From these engagement sessions there was a total of 250 visitors attending, and many in-depth discussions held about the Plan and more general marine topics.

2.4. School and SmartSTEM Workshops

Several workshops were held with schools to ensure young people's views and voices were captured. During these workshops the OIC Marine Planning team delivered presentations on how marine planning works in Orkney and how it contributes to the sustainable use of the marine environment. The workshops demonstrated how busy the Orkney Islands marine region is in simple terms and set up interactive marine planning scenarios using the Marine Spatial Planning

Challenge Game. Young people's views were captured on what they believe are important aspects of the sea, and how they should be managed.

Ten local school class sessions were delivered by the OIC Marine Planning team to engage pupils on marine planning issues and to find out what they valued about the marine environment. This included four lessons delivered in 2022 as part of the early engagement process, three workshops delivered in conjunction with a Kirkwall Grammar School SmartSTEM event, and the remaining three sessions during the formal regional marine plan consultation in 2024. The ages of the children ranged from 7 to 15 years old.

These lessons/workshops included a 30-minute interactive presentation exploring the marine developments and activities around Orkney and the many ways in which local communities rely on the ocean, and a summary of what marine planning involves. This was followed by playing an adapted version of the Marine Spatial Planning Challenge boardgame, with a scenario set up resembling the marine planning challenges faced in Orkney, before finishing up by asking the young people to write down and discuss their answers to two questions.

- Question 1: What is the most important thing about the sea for you?
- Question 2: If you were asked to manage the sea, what would you do?

These questions were specifically chosen to identify what young people value the most about the marine environment, and what they would like to see being done in the future. This information has been used to assess and inform the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan aims and objectives, to ensure they reflect young voices and aspirations.

Over 150 answers to the two questions were captured, with many more noted following the discussions that took place. The most mentioned theme in relation to Question 1 (What is the most important thing about the sea for you?) was nature conservation, with a heavy focus in all workshops being on the need to protect wildlife. This was focused on general species and habitat preservation, but led to discussions on many related impacts, in particular issues around marine litter and other more general pollution concerns. The other reoccurring topics were the importance of fishing as a food source and income (and the need to protect fish so that fishing can continue), the scenic views, and the need to keep the sea clean for us to enjoy it. Many children talked about their enjoyment of swimming and playing in the sea.

The children's knowledge and comments about marine related jobs, fishing and marine habitats and species was remarkably well informed. A high percentage of the children stated that their parents and families worked in fishing, aquaculture, marine energy, oil and gas and marine transport.

When asked "If you were asked to manage the sea, what would you do?", the responses received were very diverse. Again, conservation themes ran throughout with the two most raised topics being reducing litter and protecting fish and wildlife. Several more locally relevant topics came up in discussion, including the need to improve local piers, reduce power cuts on the smaller islands, the need for more modern ferries and more general comments on keeping the sea clean. The topic of salmon farms was raised on several occasions, with mixed

opinions between children. There was a good understanding on the need to balance human wellbeing (e.g. 'fish to eat') and nature conservation.

2.5. Business Regulatory Impact Assessment – Interviews with businesses

Six interviews with businesses of varying sizes were carried out as part of the BRIA process. This included two businesses from the aquaculture sector, two from the energy sector, one from fisheries and one from a local tourism operator. This helped to capture varied views on the Plans' impacts on businesses from a variety of sectors and businesses of a range of sizes. This part of the consultation has helped to assess the likely costs, benefits and risks of implementing the Plan for businesses and employers. Consideration has been given to the potential for any disproportionate impacts or benefits for micro/small businesses in comparison to businesses of greater size.

Questions presented to businesses during these interviews included:

- Which of the policies in the Plan does the business feel might provide either benefits/opportunities or costs/risks?
- Will the Plan have an impact on the competitiveness of your business?
- Within your industry, will the Plan affect suppliers' ability and/or incentive to introduce new technologies, products or business models?
- For small and micro businesses only, will the Plan create a disproportionate distribution of benefits/impacts towards businesses due to their size?

The BRIA interviews followed guidance and information provided within the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment: Toolkit². The findings from the consultation on the Plan and the BRIA interviews have informed the preparation of the BRIA and the final Plan.

² Scottish Government (2018). Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment: Toolkit. <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2018/11/business-regulatory-impact-assessments-toolkit/documents/business-regulatory-impact-assessment-toolkit/business-regulatory-impact-assessment-toolkit/govscot%3Adocument/business-regulatory-impact-assessment-toolkit.pdf#:~:text=BRIAs%20help%20to%20assess%20the%20likely%20costs%2C%20benefits,impact%20on%20the%20public%2C%20private%20or%20third%20sector.>

3. Consultation Respondent Profile

3.1. Overview

In total across the consultation, 35 written consultation responses were received from 23 organisations and 12 individuals. Within these responses, over 450 individual comments were submitted, logged and analysed in detail.

3.2. Respondents profile

As part of the consultation analysis process, respondents were assigned to stakeholder groups. This enabled analysis of whether differences, or commonalities, appeared across the different types of organisation and/or individuals that responded. A break-down of the stakeholder groups is shown here and in Figure 1:

- Businesses (8)
- Individual/ Interested Persons (12)
- Industry bodies (2)
- Interest Groups (8)
- Public Bodies (4)
- Public Company (1)

The consultation respondents are categorised as local community members, conservation interests, academia and research interests, fisheries interests, aquaculture interests, energy interests, recreation, historic environment, utilities and engineering, see Figure 2.

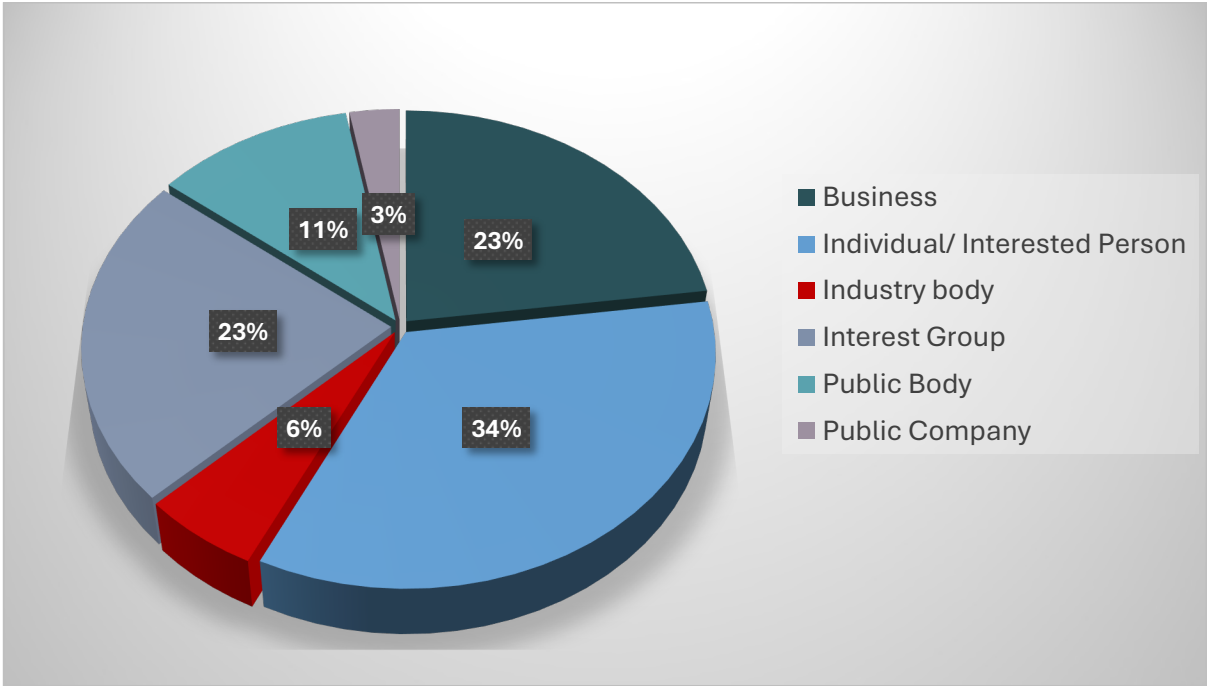


Figure 1 - Consultation Responses received for the Plan

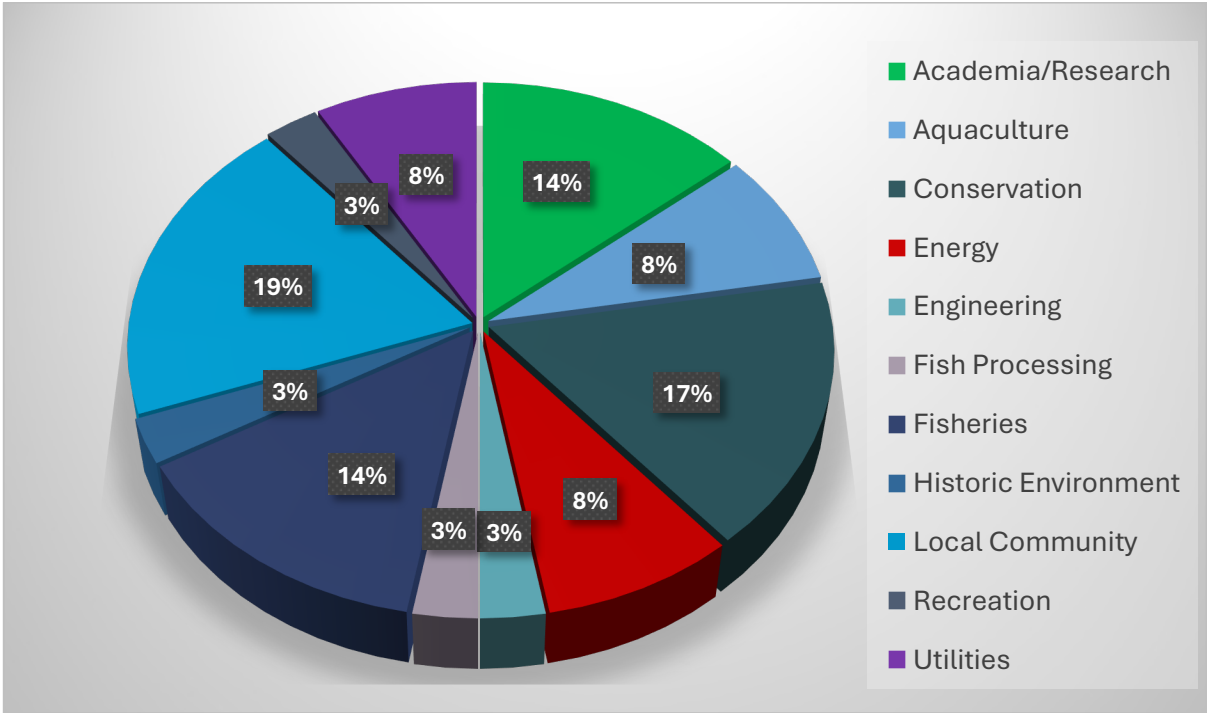


Figure 2 - Consultation response by Sector/Interest

4. Consultation Response Summary

4.1.1. Overview

This section of the report provides a summary of the issues raised in response to the consultation of the Plan and supporting questions, as detailed in Appendix 1: Consultation Response Form. The consultation questions relate to the Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Plan, and Plan appendices, in order of how they appear in the Plan. For clarity, references to Plan policies and paragraphs in this consultation response summary refer to those in the consultation draft Plan.

4.2. Section 1: Introduction

4.2.2. Purpose of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (Q1)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The plan vision would benefit from a clearly stated time period to help monitor the implementation of the plan e.g. 2045 or 2050.
- The plan should meet the needs and aspirations of Islanders and islands within the Orkney archipelago. In this regard, it is important that where local considerations need to be factored into decision making, the local context of Orkney is considered.
- It is unclear the extent to which OIC has the powers to implement the plan in decision making.
- Clarification is required in the plan on the role of OIC (the delegate) as a consultee on marine licensing decisions.
- Clarification is required in the plan on the role of OIC and other public authority decision makers to ensure that the plan's aim and objectives are addressed.
- The plan should provide guidance on spatial and temporal allocation for different users, activities and developments.
- The plan needs to be supported by clear guidance on enforcement and planning mechanisms to ensure policies lead to clear outcomes and decisions.
- The plan should include spatial management to restrict development impacts on commercial fishing interests including fish breeding and nursery grounds.

4.2.3. Use of the Plan policy framework (Q2)

Summary of consultation response issues

- It is welcomed that the plan policies include provisions to guide public authority decision makers to contribute towards the delivery of the plan objectives and that the policies should be applied proportionately.

- The identification of key terms up-front in the plan is welcomed to ensure standardised and correct interpretation of policies.
- It is unclear the extent to which OIC has the powers to implement the plan in decision making.
- This section of the plan may need to make it clear where the 'power lies' in decision making, and the role of OIC, alongside the Marine Directorate, in implementing the policies.
- It is important to ensure that the ecosystem approach is being used in plan implementation.
- Clarification is needed on how the concept of 'proportionality' will be applied in practice to policy implementation.
- It is unclear how upcoming plans will impact the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, particularly National Marine Plan 2 (NMP2).
- Consideration should be given to the inclusion of wording which more clearly states that the plan should be read and applied as whole, and that there may be conflicts between policies, that may need to be resolved.
- There is some ambiguity over what/who falls within the definition of 'Marine and/or Coastal Users'.

4.2.4. Vision, Guiding Principles, Aim and Objectives (Q3)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The interests of Orkney communities extend beyond the Orkney Islands marine region and this should be acknowledged via the implementation of the plan objectives and policies.
- The plan objectives and policies need to support better engagement with local communities in decision making.
- The plan currently reflects a strong emphasis on managing environmental impacts from development, with less focus on supporting sustainable economic development.
- The vision, guiding principles, aim and objectives should refer to the twin climate and nature crisis and the plan's role in addressing this.
- Greater clarity is needed on how a 'rapid transition' to net zero is defined within the plan objectives.
- Food production and food security should be supported within the plan objectives.
- Co-existence is vital for all sectors however, the fishing sector is often excluded from sites despite co-siting efforts; the plan needs to support a framework where co-existence is achieved.
- The plan does not provide the level of guidance which would be expected in a regional marine plan as the objectives do not specify the particular steps that will be taken to meet the plan's aim.

- Greater detail is required on the meaning of and compliance with environmental limits.
- The identification of cumulative impacts within the plan objectives is welcomed.
- Greater clarity on Objective 3 (just transition) would be useful, particularly given the multiple definitions and tensions within just transition policies and narratives.
- It is important that this marine plan embeds an approach of genuine accountability via effective, meaningful public engagement across Orkney communities.
- The ambition for a low carbon economy, and achieving net-zero commitments through just transition, should not come at the cost of food security.
- An ecosystem-based approach should supersede the implementation of individual sector policies, as if viewed in isolation, these policies will not take cumulative impacts into consideration.
- All policies should be reviewed with the intention of replacing the word 'should' with a stronger word such as 'shall' to support effective implementation.
- Visitors to Orkney could be specifically referenced in the plan's aim, vision and objectives.

4.3. Section 2: General Policies

4.3.2. Introductory Information to the General Policies (GPs)(Q4)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The plan currently reflects a strong emphasis on managing environmental impacts from development, with less focus on supporting sustainable development.
- The plan should emphasise the need to optimise positive impacts and outcomes alongside the management of negative impacts.
- The role of the plan in guiding the behaviour of applicants and developers, as well as public authorities, needs to be clearly stated.
- Further clarity is required on the meaning of 'proportionately' in the implementation of the plan policies.
- The inclusion of the mitigation hierarchy as an overarching principle that underpins the general and sector policies is welcomed.

4.3.3. General Policy 1: Sustainable development, activities and use (Q5)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The plan needs to make stronger links to the delivery of Scotland's Blue Economy Vision.
- General Policy 1 should place a more significant emphasis on support for sustainable development to reflect the current National Marine Plan (NMP 2015) and emerging draft proposals for NMP2.
- General Policy 1 should highlight the importance of using local knowledge in decision making.
- Reference to the precautionary principle in General Policy 1 is welcomed.
- Greater clarity is required on the application of the precautionary principle in decision making.
- The plan needs to be careful not to take the precautionary principle too far, making it difficult for developments or activities to go ahead.
- General Policy 1 should make further reference to the importance of adhering to the mitigation hierarchy.
- "Appropriate mitigation" must only be used when all other options have been explored fully and the adverse impacts have been agreed to be "unavoidable".
- The plan needs to include spatial management to prioritise sustainable development in appropriate locations.
- The plan should implement ecosystem-based management in recognition of the integrated nature of human and non-human activities.

4.3.4. General Policy 2: Safety (Q6)

Summary of consultation response issues

- General Policy 2 should apply other areas of safety in addition to harbour areas and shipping.
- Developments, such as aquaculture and offshore renewable energy, must ensure their design, layout and maintenance will not pose risks to the safety of fishers.

4.3.5. General Policy 3: Climate change (Q7)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The prominence given to tackling the global climate crisis and supporting the displacement of fossil-fuel use is welcomed.
- From a place-based perspective, General Policy 3c is exciting and ambitious.

- The implementation of General Policy 3c will be key to ensuring the long-term sustainability of marine developments, and the health and wellbeing of communities and ecosystems alike.
- The Orkney Partnership's 2030 net zero target should be referenced in the contextual information to this policy.
- There is no reference to the role of marine food production in the transition to more climate friendly sources of human protein.
- The plan should recognise the potential contribution of e-fuels to decarbonisation.
- The supporting text to this policy should refer to greenhouse gas emissions as opposed to carbon emissions.
- The vision, guiding principles, aim and objectives should refer to the twin climate and nature crisis and the plan's role in addressing this.
- The supporting text to this policy should refer to Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029.
- Additional guidance is required to help decision-makers and applicants understand what is meant by 'significant weight' to climate and nature crises and how this will be applied in practice.
- There should be a requirement that proposals for developments or activities must demonstrate how they will help to meet net zero targets.
- Emphasising the climate crisis is welcomed, however, to ensure that developments deliver on the ambitions of this plan, certain criteria should be incorporated to avoid potential greenwashing or bypassing of effects.
- The identification of habitat restoration as a way to help adapt to a changing climate is welcomed.
- This section should also reference underlying processes influencing climate change e.g. Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation.

4.3.6. General Policy 4: Supporting sustainable social and economic benefits (Q8)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The plan needs to emphasise the importance of securing socio-economic benefits as well as addressing environmental impacts.
- Supporting community wealth building principles is welcomed by many stakeholders.
- The plan needs to be more specific about how community wealth building will be delivered.
- The plan needs to address appropriate early engagement between fishers and developers to ensure sustainable use of the marine area.

- The plan narrative and terminology should move away from the term 'sustainable economic growth' as there are increasing concerns regarding whether growth and sustainability are compatible in all cases. It would better align with the aim and objectives of the plan to focus on sustainable development including prosperous and sustainable economies.
- There should be standardised community benefit packages across developments.
- Further guidance is required on how 'net' economic benefit will be assessed and determined in decision making.
- This policy should aim to facilitate marine developments which support the local economy, where appropriate, and the creation of skilled and well-paid jobs.
- The supporting text to this policy should reference jobs created indirectly/downstream jobs, e.g. seafood processors.
- The safeguarding of nature will provide social and economic benefits for Orkney through creating jobs in the tourism industry e.g. wildlife watching.

4.3.7. General Policy 5: Safeguarding natural capital and ecosystem services (Q9)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Safeguarding natural capital for future generations should not deprive the current generation benefiting from it in a sustainable way.
- The plan should enforce stricter protections in areas providing critical ecosystem services (e.g. breeding and nursery grounds).
- Potential pressures from fish farming can be exaggerated, often unintentionally, with regulation disproportionate to impacts.
- There are data gaps that will affect the delivery of natural capital and ecosystem service assessments.
- The word 'should' in this policy should be replaced with the word 'must' or 'shall' to strengthen policy implementation by decision makers.
- Bottom trawling damages ecosystem services in many instances, and we don't know what may recover from historic damage unless bottom trawling is banned and the ecosystem is given a chance to recover.

4.3.8. General Policy 6: Water environment (Q10)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) should advise on current River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) monitoring as it may affect the approach of this chapter.

- This policy is an opportunity to highlight responsibilities of public authorities with terrestrial jurisdictions to have regard to downstream consequences on the coastal and marine environment.
- This section focusses too heavily on the RBMP and should cover wider management priorities relating to water quality and benthic impacts.
- This policy could include further spatial planning to protect water quality.
- This policy stating that proposals should be accompanied by 'sufficient information' for an assessment on impacts on water quality and the benthic environment is welcome.
- The intended outcome and wording of General Policy 6ii needs to be clearer.

4.3.9. General Policy 7: Coastal development and coastal change (Q11)

Summary of consultation response issues

- It is welcomed that this policy recognises the importance of coastal and marine habitats and species in coastal protection, applying nature-based solutions and permitting managed future coastal change, wherever practicable.
- It would be beneficial to highlight potential cross linkages with this policy area and the role of the Coastal Change Adaptation Plan for Orkney.
- The management of coastal impacts (e.g. coastal flooding in settlements) should be more specifically addressed within the plan.
- This policy will need to be applied proportionately so that implementation does not result in disproportionately expensive requirements on developers.
- The plan should not prohibit the development of hard defence measures required for the safety of coastal communities.
- It is necessary to protect assets from the impacts of climate change, particularly in coastal environments, to ensure that the integrity of wastewater and water assets can remain fully operational.
- The linkages between this section and GP3 Climate Change should be acknowledged.

4.3.10. General Policy 8: Historic environment (Q12)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The inclusion of a specific and detailed policy on the historic environment and the inclusion of a reference to the Historic Environment Policy for Scotland is welcomed.
- A specific policy section on undesignated assets should be considered to ensure that these types of assets are given the same level of focus as designated assets and ensure that they are not undervalued by potential developers and wider stakeholders.

- Suggested that the wording for General Policy 8c on World Heritage Sites (WHS) could be adapted to directly incorporate the wording from the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) WHS policy to better reflect and align with national policy.
- This policy should mention living heritage such as building and maintaining historic boats and the importance of historic piers.
- This plan could consider embedding marine-based socio-cultural heritage within policy e.g. the embodied knowledge, skill and tradition of fishing.
- The context for General Policy 8 focusses almost entirely on physical archaeology and does not address maritime history, culture, people, etc.
- Recommended that the wording for General Policy 8d on Historic Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) should directly incorporate the wording from NPF4.

4.3.11. General Policy 9: Nature (Q13)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The alignment of this policy with NPF4 and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy is welcomed.
- This policy should highlight the importance of local knowledge in decision making.
- The context for the policy focuses on global issues when it should address local issues.
- In the absence of a biodiversity metric, General Policy 9 should refer to the need to utilise best practice methods.
- The plan should directly address the gaps in the NPF4 Policy 3 concerning the exemptions for aquaculture regarding biodiversity enhancement actions.
- Further guidance required on how significant weight will be applied to nature in decision making.
- Need to update reference to and support to the delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.
- The plan should address how development and activities impact on existing restoration and enhancement projects and how these impacts should be addressed in decision-making.
- The plan should include spatial management for fisheries, especially for fisheries such as dredging that have significant adverse impacts on the environment.
- Care is needed for any restoration and enhancement approaches to ensure it isn't a waste of effort and resources, and these efforts need to be mindful of national policy process already ongoing.
- There is a lack of guidance available for the provision of biodiversity enhancement in the marine environment and it is important that the

application of this policy is consistent and proportionate given this current limitation.

- Any future guidance on marine restoration and enhancement should be consulted on with members of OMPAG and other relevant stakeholders before being adopted.
- Further monitoring is necessary for initial baseline data in Orkney's marine environment to inform the policies in the plan; how can developments be deemed sustainable if the local environment baseline data is lacking?
- General Policy 9: Nature should sit alongside General Policy 3: Climate change in the plan to a knowledge the connected nature of these policy issues.
- Support stated for a departure from the National Marine Plan 2015 by giving significant weight to the global nature crisis, bringing the plan into line with NPF4 and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.
- Policy 9da) is helpful as it specifically applies the mitigation hierarchy to decision making on PMF impacts and may add additional weight to these considerations.

4.3.12. General Policy 9d: Specific policy provisions on how lower magnitude impacts on PMFs should be considered in decision making (Q13a)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The protection of PMFs is a priority, not only for the conservation of biodiversity but for the ecosystem services they provide to local communities.
- A new policy on lower magnitude impacts on PMFs would require significant additional assessment effort in Orkney when compared to other regions, and that this could be a deterrent to development and investment in Orkney.
- The inclusion of specific policy provisions for lower magnitude impacts on PMFs would foster a more comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to marine conservation in Orkney.
- Some policy provisions should be developed to protect PMFs in keeping with the consideration of cumulative impacts.
- The loss of a small amount of a particular PMF should not stop high value projects from proceeding where these are in the general economic or social development interest of Orkney as a whole. However, PMFs should be protected from developments which are for the convenience of an individual or small group of people, for example, installing a waste water to sea outfall rather than building a suitable on shore treatment works for waste water.
- While the intention to include specific policy provisions for lower magnitude impacts on PMFs is commendable, it is crucial to consider the practical implications for marine development.

- Clear evidence-based thresholds would be required to assess the potential impacts of individual developments, without such thresholds a policy could pose significant challenges to developers and decision-makers.
- Statutory agencies welcomed further discussion on a potential policy that will consider how lower magnitude impacts on PMFs (i.e. those impacts that do not constitute an impact on the national status) should be considered in decision making. These discussions could also be tied in with discussion on possible changes to the NMP policy and/or associated guidance.
- The risk could be that if no policy addresses lower magnitude impacts on PMFs, there will be a clear gap that could result in long-term, unpredicted consequences.
- Tools, metrics and science are needed to assess lower magnitude impacts on PMFs.
- Lower magnitude impacts on PMFs should be addressed in regional policy as disregarding them would have an extremely detrimental impact on Orkney's local biodiversity, with significant knock on effects.
- Detailed coverage of regional protection of PMFs would provide much better policy guidance for both the environment and meaningful sustainable development.
- Focusing solely on the national status of PMFs may overlook significant lower magnitude impacts that, while not immediately affecting national populations, could still have considerable consequences at the regional level.
- There should be a presumption against all developments and activities which adversely impact any PMFs.
- Existing measures are in place to ensure that anchorages do not adversely impact vulnerable PMFs; maerl beds are the most important feature in this context in Orkney.

Orkney regional approach to Priority Marine Feature policy

The Orkney regional approach to PMF policy, taken forward in response to Question 13a, is presented in Appendix 2: Orkney regional approach to Priority Marine Feature policy.

4.3.13. General Policy 10: Seascape and landscape (Q14)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The impact of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects to seascape and landscape should be identified in the contextual information to General Policy 10.
- Any strategies to minimise or mitigate significant adverse effects on landscape, townscape and seascape should be practical and proportionate to the type of development.

- This policy should not be used to prevent the construction of appropriate sea defences.
- It is important to recognise that there may be conflicts between minimising the visibility of developments, such as seaweed farms and wave farms, and ensuring that they are adequately marked for the safety of mariners, particularly in adverse conditions.

4.3.14. General Policy 11 Surface and underwater noise, and vibration (Q15)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The application of the mitigation hierarchy in relation to noise sensitive species is welcomed.
- Further research should be undertaken to address data gaps on baseline noise levels in Orkney waters and noise related impacts.
- The information on noise needs to be about Orkney and reflect the varying severity of noise impacts.
- It is recommended that the plan includes a requirement for activities that create noise pollution to use proven mitigation measures.
- The plan should refer to acoustic devices as opposed to acoustic deterrent devices (ADDs) as there are novel acoustic devices being trialled in aquaculture for medicinal bath treatments. Removing 'deterrent' would permit both ADDs and novel technology to be encompassed.
- ADDs should not be identified as a noise related pressure specifically in relation to aquaculture.
- As there is policy provision for PMFs in General Policy 9, there isn't a need for a specific policy strand on PMFs in General Policy 11.
- A requirement for the assessment and consideration of electromagnetic field effect should be included in this policy.
- The supporting text to this policy refers to the joint UK Protocol for In-Situ Underwater Measurement of Explosive Ordnance Disposal for unexploded ordnance (UXO), however it does not state that this protocol must be used.
- There should be a requirement for activities that create noise pollution to use proven mitigation measures.

4.3.15. General Policy 12: Marine litter and waste (Q16)

Summary of consultation response issues

- 'Bag the Bruck' data should be considered in the context to this policy.
- This policy should address lost, discarded or abandoned fishing gear.

- 'Bag the Bruck' is a very positive initiative though there is a need to consider how collected litter can be disposed of during the rest of the year.

4.3.16. General Policy 13: Non-native and invasive non-native species (Q17)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The updated Great Britain Invasive Non-native Species Strategy should be referenced in the supporting information to this policy.
- Relevant aspects of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy Delivery Plan should be considered for inclusion in the plan.
- Developments or activities that pose a risk of introducing non-native species must be required to produce a comprehensive Bio-Security Plan.
- This plan should ensure that the biosecurity impacts from any marine and terrestrial invasive non-native species are effectively managed.
- There is an underappreciated risk of invasive non-native species being introduced from work vessels which are difficult to clean, such as dredgers and jack-up platforms.

4.3.17. General Policy 14: Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities (Q18)

Summary of consultation response issues

- This policy is hugely welcomed and necessary, though as recognised in the plan, the associated values are often intangible or difficult to measure, and even unquantifiable. This however does not make them any less relevant, these values are often more important than short term production of a given good or short term economic investment.
- Developers across all marine activities will need guidance to help implement this policy, there is a learning curve to thinking about this and embedding it in core considerations for any marine development project.
- This policy should identify provision for an Orkney Islands Marine Region: Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life guidance.
- Sustainable marine developments, not just activities such as recreation, positively contribute to wellbeing and quality of life.
- Sustainable economic development in island communities delivers many socio-economic benefits including improvements to wellbeing and quality of life.
- Protecting communities from consultation fatigue and tickbox engagement is essential.
- This policy has no mention of the direct effects that marine developments have in contributing towards improving quality of life of rural and coastal

communities through improvement of infrastructure and amenities within the places they operate.

- Strong and inclusive community and stakeholder engagement is essential for the successful implementation of any management plan, particularly in this case, as the local community will be directly impacted by the plan.
- Fishing activities in island communities deliver significant socio-economic benefits both directly and indirectly.
- Policy 14 aii regarding the co-creation of mitigation to address impacts on amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities should be reworded to make the meaning clearer.
- This policy forms an important part of the plan, therefore it should not be listed as the last general policy.
- Sailing and rowing make a particular contribution to wellbeing and social cohesion, and developments which improve the facilities and activities of clubs and other local groups should be encouraged.

4.4. Section 3: Sector Policies

4.4.1. Introductory information to the Sector Policies (3.1 – 3.16) (Q19)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The sector policies should be as Orkney specific as possible and address local priorities.
- It is important to consider cumulative impacts on other developments, activities and infrastructure not just cumulative impacts on nature.
- All sector policies should be considered together to assist decision makers in making difficult decisions about the use of the marine environment.
- “Appropriate mitigation” must only be used when all other options have been explored fully and the adverse impacts agreed to be “unavoidable”.

4.4.2. Sector Policy 1: Commercial fishing (Q20)

Summary of consultation response issues

- This policy should be designed to support and enable the fishing industry to flourish.
- Fishing is significantly at risk from marine economy developments that are planned into the future.
- The plan should include spatial management measures for commercial fishing to address environmental impacts from scallop dredging and bottom trawling on seabed habitats and the ecosystem services they provide.
- There is no justification for continuing to dredge for clams within the Orkney Marine area, which are already fished by divers without damage to the sea.

- The policy is inconsistent with other sector policies and does not include avoidance of negative impacts caused by fishing activities on all other receptors and does not reference where fishing should be avoided or restricted.
- Policy provisions that address significant adverse impacts from commercial fishing activities on other developments, and other economic sectors, should be included in this policy.
- Additional guidance could be provided on nursery, spawning and feeding areas for commercially fished species.
- The current text underplays upstream and downstream jobs created by fishing such as shoreside processors.
- The policy wording could be stronger to protect fishing interests, such as using 'must' rather than 'should' or 'have regard to'.
- If fishing is a part of Orkney which we wish to preserve, greater connection of future generations in relation to sustainable fishing may be an opportunity stemming from this plan.
- The recognition of the importance of nursery, spawning and feeding areas for commercially fished species, and associated habitats and species, as well as the recognition of the potential impacts of developments and activities on the wider marine environment is welcomed.
- It would be helpful if this policy set out how the plan can contribute to sustainable management of commercial fisheries in Orkney and address the impact of fishing on habitats and species.
- Areas previously damaged by dredging should be allowed to recover, with dredging and bottom trawling stopped, allowing other more sustainable fishing methods.
- Reference to the Orkney Inshore Fisheries Management Plan is out of date.
- Commercial fishing plays an important role in the Orkney economy and recreational boaters benefit from it through, for example, harbour maintenance and boatyards.
- Best practice use of creel buoys should be promoted as these can pose a hazard to navigation.

4.4.3. Sector Policy 2: Aquaculture (Q21)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Concerns raised about the sustainability of aquaculture including effects on biodiversity, the water environment (chemical pressures) and wild salmonids.
- There is an opportunity for this policy section to mention how salmon farming is a global leader on producing high quality, low carbon protein, and link this to objectives and goals outlined in the Blue Economy Vision, Aquaculture Vision, and National Food Strategy.

- It is welcomed that this policy recognises the importance of nature conservation considerations, the application of the mitigation hierarchy and considering cumulative impacts from development and activities.
- This marine plan should address the effects of specific fish farms in Orkney.
- There is a disproportionate and unjustified focus on potential negative impacts from fish farming.
- The wording in this policy section exaggerates potential cumulative impacts from finfish expansion and does not consider the work done by the sector and regulators in ensuring scale, siting, operations, and design of fish farm developments are appropriately managed to limit cumulative impacts on the marine environment and other users.
- The plan should include policy for decommissioning schemes to be put in place for aquaculture developments.
- The contextual text to this policy should acknowledge that the degree of environmental impact from fish farming depends on the type, scale, location and mitigation associated with a specific fish farming development or activity.
- There are provisions in this policy to safeguard and protect other marine users and infrastructure from aquaculture activities; this policy also needs to include adequate provision to protect of aquaculture assets.
- This policy should specifically detail the mitigation hierarchy.
- It is important that new aquaculture technologies are only implemented at scale where they have demonstrated they adhere to all relevant policies.
- There is a presumption that the "baseline" for "sustainable" is the status quo. But what if there are current unsustainable aquaculture farms? It would be interesting to see if this plan can leave scope for potential reassessments of past-approved uses of the marine environment.
- The plan states that fishing has widespread impacts on the environment however this is then heavily caveated by stating "however, the degree of impact depends on the amount of fishing taking place, the efficiency and selectivity of gear, the approach taken to targeting species, and the nature and sensitivity of species and habitats affected." Similar caveats are not provided for other marine sectors. This should be consistent between sectors, particularly recognising the highly regulated nature of fish farming which takes a highly precautionary approach.
- Concerns were raised about proposed increases in the size and biomass of fish farms not resulting in economic benefits within local communities e.g. increases in the number of jobs.
- There is a need for independent modelling of fish farm impacts.

4.4.4. Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries (Q22)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The plan policies should address the onshore impacts of port and harbour development e.g. on harbours, housing provision and the local economy.
- Sector Policy 3 i. g should include reference to fallow but consented aquaculture sites.
- This policy does not contain any requirement to consider the Local Development Plan or National Planning Framework unlike aquaculture and pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure; this needs to be consistent across the sectoral policies.
- It is important that the potential environmental impacts and risks from port and harbour developments are carefully managed to safeguard the marine environment in Orkney.
- The Scapa Flow North and East Coast Safeguarded Area should be more limited in extent and should not include the coastline within the National Scenic Area.
- The recreational anchorages shown on Map 21 should also be included in Sector Policy 3a.
- Map 16 should include the recreational anchorages on Map 21.

4.4.5. Sector Policy 4: Pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure (Q23)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The marine plan spatial data should include future cable route planning.
- Cables running from Eday to the European Marine Energy Centre test site should be identified in Map 18.
- Sector Policy 4a iii. g should include reference to fallow but consented aquaculture sites.
- A requirement for the assessment and consideration of electromagnetic field effect should be included in this policy.
- Provisions for decommissioning cables and pipelines should be a key consideration in decision making.

4.4.6. Sector Policy 5: Offshore wind, wave and tidal renewable energy generation (Q24)

Summary of consultation response issues

- This policy needs to have localism at its heart to maximise the local social, economic and environmental benefits from hosting renewable energy developments in Orkney waters.

- Local socio-economic benefit policies in the plan should span beyond employment and supply chain opportunities.
- Framing 'just transition' in terms of jobs and economic activity falls short, and risks forgoing opportunities for actual just outcomes which could come from renewable energy deployments.
- The plan should include future scenario planning for offshore wind development.
- Concerns were raised that fishers will not be adequately protected through Sectoral Policy 5 a ii and b ii.
- The plan should acknowledge that European Marine Energy Centre are investigating and examining options for a national floating wind test centre in Orkney.
- This policy should reference the need to have regard to impacts on nature, including cumulative impacts, and the need for compensation, where adverse impacts cannot be avoided, minimised, or mitigated.
- Biodiversity enhancement projects should be considered as part of offshore renewable energy developments to maximise biodiversity benefits.
- There is no specific approved methodology or guidance for offshore renewable energy installation impact assessment on commercial fisheries, which can lead to impacts on fishing vessels not being adequately addressed.
- There should be an inclusion for Marine Net Gain in the plan following the UK Strategy for Marine Net Gain.
- This policy focuses on the potential socio-economic benefits and contributions to emissions reduction from renewable energy developments; there are significant benefits to local communities from fish farming development, and in the context of the climate emergency, this should be taken into account in decision making.
- Sectoral Policy 5a ii. g should include reference to fallow but consented aquaculture sites.
- This policy does not contain any requirement to consider the Local Development Plan or National Planning Framework unlike aquaculture and pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure; this needs to be consistent across the sectoral policies.

4.4.7. Sector Policy 6: Zero carbon fuels, and oil and gas transition (Q25)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Concerns were raised about the phrasing within Sector Policy 6 where it states "Zero carbon fuel"; it should instead state "zero fossil carbon fuels" as the use of e-fuels could be prevented without this correction, leading to delays/obstructions in viable options for net-zero delivery.

- The 'just transition' focus throughout the plan is primarily on jobs and skills; this is an important but restrictive approach to the 'just transition'.

4.4.8. Sector Policy 7: Tourism, recreation, leisure and sport (Q26)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The plan should set out a strategy for the future development of marine tourism.
- Does this marine plan have a say on cruise liners coming to Orkney, either the ones that already come or about more coming in the future?
- Sector Policy 7a ii of this policy should include reference to fallow but consented aquaculture sites.
- There is a role for place plans to identify recreational and sporting facilities to enable marine recreational activities and tourism.
- Map 21 should include Orkney's three marinas.
- Sector Policy 7a iii could make it challenging to develop a new private marina if it is not applied in a sensible and proportionate manner.

4.5. Section 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Plan

4.5.1. Overall Section 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Plan (Q27)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Effective monitoring is crucial to the success of the plan.
- A review of the plan every five years is an acceptable timeframe.
- Integration guidance should be prepared during the plan's lifetime.
- There should be opportunities for the review and amendment of plan policies in response to changes to wider policy, improvements in the evidence base for Orkney's marine environment and understanding of the impacts of development.
- The effects of the plan on businesses should be monitored and evaluated.
- There should be an earlier first review of this plan to take account of the adoption and publication of National Marine Plan 2.
- To keep the plan up to date, the maps in the plan should be available online and updates provided as new data becomes available.

4.6. Appendices

4.6.1. Appendix 1: Licensing and Consenting Decisions (Q28)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Section 36 applications should include reference to the Energy Consents Unit where relevant.

4.6.2. Appendix 2: Relevant Legislation, Plans, Strategies and Policies (Q29)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The Bute House Agreement is no longer in operation and should not be referred to in the plan.
- Include reference to the Planning Acts, Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture, Scotland's National Food Strategy and associated legislation, Scotland's Economic Strategy and the National Islands Plan.
- Marine Tourism: Giant Strides 2020-25 should be included in Appendix 2.

4.6.3. Appendix 3: National Marine Plan interactive (Q30)

Summary of consultation response issues

- New data in National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi) needs to be updated more promptly.
- There should be a requirement for industries to upload relevant data into the NMPi.
- Data on NMPi should inform the identification of indicators as part of a monitoring and evaluation process for the plan.

4.6.4. Appendix 4: Natural Capital and Marine Ecosystem Services (Q31)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Appendix 4 needs to be more specific in terms of ecosystem services that are provided by Orkney's habitats in order to make it more accessible for developers/users of the plan to know precisely which services are likely to be impacted by certain developments/activities and it would also be useful to signpost to examples of appropriate mitigation.
- There would be merit in detailing and quantifying the ecosystem services in the Orkney marine region.

4.6.5. Appendix 5: Priority Marine Features (Q32)

Summary of consultation response issues

- It would be very useful to include mapping of these habitats and species (where it is available) and if there are gaps in knowledge these should be addressed.

4.6.6. Appendix 6: Seaweed Harvesting (Q33)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Hand harvested seaweed is a completely different operation from seaweed aquaculture which is mentioned in Sector Policy 2; this Appendix 6 should be consistent with the wording of Sector Policy 2.
- Seaweed harvesting should not be undertaken to the detriment of bird species that forage and use these ecosystems.
- The assessment for future hand-harvesting and related activities need to be undertaken on a site-specific basis.

4.6.7. Appendix 7: Definition of Key Concepts, Acronyms and Glossary (Q34)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Improved and more targeted definitions of just transitions and sustainable development would support the plan's action and implementation.
- In the definition of the mitigation hierarchy, the term “offset unavoidable adverse impacts” needs to have further explanation with an emphasis that offsetting is a very last resort.

4.7. Supporting assessments

4.7.1. Strategic Environment Assessment (Q35)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The SEA: Draft Environmental Report is well laid out however would benefit from going into more detail in some areas, as in its current form, it is quite high level and lacks some detail.
- Some of the SEA objectives could be expanded on, reworded, or additional objectives added to better cover certain topics (e.g. benthic environment).
- Additional/updated information for various annexes was provided, for example reference to new legislation and strategy documents for Appendix A and an updated Scheduled Monument data for Appendix B.5.
- More detail could be given on mitigation measures in Appendix C3.

- Lack of clarity over how the plan policies will be monitored against the objectives, however it is noted that a separate Monitoring and Evaluation Framework is currently under development.

4.7.2. Children's Rights and Wellbeing Screening Sheet and Impact Assessment (CRWIA) (Q36)

There were no consultation responses requesting updates or changes on the CRWIA within the consultation responses.

4.7.3. Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA) (Q37)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The assessment notes that there are five areas in Orkney which are classified as being "fragile"; the areas identified have fish farming activity taking place which is critical in combating these issues and thus sustainable growth of the sector should be supported.
- It was welcomed that the assessment highlights the importance of aquaculture for the island communities.
- The assessment summaries the demographic/economic composition of Orkney generally well. However, to aid in the implementation of General Policy 5, there should be some reviewal of potential inaccuracies within the stated assessment summaries.
- In Table 3b all but employment in wave and tidal is increasing, and not highlighting this paints wave and tidal subsets of marine energy in an inaccurate negative light.
- It would be useful to understand the methodology for producing Table 3b, from the State of the Environment Assessment, as it's unclear how the conclusions have been drawn.
- The inclusion of the ICIA is welcomed, but is lacking in detail in terms of specific feedback from communities and identification of specific issues relevant to Orkney.
- The recognition of the importance of the energy sector to island communities is welcome but perhaps the importance of the subsea cable network to provide energy requirements for the many island communities on Orkney and supporting potential for renewable energy generation (onshore and marine) could be made clearer.

4.7.4. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (Q38)

There were no consultation responses requesting updates or changes on the EqIA within the consultation responses.

4.7.5. Habitat Regulations Appraisal (HRA) (Q39)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The conclusion in 5.1 of the HRA 'that it has been ascertained through this Habitats Regulations Appraisal that the adoption of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, alone or in combination, would have no adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites site' is welcomed.
- Coordination with parts of Scottish Government responsible for the offshore wind sectoral plan, National Marine Plan 2, NPF4, and any other process relating to planning for ports and harbours is recommended.
- For this specific Marine Plan, due to the potential changes ahead led by energy transition, we may see adverse impacts occurring from some marine sectors that cannot be mitigated. At this present time, it is difficult to see where these issues may occur, as each development and/or change in use, will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- For new large-scale port developments and expansion of existing ports/harbours, changes and/or new proposals/vessel routes have potential to alter the existing distribution of Special Protection Area (SPA) waterbirds, which may be outweighed by any mitigation solution and/or alternative option, and thus result in Adverse Impact on Site Integrity (AISE). Therefore, it may not be possible to arrive at an outcome conclusion of 'no further action needed', as noted within the summarised Appropriate Assessment (AA). Each development/proposal/port and harbour development will be assessed on a case-by case basis, supported either by existing data and/or new ecological survey work to help gauge level of impacts to European Sites.
- At this present time, it is understood that anchor berths and Ship-to-ship anchor berths, as depicted on map 15 (p104) of the Plan are changes to baseline operational processes that have yet to be assessed through HRA on Protected Areas of European importance.
- Floating turbine technology is developing rapidly. This may involve turbine construction and testing at quayside, as well as turbine towing to wet storage locations. It is too early yet to gauge the likely impacts of this development, until more information is forthcoming. It is possible that change to operational processes at port-side, may be so significant to SPA waterbirds, that it has potential to result in adverse effect on the integrity of a European site (AISE). It is recommended that the potential for this level of impact should be reflected within this HRA.

- The Conservation Objectives (COs) listed for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are likely to be out of date. New COs for SAC features have been identified which are site/feature specific, with some of these requiring restoration objectives subject to the condition of the SAC feature. As COs are being tailored to specific qualifying interests and their condition, this makes listing COs in a generic fashion quite problematical, and they therefore may need to be reviewed.
- The HRA should reflect the issues of AISE and acknowledge derogation (Imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI)), as these factors are quickly becoming an acknowledged part of large-scale coastal development.
- There are some missing qualifying features for Scapa Flow SPA and North Orkney SPA in Appendix 1.

4.7.6. Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (Q40)

Summary of consultation response issues

- It was welcomed that interviews will be held with business to inform the preparation of final BRIA.
- It was stated in relation to General Policy 1a that development could still be sustainable for various reasons even if it does not conform to the plan and that the policy wording could be overly restrictive. Views were expressed that there needs to be flexibility to consider changing circumstances and other relevant material considerations in decision making.
- There is currently a lack of guidance to support the implementation of General Policy 3 and General Policy 9 which could create uncertainty and additional costs.
- The requirement to take into account the Aquaculture Spatial Guidance may create additional costs for applicants in justifying developments.
- Views were expressed that the plan is skewed towards the protection of some types of existing marine developments and their future expansion such as ports and harbours.
- The summary of potential impacts identified in the BRIA in Table 1 does not include any statement on General Policy 9b which could have significant additional costs in relation to biodiversity enhancement requirements. It should therefore be recognised in this document that there will be costs here but that there is uncertainty as to the extent of measures and therefore costs.

4.8. Any other comments or feedback (Q41)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Overall, it is an ambitious and great plan, with substantial work and targeted, comprehensive policies.

- The plan raises issues that a lot of policy and legislation lacks, which is hugely important, and creates great scope to be ambitious, leading and to have genuine positive impact.
- The plan refers to achieving a balance between environmental, social and economic issues, however, in the content presented there is a strong volume of material and sentiment focused upon ecology and archaeology compared to social and economic issues.
- Support expressed for the OIC's role as a delegated authority for delivering a Regional Marine Plan for Orkney, in line with the Marine (Scotland) and Islands (Scotland) Acts; the local authority provides a democratically accountable governance structure to deliver effective marine planning, which is different to the Regional Marine Planning Partnerships.
- Further work is required on spatial planning and the OIRMP should be a first step to create an action plan for further work in the marine environment to protect and enhance habitats and address the biodiversity and climate crises.
- Across all policies, understanding to what extent these are recommendations, or to what extent these can be mandated and ensured will be crucial for local transparency and to understand the impacts of future projects more broadly.
- The draft plan overall is balanced and proportionate and aligns well with the requirements of NPF4.
- The plan is comprehensive and well written, however, the many associated supporting assessments should be screened out as unnecessary, as the associated issues have been assessed under the National Marine Plan.
- There is a lack of recognition of the benefits of fish farming when compared to other sectors such as fishing and renewable energy throughout the draft plan.
- Filling in the consultation response form was quite difficult, and it would be better if oral evidence at a consultation event could have been treated as an adequate and valid response to the consultation.

5. Modifications

5.1. Overview

This section of the report sets out statements of modifications that have been made to the proposals as published in the consultation draft of the Plan. A summary of the key modifications is provided at 5.1.2 and the modifications made to the Plan are identified 5.1.3.

5.2. Summary of modifications

Summary of key modifications to the consultation draft Plan following the public consultation:

- A greater emphasis has been placed on promoting and supporting sustainable development.
- The Plan has been updated to clarify that the Plan does not include policies that directly aim to address the management of fisheries.
- A vision period has been included to 2045.
- The aim of the Plan has been updated to include reference to the twin climate and nature crises.
- Further detail has been provided to help deliver sustainable development including using sound science responsibly, effective community engagement and valuing local knowledge.
- The Plan has been updated to clarify how the policies should be used by public authority decision makers.
- A new objective has been added; Objective 10: *Local communities are effectively engaged in decisions affecting the Orkney Islands marine region.*
- The Plan has been updated to better align with relevant policies and strategies including:
 - o Scotland's Blue Economy Vision
 - o The National Plan for Scotland's Islands.
 - o Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation.
 - o Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029.
 - o Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 and supporting Delivery Plan 2024 to 2030.
 - o Just transition policy actions.
 - o Wellbeing Economy Governments (WEGo).

- o Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture.
 - o Marine Tourism: Giant Strides 2020-25.
 - o Marine environment: unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance Joint Position Statement.
- Further guidance has been identified to support the implementation of specific policies:
 - o Orkney Islands Marine Region: Supporting sustainable social and economic benefits guidance (to support General Policy 4).
 - o Orkney Islands Marine Region: Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life guidance (to support General Policy 14).
- General Policy 1: *Sustainable development, activities and use* has been modified to promote effective engagement with local communities and to make provision for local knowledge to inform the design and assessment of development proposals.
- The Plan has been modified to align with Orkney Partnership's target outcomes for sustainable development including support for community wealth building.
- The Plan has been modified to align with the Orkney Partnership's net zero vision.
- The Plan has been modified to include reference to the Marine Spatial Planning Addressing Climate Effects (MSPACE) programme. The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan is a case study within this programme which is designed to drive forward the implementation of climate-smart marine spatial planning in the UK.
- Reference to the OIC Coastal Change Adaptation Plan has been added to the Plan to support integration between the marine planning and coastal adaptation processes.
- A policy provision to support the assessment of potential impacts on non-designated historic environment assets has been included in General Policy 8: *Historic Environment*.
- The Plan has been modified to acknowledge the transformative social and economic benefits offshore renewable energy and harbour developments can deliver for island communities, as well as the need to manage potential adverse onshore impacts on infrastructure and services.
- General Policy 1b: *Sustainable development principles* has been modified to state that impacts on existing infrastructure and services should be addressed as opposed to resolved as part of the consenting process.

- General Policy 4: *Supporting sustainable social and economic benefits* amended to state that opportunities have been considered to maximise the identified socio-economic benefits in the policy.
- General Policy 5: *Safeguarding natural capital and ecosystem services* has been modified to remove reference to 'disturbance and degradation' and these terms have been replaced with 'avoid, minimise and/or mitigate' in relation to the consideration of impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services.
- General Policy 5: *Safeguarding natural capital and ecosystem services* has been modified to state that it will be implemented by decision makers, 'where appropriate'.
- General Policy 9b modified to replace 'biodiversity enhancement' with 'marine enhancement' to create scope for broader environmental enhancement to be delivered.
- General Policy 9 has been modified to specify the use of best practice methods for proposals to enhance and/or restore the coastal and/or marine environment.
- General Policy 9d has been modified to align with the National Marine Plan and to state that proposals for development and/or activities should have regard to the relevant policy provisions in the National Marine Plan regarding Priority Marine Features.
- General Policy 11 modified to replace policy provision for Priority Marine Features with policy provisions for European Protected Species.
- Policy context to Sector Policy 1: *Commercial Fishing* modified to acknowledge the contribution of commercial fishing to food security and quality of life for fishers, and that fishing is culturally and historically significant to Orkney communities.
- Policy context to Sector Policy 1: *Commercial Fishing* modified to reflect the up-to-date position with fisheries management in Scotland.
- Sector Policy 1: *Commercial Fishing* modified to provide a standalone policy strand on the consideration of impacts on the cultural importance of fishing in local communities.
- Policy context to Sector Policy 2: *Aquaculture* modified to acknowledge that finfish and shellfish farming make an important contribution towards food production and food security.
- Sector Policy 2 modified to state that proposals for development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on active aquaculture sites.

- Additional supporting text has been added to Sector Policy 5: *Offshore wind, wave and tidal energy generation* stating that the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC) is investigating and examining options for a national floating wind test centre located to the west of Orkney.
- The Plan has been modified to clarify that the OIC Islands Archaeologist can advise on matters affecting Orkney's historic environment assets and places.
- The plan has been modified to state that General Policy 14: *Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities* supports a place-based approach to planning, development and community engagement.
- Text added to context section to Sector Policy 1: *Commercial fishing* on the National Fisheries Management Strategy 2020, alongside reference to Inshore Fisheries Management Improvement (IFMI) Programme.
- Text added to context section to Sector Policy 3: *Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries* to improve alignment with National Transport Strategy 2.
- Policy context to Sector Policy 3: *Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries* modified to acknowledge that the Orkney Harbour Masterplan Phase 1 identifies development proposals for a new pier infrastructure at Hatston and a new deep water quay facility at Deepdale, Scapa Flow, which are national developments identified in NPF4.
- Sector Policy 4: *Pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure* and Sector Policy 6: *Zero fossil carbon fuels, and oil and gas transition* have been modified to clarify that these policies only apply to public authority decision making that falls under devolved competencies.
- Marine cables and pipelines added as a consideration under 'other marine users' in Sector Policy 3: *Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries* and Sector Policy 7: *Safeguarding tourism, recreation, leisure and sport uses*.
- Sector Policy 7b: *Safeguarding tourism, recreation, leisure and sport uses* modified to state that proposals for development and/or activities should consider options to avoid, minimise or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on tourism, recreation, leisure and sport uses.

5.3. Modifications to the consultation draft plan

Modifications made to the consultation draft Plan are identified in Table 2. The Plan paragraph references have been updated through the Plan modification process. The paragraph numbers identified in Table 2 are those in the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (finalised Plan). Where these paragraph references are different to those in the consultation draft Plan, reference to the relevant section or paragraph in the consultation draft Plan is provided.

Table 2 - Modifications to the consultation draft plan

Modification	Reason for Modification
Foreword	
Updated Foreword in the finalised Plan.	Updated post consultation to reflect the up-to-date position.
Executive Summary	
Updated Executive Summary in the finalised Regional Marine Plan.	Updated post consultation to reflect the content of the finalised Plan.
Introduction	
Cross reference to Map 1 added to paragraph 1.1.	For clarity.
Paragraph 1.4 modified to remove unnecessary detail on governance and to remove repetition.	For clarity and conciseness.
Paragraph 1.6, 1.7, 1.8 and 1.10 modified to clarify how the plan and its policies should be used in decision making. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 1.15, 1.16, 1.17 and 1.18).	For clarity and to support plan implementation.
A new paragraph added at 1.8 to clarify that the Plan has been prepared without policies that directly aim to address further management of fisheries.	For clarity.
Paragraph 1.11 amended to clarify the role of Orkney Islands Council, as the delegate, as a consultee on marine licensing. (Consultation Draft reference: text added after paragraph 1.8).	For clarity and to support plan implementation.
Paragraph 1.11 added regarding the provisions of the Marine Licensing (Consultees) (Scotland) Order 2011.	To acknowledge the statutory role of OIC.
Reference to devolved competencies added to Table 1.	To clarify that the plan only applies to developed competencies.
'Impacts or effects from development and activities' section removed from Section 2 and 3 and added to Section 1, paragraph 1.18 to 1.23. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraphs 2.11 to 2.16 and 3.11 to 3.16).	To removed repetition of text.
Paragraph 1.18 modified to remove the term 'long distances'. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.11).	For greater accuracy.
Paragraph 1.18 word 'deposited' replaced with 'settling'. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.11).	Deposit is a specific term used in marine licencing. Replaced with a word of equivalent meaning to avoid misinterpretation.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Paragraph 1.19: Plan modified to include 'economic receptors and infrastructure'. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.12).	To highlight the potential for economic and infrastructure related cumulative impacts.
Paragraph 1.22 has been updated to provide further detail on avoiding sites with potential to have adverse impacts. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.15).	For clarity and to support appropriate implementation of the plan policies.
Paragraph 1.26 amended to include vision period to 2045. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 1.17).	To align with the vision period for NPF4 and wider relevant plans and strategies.
'Human activities' replaced with 'the marine environment' in Table 2, B.	To ensure the consistent application of the definitions in Table 1.
'and/or activities' inserted in Table 2, E.	For clarity and consistency.
Paragraph 1.28 amended to identify that Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment includes the identification of relevant data gaps. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 1.19).	For clarity and accuracy.
Text inserted at Paragraph 1.29 to refer plan users to National Marine Plan interactive hyperlinks/smart URL to access the Plan map data. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 1.20).	To improve access to the finalised Plan's online spatial information.
Paragraph 1.31 reworded to include reference to all relevant available data alongside the NMPI. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 1.22).	To include reference to wider relevant data.
Text stating that 'Information on how to use NMPI is provided in Appendix 3' moved from paragraph 1.31 to paragraph 1.29. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 1.22 and 1.20).	For clarity.
Aim of the Plan in Table 2 updated to refer to tackling the twin climate and nature crises.	To better align the aim of the plan with the policy provisions, and wider relevant plans and strategies.
Reference to 'environmental limits' removed from Guiding Principle A and replace with 'protecting the environment'.	To enable unambiguous interpretation and implementation of the finalised Plan.
Guiding Principle B and the aim of the Plan updated to refer to the climate and nature crises.	For clarity and to set the appropriate context for the more detailed objectives and policies.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Objective 1 updated to refer to sustainable development, activities and use.	To better align with the aim of the plan and policy term definitions.
A new objective has been added; Objective 10: Local communities are effectively engaged in decisions affecting the Orkney Islands marine region.	To better reflect the priorities of local communities identified via the Plan consultation.
Section 2: General Policies	
Paragraphs 2.3 and 3.4 added to clarify the role of the general policies in supporting applicants preparing proposals for development and activities.	For clarity.
Paragraphs 2.3 and 3.4 from the consultation draft Plan have been removed and included in Section 1.	To remove duplicated text from the Plan.
Paragraph 2.8 amended to state see Section 1 for details on the use of spatial information and data.	For clarity.
Paragraph 2.9 and 3.10 amended to remove unnecessary detail. (Consultation Draft reference: Paragraph 2.9 and 3.9).	For clarity and brevity.
Reference to 'environmental limits' removed from paragraph 2.11. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.17).	To enable unambiguous interpretation and implementation of the Plan.
Paragraph 2.11 and 2.12 updated to emphasise support for sustainable development including a thriving Orkney economy. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.17 and text added after paragraph 2.17).	To emphasise support for sustainable development.
Paragraph 2.14 added to align with the Scottish Government Blue Economy Approach. (Consultation Draft reference: text added after paragraph 2.18).	To align with Scotland's Blue Economy Approach.
Paragraph 2.13 amended to include reference and supporting weblinks to Scottish Government policy on a just transition, community wealth building and a wellbeing economy. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.18).	To include the relevant policy context for General Policy 1 and wider related policies.
Paragraph 2.15 added to explain that offshore developments can have	To provide relevant context to General Policy 1.

Modification	Reason for Modification
significant impacts on adjacent island communities including infrastructure, community services and facilities. (Consultation Draft reference: text added after 2.18).	
Paragraph 2.16 added stating that using sound science responsibly, effective community engagement and valuing local knowledge are principles that underpin the approach to sustainable development in the Plan. (Consultation Draft reference: text added after 2.18).	To provide clear context for the approach to sustainable development in the Plan and General Policy 1.
General Policy 1b ii. added to include policy provision on effective engagement with local communities.	To better reflect the priorities of local communities identified via the Plan consultation.
The following headings added to General Policy 1b to aid policy understanding by plan users: <i>'Maximising benefits.</i> <i>Effective community engagement.</i> <i>Addressing direct/indirect impacts.</i> <i>Addressing cumulative impacts.</i> <i>Effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure and services.</i> <i>Addressing impacts on existing development and marine users.</i> <i>Using sound science and local knowledge'.</i>	To assist plan users to identify the purpose of each policy strand in General Policy 1b.
'and' replaced with 'and/or' in General Policy 1b v. (Consultation Draft reference: GP 1b iv.).	For accuracy, and consistency with General Policy 1b vi.
'resolved' replaced with 'addressed' in General Policy 1b vi. (Consultation Draft reference: GP 1b v.).	To acknowledge that it may not be possible to fully resolve all issues regarding impacts on existing infrastructure and services as part of the consenting process i.e. prior to a decision notice being issued. Some issues may need to be resolved post consent.
'alongside relevant local knowledge' added to General Policy 1b viii.	To recognise the importance and value of local knowledge in decision making.

Modification	Reason for Modification
(Consultation Draft reference: GP 1b vii.).	
Table 3 amended to identify additional indirect contributions towards the plan objectives and alignment with National Marine Plan policies GEN 2, GEN 3, GEN 18, GEN 19 and GEN 21.	To support plan implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of the plan.
NPF4 ' <i>Policy 12b</i> ' edited to state ' <i>Policy 12bi</i> ' in Table 3.	For greater accuracy.
Reference to the owner and operator of the Flotta Oil Terminal removed from paragraph 2.22. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.24).	To future proof the accuracy of the finalised Plan.
'Policy intent' for General Policy 3 modified to refer to greenhouse gas emissions.	For clarity, and consistency with relevant legal and policy frameworks.
Paragraph 2.25, data and reference updated. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.27).	To use UK specific climate data.
Additional text inserted at 2.26 to reflect Orkney Partnership vision for a climate resilient and net zero future. (Consultation Draft reference: text added after paragraph 2.27).	To reflect the updated local policy context that has emerged since the consultation draft plan was published.
Paragraph 2.28 added after paragraph 2.27 to provide further information on just transition.	To align with the Orkney Partnership's vision on net zero and a just transition where the economy, communities and natural environment all prosper and benefit, building their resilience, and adapting to the changing climate.
Paragraph 2.27 amended to refer to zero fossil carbon fuels. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.28)..	To recognise the potential contribution of e-fuels to decarbonisation.
Paragraph 2.30 amended to refer to e-fuels. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.31).	To recognise the potential contribution of e-fuels to decarbonisation.
Paragraph 2.27 amended to refer to greenhouse gas reduction measures and the Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.28).	To better align with General Policy 3 and to reflect the up-to-date policy context.
Paragraph 2.28 updated regarding alignment with National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and National Marine Plan (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.29).	To provide the relevant national policy context to General Policy 3a Climate Crisis.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Paragraph 2.29 amended regarding reference to blue carbon. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.30).	To ensure that the potential contribution of blue carbon to climate mitigation is not over emphasised in the finalised Plan when compared to other examples of mitigation.
General Policy 3c iii. amended to refer to 'nature-based solutions'.	To align with terminology in NPF4.
'adequate' and 'including appropriate nature-based measures' deleted from General Policy 3c ii.	To remove ambiguity and improve clarity.
Reference to Marine Spatial Planning Addressing Climate Effects (MSPACE) programme added at paragraph 2.36. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph added after 2.36).	To acknowledge the role of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan as a case study within the MSPACE project.
Paragraph 2.37 text amended to state social as well as economic opportunities and to refer to sustainable economic development and the role of marine planning in delivering this.	To better reflect the approach to sustainable development that underpins the plan aim and objectives.
Text amended at paragraph 2.38 to provide appropriate context for General Policy 4.	To improve description of the purpose and context for General Policy 4.
Paragraph 2.38 amended to include reference to upstream and downstream businesses.	For clarity.
Text inserted at paragraph 2.39 on community wealth building and the Orkney Partnership's target outcomes for sustainable development include supporting community wealth building. And updated to include the principles of community wealth building in the Orkney context.	To improve alignment with NPF4 and Orkney Partnership targets.
General Policy 4a (i. ii. and iii.) modified to state that 'opportunities have been considered'.	To align with the current Scottish Government policy position.
General Policy 4a ii. amended to refer to skills development.	To acknowledge the importance of addressing skills development to enable local people to access new job opportunities, and where relevant, assist in the delivery of a just transition to net zero.
General Policy 4a iii. amended to better align with the definition of key policy terms in Table 1.	To improve clarity for decision makers when implementing this policy.
General Policy 4a iv. amended to remove the term 'net'.	To support clearer policy interpretation.

Modification	Reason for Modification
General Policy 4c added to make provision for guidance to support the implementation of General Policy 4.	Consultation highlighted that guidance would be beneficial to support the implementation of General Policy 4. Supporting guidance will be developed post adoption of the Plan.
Paragraph 2.40 updated to refer to current as well as future generations.	To acknowledge the importance of considering current generations.
Locally relevant habitats added to paragraph 2.42.	For clarity, accuracy and local relevance.
General Policy 5 modified to remove reference to disturbance and degradation and these terms have been replaced with 'avoid, minimise and/or mitigate' in relation to the consideration of impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services.	There is no clear definition for disturbance or thresholds available to be implemented in this context.
General Policy 5 i. modified to add 'where appropriate'.	To make clear that there is discretion to the decision maker to decide when it is appropriate to apply this policy.
General Policy 5 ii. 'coastal and/or marine' added.	For clarity and accuracy.
Table 7 amended to identify additional indirect contributions towards the plan objectives.	To support plan implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of the plan.
Paragraph 2.47 amended to include the Scotland River Basin District (Status) Directions 2024.	To include reference to up-to-date regulations.
Paragraph 2.48 updated to all water environment types covered by the Directions.	For clarity.
General Policy 6 ii. wording amended to aid understanding and interpretation.	For clarity.
Table 8 amended to identify additional contributions towards the plan objectives.	To support plan implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of the plan.
Date added to Map 3.	For clarity.
Text added to paragraph 2.54 to acknowledge that a changing climate affects the rate of coastal change. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.53).	For clarity.
Text added at paragraph 2.56 on the emerging Orkney Coastal Change Adaptation Plan.	To reflect the up-to-date planning/policy context.
General Policy 7b ii. amended to improve clarity of interpretation.	For clarity.
Proposed Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area replaced with Scapa	To acknowledge site designation in August 2025.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Flow Historic Marine Protected Area in paragraph 2.58. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.56).	
'Canmore' replaced with 'Trove.scot' in paragraph 2.60. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.58).	Canmore has been replaced with www.trove.scot .
<i>Historic environment assets</i> replaced with <i>'Historic assets and places'</i> in paragraph 2.60. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.58).	For compatibility with NPF4.
<i>'Many historic environment assets'</i> replaced with <i>'Many historic assets and places'</i> in paragraph 2.61. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.59).	For compatibility with NPF4.
Reference to Historic Environment Scotland (HES) practical guidance on conserving underwater heritage added to paragraph 2.61. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.59).	To include up to date relevant guidance in the Plan.
Reference to early engagement with HES and the Orkney Islands Council Islands Archaeologist included in paragraph 2.62. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.60).	To support policy implementation and assist applicants.
Modification made to paragraph 2.62 to state that the OIC Islands Archaeologist can advise on matters affecting Orkney's historic environment assets. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.60).	HES has changed their procedures to only comment on matters affecting the historic environment assets of national significance. The Islands Archaeologist can advise on other relevant matters.
The title of General Policy 8a changed to 'Historic assets and places'	For compatibility with NPF4.
'place' replaced with 'places' in General Policy 8a(i).	For compatibility with NPF4.
Modification made to General Policy 8a i., <i>'*Where relevant, for EIA development and/or activities refer to: HES, Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook'</i> .	For clarity
Reference in General Policy 8a iii. updated to 'The Crown Estate: Archaeological Written Schemes of Investigation for Offshore Wind Farm Projects '.	To include reference to the up-to-date guidance.
General Policy 8j added to include policy provisions for non-designated historic environment assets.	To provide clarity on how non-designated historic environment assets are assessed and considered in decision making.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Reference to Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and Biodiversity Delivery Plan amended at paragraph 2.67. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.65).	To bring the plan up to date with the latest Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and Biodiversity Delivery Plan.
Paragraph 2.68 modified. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.67)	To provide the relevant national policy context to General Policy 9a: <i>Climate Crisis</i> .
Paragraph 2.69 amended to remove site hierarchy and to reference SiteLink. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.67)	To provide access to the most up to date information.
Table 11 title amended to remove the term hierarchy.	For accuracy.
Paragraph 2.74 updated to state that Priority Marine Features are protected under relevant legislation. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.72).	For clarity.
Text added to General Policy 9b i. on the use of best practice assessment and implementation methods.	For clarity and consistency with NPF4.
General Policy 9b i. modified to replace biodiversity enhancement with the enhancement and/or restoration of the coastal and/or marine environment.	To create scope for broader environmental enhancement to be delivered.
General Policy 9d ii. modified to state that proposals for development and/or activities should demonstrate that they have considered, where possible, how any significant adverse impacts on Priority Marine Features have been avoided, minimised and/or appropriately mitigated.	For clarity and to aid alignment and conformity with the National Marine Plan.
General Policy 9d ii. amended to state that proposals for development and/or activities should have regard to the relevant policy provisions in the National Marine Plan.	For clarity and to aid alignment and conformity with the National Marine Plan.
Paragraph 2.76 modified to remove the phase 'world class'. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.74)	The term world class has no clear definition.
Paragraph 2.79 added regarding the potential impacts of development on landscape and seascape. (Consultation Draft reference: text added after paragraph 2.76).	To provide appropriate context to General Policy 10.
The title of General Policy 10a changed to 'Seascape and landscape'.	To align with the relevant terminology in National Marine Plan.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Map 10 title updated.	For accuracy.
Reference to Planning Advice Note 1/2011 included at paragraph 2.81. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.78).	To include reference to relevant planning advice.
The noise related pressures identified at paragraph 2.82 have been reordered. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.79).	For clarity.
Paragraph 2.82 has been amended to refer to pressures as opposed to sectoral activities. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.79).	To refer to pressures as opposed to sectoral activities.
The word 'deterrent' has been removed from paragraph 2.82. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.79).	For accuracy.
Reference to under water noise modelling removed from paragraph 2.84. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.81).	Reference not specifically relevant to the policy context.
Reference to Marine environment: unexploded ordnance (UxO) clearance Joint Position Statement added to paragraph 2.85. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.82).	To provide reference to the relevant policy statement on UxO clearance.
General Policy 11b ii. amended to remove reference to Priority Marine Features (PMFs).	A separate policy provision on PMFs is not needed in addition to General Policy 11b i and General Policy 9d.
General Policy 11b ii. amended to address European Protected Species (EPS).	To make approach provisions for EPS regarding noise impacts.
Text added to reference Fishing for Litter project at paragraph 2.88. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.85).	To include reference to this relevant local project.
Paragraph 2.92 updated to include up to date reference to the Great Britain Invasive Non-native Species Strategy. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.89).	To reflect the up-to-date policy context.
Reference to Orkney Native Wildlife Project added to paragraph 2.95. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.92).	To provide web link to relevant supporting information.
Added appropriate reference to the NatureScot Marine Biosecurity Planning Guidance into GP 13 i.	To reflect the up-to-date policy context.

Modification	Reason for Modification
General Policy 13 iii. amended to refer to the Marine Directorate.	To include updated terms.
Paragraph 2.96 amended to refer to Orkney Islands Marine Region: Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life guidance.	To support implementation of General Policy 14.
Paragraph 2.97 amended to state that The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, identifies outcomes for planning including improving the health and wellbeing of people living in Scotland. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.94).	To set out the relevant statutory context.
Paragraph 2.96 and 2.100 amended to state the beneficial effects of sustainable economic development on wellbeing and quality of life. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraphs 2.93 and 2.96).	For clarity.
New paragraph added at 2.98 provide further detail on the place-based approach to planning, development and community engagement. Consultation Draft reference: text added after paragraph 2.94).	For compatibility with NPF4 and to provide appropriate context to General Policy 14.
General Policy 14a ii. wording amended to assist with clearer interpretation.	For clarity.
General Policy 14c title changed to <i>'Delivering benefits for places and local communities'</i> .	For compatibility with NPF4.
Consultation Draft General Policy 14c ii. removed. To remove duplication of 14c i. and the ambiguity of policy requirements	For clarity and to remove duplication.
<i>'where appropriate'</i> replaced with <i>'where applicable'</i> in General Policy 14b ii. (Consultation Draft reference: GP 14c iii.	For greater clarity and accuracy.
Consultation Draft General Policy 14c iii. moved to General Policy 14b ii in the finalised Plan.	To improve the structure and layout of the policy to aid implementation.
General Policy 14d added to identify provision for Orkney Islands Marine Region: Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life guidance, where available.	To support policy implementation.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Table 17 amended to identify a direct contribution to objective 10 and an indirect contribution to objective 4.	For clarity and accuracy.
Section 3: Sector Policies	
Paragraph 3.2 amended to refer to sustainable economic development.	To better reflect the approach to sustainable development that underpins the plan aim and objectives.
Paragraph 3.5 modified to cross reference to section 1 and remove duplication of text from section 1. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.4).	To remove duplication of text.
Paragraph 3.10 modified to provide updated context to Appendix 1. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.9).	For clarity.
Paragraphs 3.11 to 3.16 in the consultation draft Plan (1.17 to 1.22 in the finalised Plan) moved to section 1.	To remove duplication of text.
Paragraph 3.12 amended to acknowledge the contribution of commercial fishing to food security. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.17).	To acknowledge the contribution of commercial fishing to food security.
Paragraph 3.12 amended to include reference to quality of life. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.17).	To acknowledge the relationship between fishing and quality of life in Orkney communities.
Paragraph 3.12 amended to acknowledge that fishing is culturally and historically significant to Orkney communities. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.17).	To acknowledge that fishing is culturally and historically significant to Orkney communities in response to consultation feedback.
Paragraph 3.13 amended to acknowledge the role of shoreside processing. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.17).	For clarity.
Paragraph 3.15 amended to include reference to the National Fisheries Management Strategy 2020, alongside reference to the Inshore Fisheries Management Improvement (IFMI) Programme. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.19).	To provide the relevant national policy context to Sector Policy 1.
Paragraph 3.15 to 3.17 updated to reflect the up-to-date position with fisheries management in Scotland. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.19 and 3.20).	For clarity.

Modification	Reason for Modification
<i>The word 'currently' added to paragraph 3.17. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.20).</i>	For clarity.
Paragraph 3.22 text modified to provide appropriate context to Sector Policy 1iii. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.25).	To improve clarity and support appropriate plan implementation.
Sector Policy 1 amended to provide a standalone policy (Sector Policy 1 ii.) for the consideration of the cultural importance of fishing, and amended to remove reference to cultural importance in Sector Policy 1 i. e..	To acknowledge the requirement for specific assessment considerations in relation to cultural importance.
Paragraph 3.23 added to refer to finfish and shellfish farming making an important contribution towards food production and food security. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.26).	To acknowledge these wider benefits of sustainable fish farming.
Paragraph 3.23 amended to provide an appropriate reference to the Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.26).	To provide reference to the relevant strategic context.
Paragraph 3.25 amended to explain that the degree of environmental impact depends on the type, scale, location and mitigation associated with a specific fish farming development or activity. This amendment has also been made to Paragraph 3.37, 3.49 and 3.61 for consistency across the relevant Sector Policies. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.27 and also 3.39, 3.50 and 3.62).	For clarity and consistency.
<i>'Marine fish farms also require a marine licence' replaced with 'Marine fish farms may also require a marine licence' in paragraph 3.26. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.28).</i>	For greater accuracy.
Paragraph 3.26 modified to state <i>'an environmental licence (for farm discharges into the water environment)'</i> . (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.28).	To reflect the up-to-date regulatory position.
Paragraph 3.28 text amended removing reference to the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial	This consultation has ended.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Guidance consultation. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.30).	
Paragraph 3.28 amended to state 'potential' sensitivity. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.30).	For accuracy, and consistency with the terminology in the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance.
Paragraph 3.28 amended to remove ' <i>and activities</i> '. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.30)	To remove ambiguity over the application of the Spatial Guidance to activities, as defined in the plan in Table 1.
Sector Policy 2 vi and vii updated to remove ' <i>and/or activities</i> '.	To remove ambiguity over the application of the Spatial Guidance to activities, as defined in the plan in Table 1.
Paragraph 3.33 text amended to state that Appendix 6 provides information on wild seaweed harvesting and reference to the Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture moved to paragraph 3.23. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.35).	For clarity.
Sector Policy 2a added to state that proposals for development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on active aquaculture sites.	To provide clarity on how impacts on active aquaculture sites will be addressed in decision making.
Sector Policy 2b ii. b., Sector Policy 3d ii. b., Sector Policy 4a iii. b., Sector Policy 5a ii. b., Sector Policy 5b ii. b. and Sector Policy 7a ii. b. modified to state the national status of Priority Marine Features.	For conformity with National Marine Plan.
Sector Policy 2b ii. g. and 2c ii. f. amended to refer to active aquaculture sites. (Consultation Draft reference: SP 2a ii.g. and SP 2b ii.f.).	For clarity and consistency.
' <i>planning</i> ' inserted to Sector Policy 2b v. (Consultation Draft reference: Sector Policy 2a v.	To clarify that this policy may be implemented via a condition on a planning permission.
Additional text inserted in paragraph 3.38 and 3.61 to provide information on potential for significant onshore impacts and benefits from harbour and renewable energy developments. (Consultation Draft reference: Text added after paragraphs 3.39 and 3.62).	To identify the potential for harbour and renewable energy developments to have significant onshore impacts and benefits for adjacent communities.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Paragraph 3.42 modified to include reference to National Transport Strategy 2. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.43).	To improve alignment with National Transport Strategy 2.
Paragraph 3.42 updated to remove reference to the John O'Groats to Burwick ferry service. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.43).	Service not currently operational.
Paragraph 3.43 amended to state that the Orkney Harbour Masterplan identifies development proposals for new pier infrastructure at Hatston and a new deep water quay facility at Deepdale, Scapa Flow, which are national developments identified in NPF4. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.44).	To state the current position with these developments and their status within NPF4.
Sector Policy 3d i. added to refer to the Orkney Local Development Plan, National Marine Plan and National Planning Framework.	For clarity and consistency across relevant policies.
'Marine cables and pipelines' added as an 'other coastal and marine user' consideration at Sector Policy 3d ii. g., Sector Policy 5a ii. g., Sector Policy 5b ii. h. and Sector Policy 7a ii. g.. (Consultation Draft reference: SP 3d i. g.).	Marine cables and pipelines added as they are a relevant sensitivity/constraint and for consistency across the sector policies.
Sector Policy 3d ii. g. amended to refer to 'active' aquaculture sites. (Consultation Draft reference: SP 3d i. g.).	For clarity.
Annex B added to Table 20.	To recognise the alignment of Sector Policy 3 with the NPF4 Annex B – National Developments Statements of Need.
Cables running from Eday to the EMEC test site added to Map 18.	For completeness.
Text added at paragraph 3.46 clarifies that Sector Policy 4 only applies to public authority decisions where proposals fall within devolved competencies and that offshore oil and gas licensing is reserved to the UK Government including the construction and decommissioning of hydrocarbons pipelines.	To ensure conformity with the relevant legal requirements.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Paragraph 3.52 modified to state <i>'Submarine cables should be appropriately protected, whilst achieving successful seabed user coexistence, in accordance with the National Marine Plan'</i> . (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.51).	To provide appropriate alignment with National Marine Plan on cable protection matters.
Reference to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 removed from Paragraph 3.53. (Consultation Draft reference: Paragraph 3.52).	The reference was not directly relevant to the context of Sector Policy 4.
Paragraph 3.54 amended regarding the identification of new cables on UK Hydrographic Office charts.	For clarity.
'protection' added to Sector Policy 4a i.	To provide appropriate alignment with National Marine Plan on cable protection matters.
Information on National Marine Plan in Sector Policy 4a i. moved to Context at paragraph 3.47.	To provide appropriate context to Sector Policy 4.
Sector Policy 4a iii. g. modified to refer to active aquaculture sites.	For clarity.
Sector Policy 4 modified to state that Sector Policy 4 is to be applied to relevant proposals for development and/or activities that require authorisation from a public authority under devolved competencies.	To ensure conformity with the relevant legal requirements.
Paragraph 3.61 amended to refer to inclusive economic development. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.60).	To better reflect the approach to sustainable development that underpins the plan aim and objectives.
Paragraph 3.61 amended to remove reference to the development of skills and supply chain bolstering. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.60).	To ensure that a broader view is taken to a just transition in addition to the considerations of skills and supply chain bolstering.
Paragraph 3.70 added to acknowledge that EMEC are investigating and examining options for a national floating wind test centre.	To ensure the plan is up to date with local strategic projects.
Added reference to Map 10 to 3.71.	For clarity.
Sector Policy 5a ii. g. and 5b ii. h. amended to refer to 'active' aquaculture sites and 'marine cable routes and pipelines'.	For clarity and consistency.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Paragraph 3.77 modified to acknowledge the relevance of Sector Policy 6 to devolved competencies only.	To ensure conformity with the relevant legal requirements.
3.80 updated to refer to renewable energy generation exceeding demand as well as curtailment. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.76).	For accuracy.
Reference to the Flotta Hydrogen Hub removed in paragraph 3.83 and the reference to information about Flotta on the North Sea Transition Authority added to paragraph 3.82 (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.79).	To provide up to date information.
Sector Policy 6 modified to state zero 'fossil' carbon fuels in the policy title and policies at i. ii. and iii.	To recognise the potential contribution of e-fuels to decarbonisation.
Paragraph 3.85 updated to state that ship-to-ship transfer operations are licenced by the Maritime and Coastal Agency (MCA). (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.81).	For clarity.
Sector Policy 6 amended to specify that it is to be applied to relevant proposals for development and/or activities that require authorisation from a public authority under devolved competencies.	To ensure conformity with the relevant legal requirements.
Map 21 updated to be titled Recreational Anchorages and Visiting Yacht Moorings.	For clarity.
Sector Policy 7a i. included to refer to the Orkney Local Development Plan, National Marine Plan and National Planning Framework.	For clarity and consistency.
Sector Policy 7a ii. g. amended to refer to active aquaculture sites (Consultation Draft reference: SP 7 a ii. g.).	For clarity.
'Marine' removed from Sector Policy 7a ii., 7a iii. and 7a iv. (Consultation Draft reference: Sector Policy 7a i., 7a ii. and 7 a iii.).	To reflect that some relevant developments may be coastal and/or intertidal.
Should 'avoid' replaced with should 'consider options to avoid' in Sector Policy 7b i.	To remove a potentially significant restriction on sustainable development.
Reference to NPF4 'Policy 20' replaced with 'Policy 30'.	For accuracy.
Section 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Plan	
Paragraph 4.1 updated to reflect the statutory requirements for plan review.	To ensure conformity with the relevant legal requirements.

Modification	Reason for Modification
Appendix 2: Relevant Legislation, Plans Strategies and Policies	
Additional legislation added to Table 2A: • Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020. • Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. • Invasive Alien Species Regulation 1143/2014. • The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. • The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. • The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.	To provide the relevant legislative context.
Additional plans, strategies and policies added to Table 2A: • The National Plan for Scotland's Islands • Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation • Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029 • Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture • Marine Tourism: Giant Strides 2020-25	To provide the relevant policy context.
Reference to Bute House Agreement and Orkney Biodiversity Action Plan 2018-22 removed from Table A2.	To reflect the current policy context.
Appendix 3: National Marine Plan interactive	
Paragraph A3.6 added to state that maps within this Plan contain hyperlinks to display the specific map data within NMPi where available.	To provide appropriate reference to relevant data on NMPi.
Appendix 4: Natural Capital and Marine Ecosystem Services	

Modification	Reason for Modification
Reference provided to the Nature Capital Assessment for the Orkney Marine Region Area at paragraph 2.42 and A4.6. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 2.42 and A4.6).	For clarity.
<i>Appendix 6: Seaweed Harvesting</i>	
Appendix 6 title updated to refer to wild seaweed harvesting.	For clarity.
Paragraph 3.33 updated to include cross reference to Appendix 6. (Consultation Draft reference: paragraph 3.35).	For clarity.
<i>Appendix 7: Definition of Key Concepts, Acronyms and Glossary</i>	
Glossary and Key concepts tables merged into Table 4A.	For clarity, and to support plan implementation.
Co-existence definition updated in Table A4 to align with National Marine Plan 2 Planning Position Statement definition.	For consistency with the national approach.
Just transition definition amended in Table A4.	To align with the Scottish Government definition.
Quality of life definition updated in Table 4A.	To support policy implementation.
Reference to 'maerl beds' replaced with 'seagrass beds' Table A4.	To reflect the current Scottish Government position on blue carbon.
Devolved Competence definition added to Table 4A.	To support plan implementation.
Orkney Islands marine region definition added to Table 4A.	To support plan implementation.
<i>Additional modifications</i>	
All footnote references updated and added where necessary.	To include up to date references.
Symbology and colours updated in all maps.	To improve accessibility.
All map data reviewed and updated to ensure that the most recent data sets are used. Map 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 16, 18, 19, 21 updated with new data.	To ensure the plan is up to date at the point of publication.
New text added to each map annotation including NMPi smartURL hyperlink.	To enable plan users to access map specific data online.
Paragraph numbers updated.	For accuracy.
Table of contents numbering updated.	For accuracy.
Tables and Figures tables of content have been updated with the correct page numbers.	For accuracy.

Appendix 1: Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan Consultation Response Form

Section 1: Introduction

Q1 Do you have any comments on the purpose of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (1.1 - 1.4)?

Q2 Do you have any comments on how to use the Plan policy framework (1.5 to 1.14)?

Q3 Do you have any comments on vision, guiding principles, aim and objectives (1.15, 1.16 and Table 2)?

Section 2: General Policies

Q4 Do you have any comments on the introductory information to the General Policies (2.1 – 2.16)?

Q5 Do you have any comments on General Policy 1:
Sustainable development, activities, and use?

Q6 Do you have any comments on General Policy 2:
Safety?

Q7 Do you have any comments on General Policy 3:
Climate change?

Q8 Do you have any comments on General Policy 4:
Supporting sustainable social and economic benefits?

Q9 Do you have any comments on General Policy 5:
Safeguarding natural capital and ecosystem services?

Q10 Do you have any comments on General Policy 6:
Water environment?

Q11 Do you have any comments on General Policy 7:
Coastal development and coastal change?

Q12 Do you have any comments on General Policy 8:
Historic environment?

Q13 Do you have any comments on General Policy 9:
Nature?

Priority Marine Features

Priority Marine Features (PMFs) are species and habitats which have been identified as being of conservation importance to Scotland. PMFs range from flame shell beds in coastal waters to the cold- water coral reefs in deeper seas and mobile species such as minke whale and basking shark. Appendix 5 of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan identifies the PMFs recorded within the Orkney Islands marine region.

General Policy 9d aims to provide greater clarity on how impacts on PMFs should be assessed and considered in decision making. This includes policy provisions on how impacts on the national status of Priority Marine Features should be considered. The policy does not include specific policy provisions on how lower magnitude impacts on Priority Marine Features, that do not constitute an impact on the national status, should be considered in decision making.

Q13a Do you think General Policy 9d should include specific policy provisions on how lower magnitude impacts on Priority Marine Features (i.e. those impacts that do not constitute an impact on the national status) should be considered in decision making?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

Please provide any further information to support your response to Q13a:

Q14 Do you have any comments on General Policy 10: *Seascape and landscape*?

Q15 Do you have any comments on General Policy 11: *Surface and underwater noise, and vibration*?

Q16 Do you have any comments on General Policy 12: *Marine litter and waste*?

Q17 Do you have any comments on General Policy 13:
Non-native and invasive non-native species?

Q18 Do you have any comments on General Policy 14:
Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities?

Section 3: Sector Policies

Q19 Do you have any comments on the introductory information to the Sector Policies (3.1 – 3.16)?

Q20 Do you have any comments on Sector Policy 1:
*Commercial
fishing?*

Q21 Do you have any comments on Sector Policy 2:
Aquaculture?

Q22 Do you have any comments on Sector Policy 3:
Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries?

Q23 Do you have any comments on Sector Policy 4:
*Pipeline, electricity and telecommunications
infrastructure?*

Q24 Do you have any comments on Sector Policy 5:
Offshore wind, wave and tidal renewable energy generation?

Q25 Do you have any comments on Sector Policy 6:
Zero carbon fuels, and oil and gas transition?

Q26 Do you have any comments on Sector Policy 7:
Tourism, recreation, leisure and sport?

Section 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Plan

Q27 Do you have any comments on Section 4:
Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Plan?

Appendices

Q28 Do you have any comments on Appendix 1:
Licensing and Consenting Decisions?

Q29 Do you have any comments on Appendix 2:
Relevant Legislation, Plans, Strategies and Policies?

Q30: Do you have any comments on Appendix 3:
National Marine Plan interactive?

Q31: Do you have any comments on Appendix 4: *Natural Capital and Marine Ecosystem Services?*

Q32 Do you have any comments on Appendix 5: *Priority Marine Features*?

Q33 Do you have any comments on Appendix 6: *Seaweed Harvesting*?

Q34 Do you have any comments on Appendix 7: *Definition of Key Concepts, Acronyms and Glossary*?

Supporting Documents

Q35 Do you have any comments on the Strategic Environment Assessment?

Q36 Do you have any comments on the Children's Rights and Wellbeing Screening Sheet and Impact Assessment (CRWIA)?

Q37 Do you have any comments on the Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)?

Q38 Do you have any comments on the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

Q39 Do you have any comments on the Habitat Regulations Appraisal (HRA)?

Q40 Do you have any comments on the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA)?

Other Comments

Q41 Do you have any other comments or feedback you would like to provide?

Respondent Information

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

☐

Individual

☐

Organisation

Your name

Organisation (if applicable) Email address

Please indicate how you wish your response to be handled. If you ask for your response not to be published, we will still take account of your views in our analysis but we will not publish your response, quote anything that you have said or list your name. We will

regard your response as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy. By submitting your consultation response, you agree to our privacy policy.

Orkney Islands Council would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference. Your email address will never be published.

Publish response with name ☐

Publish response only (without name) ☐

Do not publish response ☐

Information for organisations only:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' refers only to your name, not your organisation's name. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation.

Do you consent to Orkney Islands Council contacting you again in relation to this consultation exercise? (Required)

Yes ☐ No ☐

Blank Page

Appendix 2: Orkney regional approach to Priority Marine Feature policy

Introduction

A2.1 A specific question (Q13a) in the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan consultation was include on the potential to take forward a regional approach to Priority Marine Feature (PMF) policy in Orkney.

A2.2 Question 13a:

Do you think General Policy 9d should include specific policy provisions on how lower magnitude impacts on Priority Marine Features (i.e. those impacts that do not constitute an impact on the national status) should be considered in decision making?

A2.3 A total of 24 consultees responded to Question 13a. The responses to are provided in Figure 3.

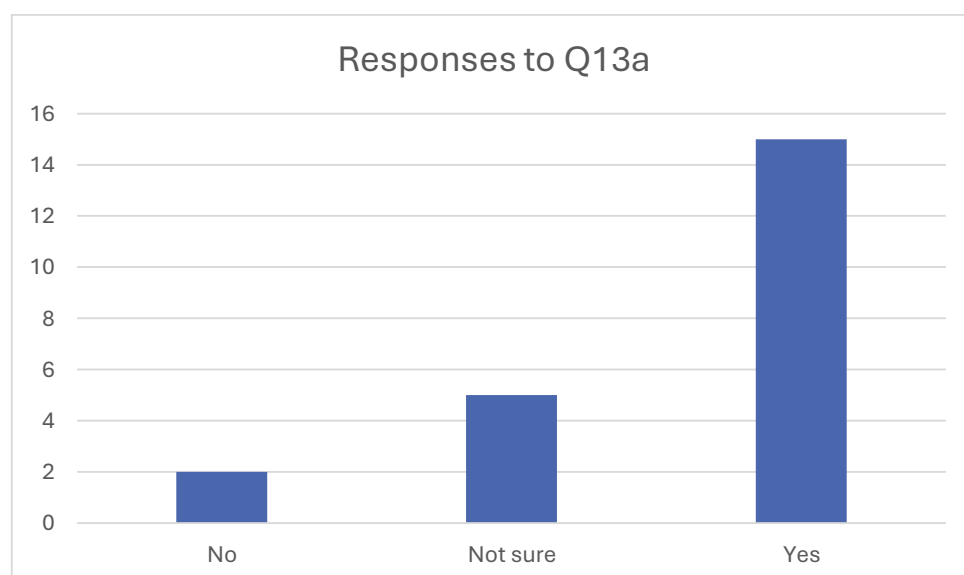


Figure 3 - Responses to Question 13a

Overview and analysis of stakeholder views captured in response to Q13a

A2.4 Summary of views captured:

- Significant support was expressed for taking forward a policy to address lower magnitude impacts on PMFs i.e. impacts that are significant at a regional scale.
- Whilst there were a significant number of stakeholders that supported a policy on lower magnitude impacts on PMFs, there were also significant concerns that such a policy could slow decision making and significantly increase costs for developers in Orkney.

- Concerns were raised that additional assessment effort would be required in Orkney when compared to other regions, and that this could become a deterrent to development and investment.
- Views were expressed that it would not be appropriate to include a specific policy on lower magnitude impacts on PMFs in a regional marine plan, prior to the current national policy framework for PMFs being reviewed and consulted on as part of National Marine Plan 2.
- Many stakeholders expressed views that if this policy went ahead, it would need to be supported by guidance and tools to enable effective decision making.
- Views were expressed that any new policy on PMFs would need to be supported by an extensive and robust evidence base on habitat/species-specific sensitivity and potential effects from development and activities.

Orkney regional approach to Priority Marine Feature policy

A2.5 Significant consideration has been given to the broad spectrum of views capture in response to Question 13a and the wider policy context. In light of this, it is considered appropriate that General Policy 9d within the consultation draft plan is retained, with a minor modification (see Table 2), and that a policy on lower magnitude/regionally significant impacts on PMFs should not be taken forward at this stage due to the following considerations:

- There is a need for clarity on PMF protections in NMP2 and the potential role of regional marine plans for establishing policy on these matters;
- An Orkney regional PMF policy could create regional disparities in environmental protection which could become a deterrent for investment and development in Orkney and incur significant associated costs for innovation projects and wider development.

A2.6 It is recognised that the consultation demonstrated significant support from stakeholders to take forward a policy to address lower magnitude impacts on PMFs. However, as significant adverse economic and development related impacts have been identified through the consultation, it is not considered appropriate to take forward a regional PMF policy in Orkney at this stage.

A2.6 OIC Marine Planning will continue to engage with the preparation of NMP2 and will consider the implications for PMF policy in Orkney following the adoption of NMP2.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment

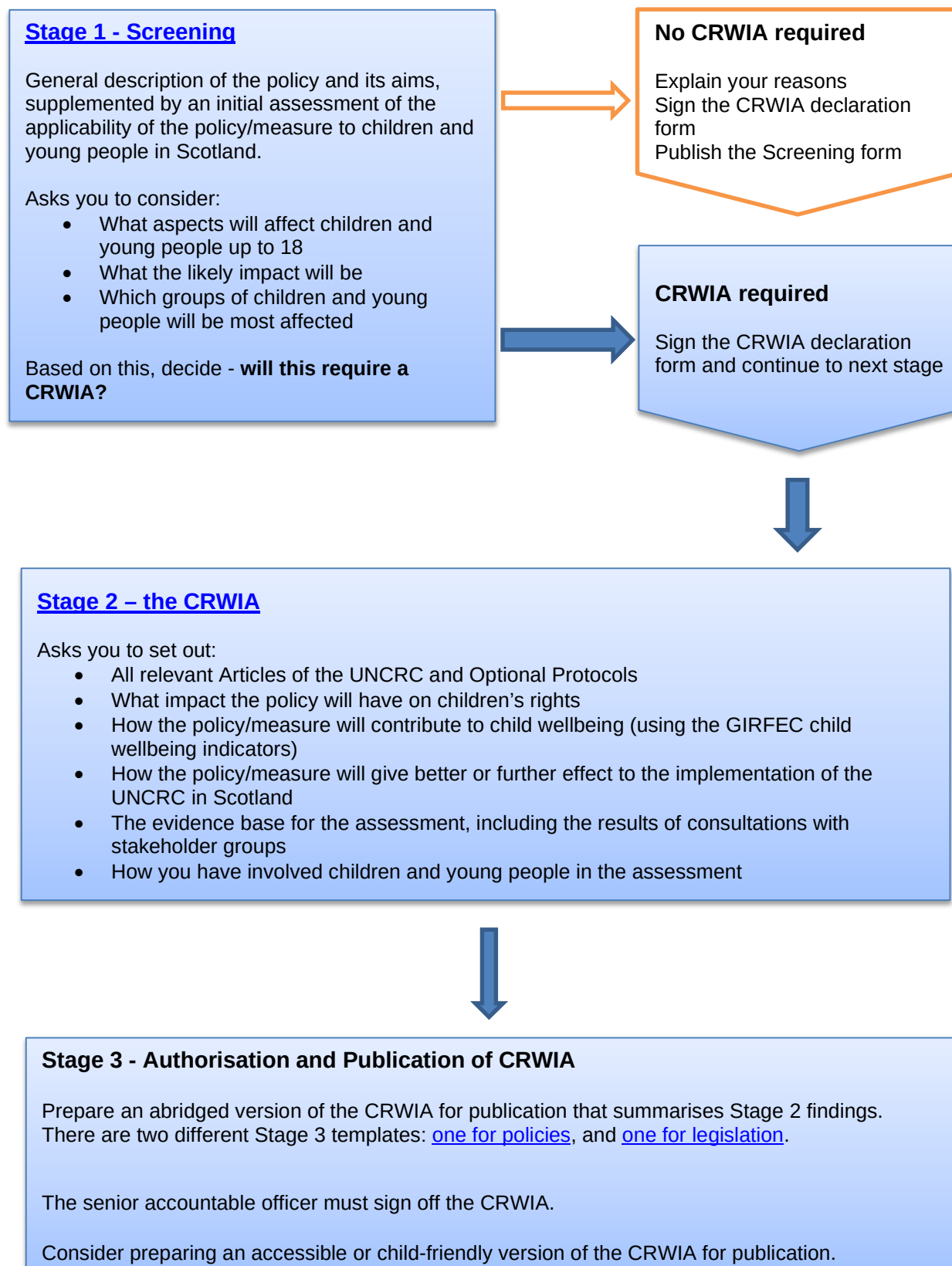


Blank Page

The Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment Flowchart

Follow links below to the three different stages of the Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) process.

There is a three stage process to CRWIA. This flowchart lays out the different steps you should take. Templates are available with key questions for each stage of the process, supported by guidance on what you need to consider at each stage.



CRWIA Stage 1
Screening - key questions

1. Name the policy, and describe its overall aims.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: The Plan vision is that the Orkney Islands marine region is clean, healthy, safe and productive; Orkney's marine and coastal environment is rich in biodiversity and managed sustainably to support thriving and resilient local communities. The Plan aims to balance sustainable use, whilst ensuring effective conservation, of the marine environment. Its purpose is to ensure a healthy and diverse marine ecosystem that supports current and future generations. The Plan reflects the requirements for regional marine plans under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and associated Delegation of Functions Direction 2020. The Plan is in conformity with Scotland's National Marine Plan (2015) and has been prepared to guide public authority decision making on development and activities in the Orkney Islands marine region.

2. What aspects of the policy/measure will affect children and young people up to the age of 18?

The Articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) and the child wellbeing indicators under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 apply to all children and young people up to the age of 18, including non-citizen and undocumented children and young people.

No discernible affect.

3. What likely impact – direct or indirect – will the policy/measure have on children and young people?

'Direct' impact refers to policies/measures where children and young people are directly affected by the proposed changes, e.g. in early years, education, child protection or looked after children (children in care). 'Indirect' impact refers to policies/measures that are not directly aimed at children but will have an impact on them. Examples include: welfare reforms, parental leave, housing supply, or local transport schemes.

None; there are no anticipated direct impacts expected from the objectives, priorities and policies within the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.

4. Which groups of children and young people will be affected?

Under the UNCRC, 'children' can refer to: individual children, groups of children, or children in general. Some groups of children will relate to the groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. 'Groups' can also refer to children by age band or setting, or those who are eligible for special protection or assistance: e.g. preschool children, children in hospital, children in rural areas, looked after children, young people who offend, victims of abuse or exploitation, child migrants, or children living in poverty.

No discernible effect as no specific groups will be directly affected by the high level policies, priorities or objectives in the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.

5. Will this require a CRWIA?

Explain your reasons.

The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan has no discernible effects on children's rights and wellbeing as the policies within the Plan do not relate to activities specifically aimed at children or young people directly or indirectly and any potential minor impact cannot reasonably be isolated or measured in a proportional manner.

Section 16 (5) of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 requires that the first plan review report must be published before the expiry of five years beginning with the date on which the marine plan concerned was adopted. This will include another assessment on whether a CRWIA is required.

CRWIA Declaration

Tick relevant section, and complete the form.

CRWIA required

CRWIA not required

Not required.

Authorisation

Policy lead

Daniel Morris Marine Planner
Infrastructure and Organisational
Development

Date

07/10/2025

This publication is available at www.orkney.gov.uk

Published by Orkney Islands Council 2025.



Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan **Equality Impact Assessment**





Equality Impact Assessment

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to improve the work of Orkney Islands Council (OIC) by making sure it promotes equality and does not discriminate. EqIA is undertaken to ensure there is not discrimination against certain groups of people or people with protected characteristics.

This assessment records the likely impact of any changes to a function, policy or plan by anticipating the consequences, and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

1. Identification of Function, Policy or Plan

Name of function / policy / plan to be assessed.	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP)
Service / service area responsible.	Infrastructure and Organisational Development
Name of person carrying out the assessment and contact details.	Daniel Morris daniel.morris@orkney.gov.uk
Date of assessment.	07/10/2025
Is the function / policy / plan new or existing? (Please indicate also if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly).	New; no significant change to service. The production of the Plan is a statutory function of the Council in accordance with The Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020.

2. Initial Screening

What are the intended outcomes of the function / policy / plan?	To aid statutory decision-making regarding marine licensing and consenting by the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government (Marine Directorate), the

	planning authority (Orkney Islands Council, OIC) and other relevant regulators. • Promote sustainable development in the marine environment. • Provide local marine regional data and information to allow greater certainty for developers regarding prospective proposals. • Enable greater local involvement and ownership of marine planning policy to inform decision-making about specific issues within the local area. • Provide a transparent plan-making process and promote good governance. • Ensure marine environment is protected.
Is the function / policy / plan strategically important?	Yes; it is a statutory regional marine plan guiding decision-making.
State who is, or may be affected by this function / policy / plan, and how. How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this function / policy / plan?	Anyone with an interest in marine planning, marine development or associated activities. For example sectors/groups including: • marine activities/businesses • developers of licensed activities in the Plan area • activities in the Plan area that do not require licences or do not require licences with a spatial component • marine nature conservation, coastal defence and marine heritage activities/conservation • coastal communities • the Scottish Government (through Marine Scotland's Planning and Licensing functions) • local planning authorities • Crown Estate Scotland • Regional Marine Planning Partnerships The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan ('The Plan') provides a suite of policies to guide marine development and/or activities whilst ensuring environmental protection and stakeholder engagement. The Plan aligns with the Orkney Local Development Plan, the Indicative Orkney Regional Spatial Strategy, National Planning

	Framework 4 and the National Marine Plan. As a statutory plan, all decision-making functions of the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government, OIC and any other relevant public authorities will have to be made in accordance with the Plan unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise.
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this function / policy / plan?	360+ stakeholder database used to send c. biannual updates on the plan making process. The Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group (OMPAG) was set up to provide technical expertise and guidance. The Statement of Public Participation was produced within first six months of OIC receiving delegated functions. The OIC Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment (SoEA) workshops, non-connected isles presentations for SoEA, independent review panel (Heriot Watt University), one to one sectoral, environmental, academic, educational and social stakeholder meetings informed data gathering for SoEA report, as appropriate. Stakeholder engagement events held in Stronsay, Sanday, Hoy, Westray, Stromness, Kirkwall and St Margaret's Hope in 2022. The formal public consultation process in 2024 enabled significant stakeholder input to the plan-making process. During this statutory consultation, a variety of consultation and engagement events were delivered. This included: • The OIC Marine Planning team hosting 10 in-person events in multiple locations throughout the Orkney Islands; • Two online information sessions in order to maximise participation opportunity; • Workshops with schools where OIC Marine Planning staff captured young people's opinion on what is important for them about the sea and how it should be managed; and • Six interviews with businesses.

Is there any existing data and / or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic / consultants' reports, benchmarking (see equalities resources on OIC information portal).	The SoEA provides a baseline assessment of the socio-economic and environmental issues affecting the Orkney Islands marine region. The assessment did not identify any significant equalities issues e.g. regarding the local population or economic activities. Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan: Consultation Draft: Equality Impact Assessment Record noted that no concerns were raised and no potential impacts identified. Nor were any significant impacts identified in the National Marine Plan. Both plans were subject to extensive stakeholder engagement and public consultation. Shetland Islands' Regional Marine Plan EqIA: identified no positive or negative impact and the policies deemed to not directly or indirectly be discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010. Policies contained in the OIRMP cover very similar topics and issues.
Is there any existing evidence relating to socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. For people living in poverty or for people of low income. See The Fairer Scotland Duty Interim Guidance for Public Bodies for further information.	No; it was determined that a light-touch approach to EqIA is required, as current evidence demonstrates that the OIRMP has insignificant potential impacts and minimal relevance to equality.
Could the function / policy have a differential impact on any of the following equality areas?	(Please provide any evidence – positive impacts / benefits, negative impacts and reasons).
1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.

2. Sex: a man or a woman.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
5. Pregnancy and maternity.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
6. Age: people of different ages.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists).	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term

	needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
8. Caring responsibilities.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
9. Care experienced.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
10. Marriage and Civil Partnerships.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
11. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not).	(Includes physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, mental health) No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.
12. Socio-economic disadvantage.	No impact. The policies included in the plan are intended to safeguard and improve the marine and coastal environment and meet the long term

	needs of the local communities and the environment. The policies of the regional marine plan are general policy statements and are intended to have low or minimal impact on those with protected characteristics and therefore equality.

3. Impact Assessment

Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	An equality impact assessment ("EqIA") aims to consider how a policy (a policy can cover: activities, functions, strategies, programmes, and services or processes) may impact, either positively or negatively, on different sectors of the population in different ways. This EqIA has been undertaken to consider the impacts on equality of the development of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan ("the OIRMP"). The policies contained in the OIRMP are intended to safeguard and, where possible, improve the Scottish marine area, with the purpose of meeting the long term needs of nature and people. It is anticipated that these policies will be positive for Orkney's communities, however, the policies contained in the OIRMP are general policy statements and have no differential or discriminatory impact(s) on those with protected characteristics. The EqIA has confirmed that the OIRMP is neither directly or indirectly discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010. No significant equality issues were raised during the policy development process. This has been reviewed during the public consultation on the consultation draft OIRMP and supporting draft documents/assessments. Thus, there are no identified differential impacts to be addressed.

How could you minimise or remove any potential negative impacts?	No negative impact identified.
Do you have enough information to make a judgement? If no, what information do you require?	Yes.

4. Conclusions and Planned Action

Is further work required?	Yes, ongoing implementation of the Plan and monitoring and evaluation. This EqlA will therefore be updated in light of any feedback during implementation and monitoring of the Plan, and the conclusion above i.e. the OIRMP is neither directly or indirectly discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010, will be revised if appropriate. This is part of the statutory planning function of the Council and the delegated functions for preparing the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
What action is to be taken?	This document is kept under review and will be amended as required to ensure that it is up to date and accords with the requirements of current relevant legislation and policy.
Who will undertake it?	OIC Development and Marine Planning
How will it be monitored? (e.g. through service plans).	Through the monitoring and evaluation processes of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.

Signature: D. Morris

Date: 07/10/2025

Name: DANIEL MORRIS

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send a copy to HR and Performance. A Word version should also be emailed to HR and Performance at hrsupport@orkney.gov.uk

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Island Communities Impact Assessment



Blank Page

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Islands Communities Impact Assessment

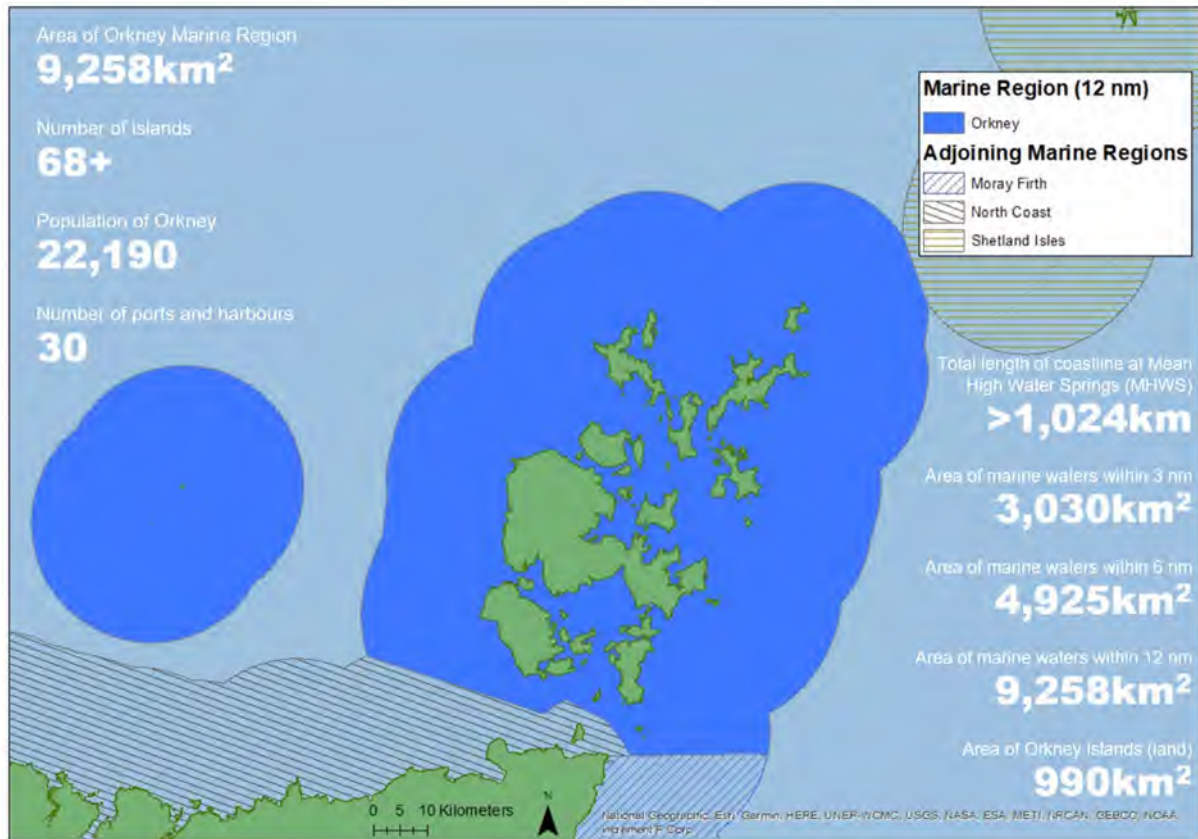


Figure 1: Overview of Orkney Islands Marine Region

Contents

Topic	Page
Contents	<i>ii</i>
Acronyms	<i>iii</i>
Background	1
Step 1: Define the Issue	2
Step 2: Understand the situation	5
Step 3: Consultation	16
Step 4: Assessment ICIA required?	16
Step 5: Preparing the ICIA	17
Step 6: Making adjustments	17
Appendix 1 Orkney Islands Council Islands Communities Impact Assessment	19
Appendix 2: Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group members	24
Appendix 3: Organisations contacted for input	25
Appendix 4: Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Summary	26
Appendix 5: Feedback from early engagement island visits (Spring 2022)	31

List of Figures

Figure 1: Overview of Orkney Islands Marine Region	i
Figure 2: Map highlighting permanent populated isles of Orkney based on census data	6
Figure 3: Population change across Scotland	11
Figure 4: Map highlighting some the recently previously populated isles according to census data from 1961 – 2011	13
Figure 5: Map of designated nature conservation sites within the Orkney marine region.	15

List of Tables

Table 1: Draft objectives of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan	4
Table 2: Population of Orkney Islands	7
Table 3: Previously recently inhabited islands in Orkney	14

Acronyms

ICIA	Island Communities Impact Assessment
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
OIC	Orkney Islands Council
OIRMP	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
OLDP	Orkney Local Development Plan
SoEA	State of the Environment Assessment
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Island Communities Impact Assessment: Orkney Islands marine region

Background

This report provides an assessment of impacts on island communities in relation to the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP). The OIRMP guides sustainable development, activities and use in the Orkney Islands marine region, whilst ensuring environmental protection. The statutory policies and spatial information guides decision making on marine licensing and consenting.

The production of the Plan is a statutory function of the Council in accordance with The Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020¹. The Orkney Islands marine region includes the marine waters around Sule Stack and Sule Skerry, as shown in Figure 1 above. This area covers 9,258 km² from Mean High Water Springs to 12 nautical miles (nm).

The Island Communities Impact Assessments (Publication and Review of Decisions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 were laid on 3 November and came into force on 23 December 2020. This means that the duty to carry out an Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA) became a legal requirement for relevant authorities (listed in the Act) from 23 December 2020 and requires Scottish Government and relevant authorities to take island issues into account when developing or reviewing policies, strategies or services². This report has been prepared with regard to the steps outlined in the '*Island Communities Impact Assessments: Guidance and Toolkit*'³ and is in accordance with Sections 7 and 12 of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018⁴.

As the OIRMP only applies to the Orkney Island marine region, any potential differential impacts in relation to mainland Scotland are not applicable, as per the guidance provided in the '*Island Communities Impact Assessments: Guidance and Toolkit*' document⁵. However, this report examines if there are likely to be any significant differences in application of the OIRMP policies between the different Orkney Island communities.

Appendix 1 sets out key information in relation to the ICIA under the Orkney Islands Council ICIA format.

¹ [Delegation of Regional Marine Planning Functions in the Orkney Islands 2020 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/delegation-of-regional-marine-planning-functions-in-the-orkney-islands-2020/pages/1-1-introduction.aspx)

² [National Islands Plan Annual Report 2020 \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-islands-plan-annual-report-2020/pages/1-1-introduction.aspx)

³ [Carrying out your Island Communities Impact Assessment - Island communities impact assessments: guidance and toolkit - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/carrying-out-your-island-communities-impact-assessment-island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-and-toolkit/pages/1-1-introduction.aspx)

⁴ [Islands \(Scotland\) Act 2018 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/section/7)

⁵ [Carrying out your Island Communities Impact Assessment - Island communities impact assessments: guidance and toolkit - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/carrying-out-your-island-communities-impact-assessment-island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-and-toolkit/pages/1-1-introduction.aspx)

Step 1: Define the issue

The OIRMP enables sustainable development and activities in the Orkney marine region by providing a strategic planned approach that supports:

- sustainable licensing, consenting and management decisions in relation to development and activities in the Orkney Islands marine region;
- marine developers in early identification of localities of most and least constraint;
- environmental protection, and where appropriate, enhancement measures, to satisfy statutory requirements and policy commitments; and
- provision of identifiable socio-economic benefits for local communities and wider stakeholders.

The Vision of the Plan is:

‘The Orkney Islands marine region is clean, healthy, safe and productive; Orkney’s marine and coastal environment is rich in biodiversity and managed sustainably to support thriving and resilient local communities’.

The draft objectives of Plan are in Table 1 below; they relate to environmental, economic and climate change factors.

The intended outcomes of the Plan are to:

- Aid statutory decision-making regarding marine licensing and consenting by the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government, Local Authorities and other regulators;
- Enable sustainable development in the marine environment;
- Provide local marine regional data and information to allow greater certainty for developers regarding prospective proposals;
- Allow more local involvement, ownership and input into decision-making about specific issues within the local area;
- Provide a transparent plan-making process and promote good governance; and
- Ensure marine environment is protected.

The Plan therefore also contributes to a number of the strategic objectives of the National Islands Plan⁶ e.g. Strategic Objective 2: *Sustainable Economic Development*; Strategic Objective 8: *Environmental Wellbeing and Biosecurity*; Strategic Objective 9: *Climate Change and Energy*; Strategic Objective 10: *Empowered Island Communities and Strong Local Partnership*; Strategic Objective 13: *Implementation*.

National Planning Framework (NPF4)⁷ guides the development and use of land to 2045. It forms part of the development plan and therefore influences the day-to-day

⁶ [The National Plan for Scotland's Islands - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-islands-plan/pages/2/)

⁷ National Planning Framework 4 - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/>

decisions on local planning matters. It focuses on:

- Sustainable places
- Liveable places
- Productive places

In terms of policy, NPF4 is linked to the outcomes of the National Performance Framework. It aims to rebalance the planning system so that climate change and nature recovery are the primary guiding principles for all our plans and all our decisions.

The Government's aim is to also help stimulate the green economy by facilitating innovation, greener design and place-based solutions.

NPF4 is required by law to contribute to six high level outcomes:

- Meeting the housing needs of people living in Scotland including, in particular, the housing needs for older people and disabled people,
- Improving the health and wellbeing of people living in Scotland,
- Increasing the population of rural areas of Scotland,
- Improving equality and eliminating discrimination,
- Meeting any targets relating to the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases, and
- Securing positive effects for biodiversity.

It also includes land use planning policies supporting key issues for island communities such as engagement, transport, local living, housing, spaces and places, rural and coastal policies, aquaculture, health and wellbeing and connectivity.

The OIRMP, its policies, along with all the supporting assessments, are applicable to all of the islands' regional marine waters and communities in Orkney equally. The Plan, including all aims, objectives and policies, along with all the supporting assessments, has been modified in light of public and stakeholder consultation in order to pay due regard to the National Marine Plan and NPF4.

Table 1: Objectives of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Number	Objective
1	A clear strategic direction is provided for development, activities and use in the Orkney Islands marine region and there is greater certainty for prospective developers, investors and local communities.
2	Development, activities and use are managed within an ecosystem approach, to protect and, where appropriate, enhance the biological, chemical and physical functioning of the marine and coastal environment, including the management of cumulative impacts.
3	A rapid and just transition to a low-carbon economy is supported to achieve net-zero commitments.
4	Mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change is supported.
5	Socio-economic benefits and prosperity are delivered for local communities and the wider economy.
6	The well-being of local communities and the amenity of marine and coastal places are protected and enhanced.
7	Reliable information is provided on existing and proposed coastal and marine development, activities, use and assets.
8	Spatial planning and data are provided, enabling sustainable coexistence and synergies between existing and new marine development, activities and use, and the environment.
9	Plan users are assisted in navigating the relevant legislative and policy frameworks more easily and effectively.
10	Local communities are effectively engaged in decisions affecting the Orkney Islands marine region.

Step 2: Understand the situation

Introduction

The Orkney archipelago consists of 68+ islands over an area of 990km². Sixteen of the islands are populated according to census data, some uninhabited islands are still used for farming, whilst others are relatively small rocky outcrops (see Figure 2). In addition, although the 2022 census does not show any population for Papa Stronsay, there are currently nine monks living on the island (per comm).

In Orkney, no one lives further than five miles from the coast⁸; the vast majority live much closer. Thus, all Orkney communities are classed as ‘coastal’. The capital is Kirkwall; it, along with Stromness, are the two towns in Orkney, whilst the rest of the population live in villages, rural settlements and scattered housing across the Mainland Orkney parishes and Islands.

Orkney Mainland is connected to Lamb Holm and Glimps Holm, both unpopulated islands, and to the Islands of Burray and South Ronaldsay, via the Churchill Barriers. The rest of the populated islands are ferry and/or air connected; the Orkney Local Development Plan (OLDP)⁹ Strategy establishes the ‘Isles Approach’ which applies to this latter category:

- Eday
- Egilsay
- Flotta
- Graemsay
- Hoy
- North Ronaldsay
- Papa Westray
- Rousay
- Sanday
- Shapinsay
- Stronsay
- Westray
- Wyre

The Isles Approach is stated in the OLDP as “*Development within the islands, which support permanent resident populations and are served by public transport services, will be supported where it accords with relevant Plan policies and where it shall not place any unacceptable burden on existing infrastructure and services.*”

⁸ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment](#)

⁹ [Orkney Local Development Plan](#)



Figure 2: Map highlighting permanent populated isles of Orkney based on census data (Papa Stronsay excluded in Table 2 as not included in census data).

Orkney's Island Communities

Fragile areas

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) identified fragile areas across Scotland. Fragile areas are characterised by declining population; under-representation of young people within the population; lack of economic opportunities; below average income levels; problems with transport, and other issues reflecting their geographic location¹⁰. Although somewhat dated, these HIE data are reflected in the population information below.

In Orkney, there were 5 data zones (2014 data zones) classed as fragile:

- S01004968: Rousay, Egilsay, Shapinsay and Wyre
- S01004969: North Ronaldsay, Sanday and Stronsay
- S01004970: Eday, Westray and Papay
- S01004971: Hoy, Flotta, South Walls and South Ronaldsay
- S01004972: Burray and St. Margaret Hope

These five data zones cover 14 of the 16 populated islands; South Walls is attached to Hoy by a causeway and Burray and South Ronaldsay are connected by the Churchill Barriers. The main area not classed as fragile is Mainland. Graemsay was classified as fragile but was included in the Stromness data zone (pers comm), therefore not covered in the list above.

Population

The Orkney population from the 2022 census is 21,961 and is estimated to be 22,000 for 2023, across 16 islands (see Tables 2). A small number of other islands e.g. Aukerry, Copinsay and Hunda have seasonal populations (see below).

Table 2: Population of Orkney Islands

Island	Population	Comment*
Burray	455	Burray lies between Mainland and South Ronaldsay, connected by the Churchill Barriers.
Eday	105	Situated centrally among the North Isles of Orkney, 14 miles north-east of Kirkwall, Eday, the isthmus isle, eight miles long and pinched at the waist, offers a unique blend of heather-clad hilly moorland with panoramic views over sea and islands, sheer cliffs, sweeping beaches and sand dunes and rich in archaeology. Most of the crofts and farms are located on the fertile coastal strip.
Flotta	79	Flotta has one of the most spectacular 360 degree panoramas in the UK: the sweep of the Hills of Hoy, the great expanse of Scapa Flow and the hills of Mainland Orkney beyond, to the east Burray and South Ronaldsay, completing the circle by looking out across the Pentland Firth to the Scottish mainland. Flotta was a strategic military base in both World Wars therefore contains much military history. Since the mid 1970s, Flotta has been the location for an oil terminal that makes a significant contribution to Orkney's economy.

¹⁰ [Highlands and Islands Enterprise | HIE](#)

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Islands Communities Impact Assessment

Island	Population	Comment*
Graemsay	28 (2011 census)	Graemsay is located in the Western approaches to Scapa Flow lying between Stromness on Orkney mainland and North Hoy, separated from the Mainland by Clestrain Sound. The island is 409 ha (1.58 sq mi) in area and is around two miles by a mile and half. Large parts of the island have been left largely undeveloped and are a haven for many wild plants. It is mainly crofted and has a predominantly ageing population.
Hoy	416	Hoy is the second largest island in Orkney, at 57 square miles. From the summit of Ward Hill, the highest point in the county at 1570 feet, every island in Orkney can be seen with the exception of Rysa Little, which is the nearest. Hoy has significant military history. During World War II, thousands of navy personnel were based at Lyness and the now deserted naval base has been converted to a visitor centre with many exhibits from both world wars and the scuttled German fleet. This, along with the Old Man of Hoy stack and the spectacular hills and wildlife, are key tourist attractions. Lyness is a key port facility.
Papa Westray	101	Known locally as 'Papay' it is four miles long and a mile across at its widest point. With a history stretching back thousands of years, Papay's more recent past has seen plenty of positive projects bring a sense of vibrancy to the island. There's an annual arts festival, a fantastic community shop, one of Orkney's best hostels and a refurbished craft and heritage space, housed on the shore in the island's former kelp store.
Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre	268	Rousay is known as the 'Egypt of the north' thanks to its collection of more than 150 ancient sites. A mile-long stretch on the south west coastline showcases some incredible locations, including the Iron Age Midhowe Broch, the 5000-year-old Midhowe Chambered Cairn, housed in an imposing hangar, and the excavations at Swandro. Three miles long by a mile and half wide, off the east coast of Rousay, Egilsay is a haven for birds, especially the rare Corncrake. Although only two miles long and a mile wide, Wyre has a history stretching back thousands of years. The island's main attraction is the substantial Cubbie Roo's Castle, the remains of an imposing structure built for 12th century Norse chieftain, Kolbein Hruga.
Sanday and North Ronaldsay ¹¹	549	The largest of Orkney's north isles, Sanday has a land and seascape more akin to the Outer Hebrides, with beautiful beaches, sand dunes and machair, all set at the fringes of some of Orkney's most fertile farmland.

¹¹ The 2022 figure is based on the new zone of Island Groups 2022, which is compatible for Orkney, except that North Ronaldsay is now combined with Sanday and Egilsay and Wyre are now combined with Rousay.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Islands Communities Impact Assessment

Island	Population	Comment*
		North Ronaldsay is the most northerly of the Orkney Islands and is three miles long and two miles wide, the island is famous for its rare breed of seaweed-eating sheep, which are contained on the seaward side of the island by a drystone dyke that encompasses the shoreline.
Shapinsay	302	A green, fertile, low-lying island, full of wildlife and boasting a vibrant community 25 minutes away by ferry from Kirkwall. The village of Balfour, an early example of a planned village, was built in the late 1700s. It still retains much of its original character, with the single street overlooked by stone cottages that originally housed workers on the sprawling Balfour estate, home of the grand Balfour Castle.
South Ronaldsay	988	Orkney's fourth largest island and home to St Margaret's Hope, known locally as 'the Hope'; possibly the most picturesque village in the archipelago.
Stronsay	327	Covering an area of 12½ square miles, it is the seventh largest island, known as the 'island of bays', due to the three large bays separated by two isthmuses: St Catherine's Bay to the west, the Bay of Holland to the south and Mill Bay to the east. The main village is Whitehall, home to a heritage centre.
Westray	576	At 18.2 square miles, it is the sixth largest island. The main village is Pierowall, with a heritage centre, the 15th-century Lady Kirk church and pedestrian ferry service to nearby Papa Westray island. Westray has a number of archaeological sites dating from 3500 BC, and remains of several Norse-Viking settlements. The spectacular sea cliffs around Noup Head are home to thousands of seabirds.
Mainland	17,805	Mainland Island covers an area of approximately 202 square miles; key areas are East and West Mainland respectively. It accounts for three-quarters of the population of Orkney and links the northern isles to the southern isles via air, ferry and Churchill Barriers. The main settlements are Kirkwall, Stromness, Dounby, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope. East Mainland contains fertile farmland, craggy coastlines and beautiful beaches, whilst West Mainland contains world-class archaeology and incredible coastlines.
Total	21,961	

* Data sources include www.orkney.com ; www.graemsay.org.uk ; [briefing-population-growth-and-decline-in-orkney-updated-6-january-2025.pdf](#) and [Sandside, Graemsay Website & blog](#) ; [The Orkney Islands of Scotland - WorldAtlas](#)

National Records of Scotland data shows that the population for Orkney decreased between 2022-2023 (see Figure 3).¹².

¹² <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/publications/mid-2023-population-estimates/?form=MG0AV3>

Percentage population change mid-2022 to mid-2023

- Population decrease
- Population increase of less than 0.8%
- Population increase of 0.8% or more

1. West Dunbartonshire
2. East Dunbartonshire
3. North Lanarkshire
4. Glasgow City
5. East Renfrewshire
6. Renfrewshire
7. Inverclyde
8. Clackmannanshire
9. Falkirk
10. West Lothian
11. City of Edinburgh
12. Midlothian
13. East Lothian

© Crown copyright and database right 2024
All rights reserved National Records of Scotland
Ordnance Survey Licence number: 100020542



Figure 3: Population change across Scotland (Source: [Mid-2023 population estimates - National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#) (accessed 24/3/2025))

Now unpopulated islands

A number of islands around Orkney used to be inhabited in the relatively recent past (see Figure 4). Census data between 1961 – 2011 shows the islands that were formally populated during this time, as outlined in Table 3. Populations ranged from one person on Auskerry and Sule Skerry respectively, up to ten people on Papa Stronsay in 2010. Although the 2011 census does not show any population for Papa Stronsay, there are currently nine monks living on the island (per comm).

Some of the islands may be occupied (e.g. Gairsay) or are habitable on a temporary basis, but are not included in the population figures in Table 2 above.

Smaller islands

The rest of the islands are relatively small low-lying islands, skerries or rock stacks. Some are used for farming e.g. sheep grazing or are being considered for potential wind energy generation. Several are designated nature conservation sites for a range of qualifying features such as seals and seabirds.



Figure 4: Map highlighting recent previously populated isles according to census data from 1961 – 2011 (see text for details).

Table 3: Recent previously inhabited islands in Orkney (see text for details).

Island	Comment
Auskerry	Two people live on Auskerry for at least part of the year.
Copinsay	The lighthouse is automated, but a planning application was approved in 2010 for construction of a small wind turbine on Copinsay.
Papa Stronsay	Whilst no separate census data are available for this island, it is home to nine Transalpine monks as of April 2021.
Gairsay	One family lives on and farms part of Gairsay.
Cava	About one third of the island area is semi-improved grassland, all formerly cultivated. Now home to national important habitats and species such as blanket bog, Arctic tern and curlew.
Fara	Most of the island is peat-covered. Now home to nationally important habitats and species such as maritime cliff and slope, red-throated diver and otter.
Sule Skerry	A low-lying island located 60 kilometres west of Brough Head, off the north-west of the Orkney Mainland. A SSSI for breeding seabirds colonies, including puffin, shag and storm petrel.
Swona	The island is home to wild cows from a herd left behind in the 1970s.
Pentland Skerries	Unpopulated since the lighthouse became automated.

The marine environment

The Orkney Islands marine region, which is the subject area for the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP) being assessed in this ICIA, covers 9,258 km² from Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) to 12 nautical miles (nm). It is bound by 1,024 km² of coastline around the 68+ islands; the latter covers 990 km². Thus, the marine regional area is virtually ten times the land area.

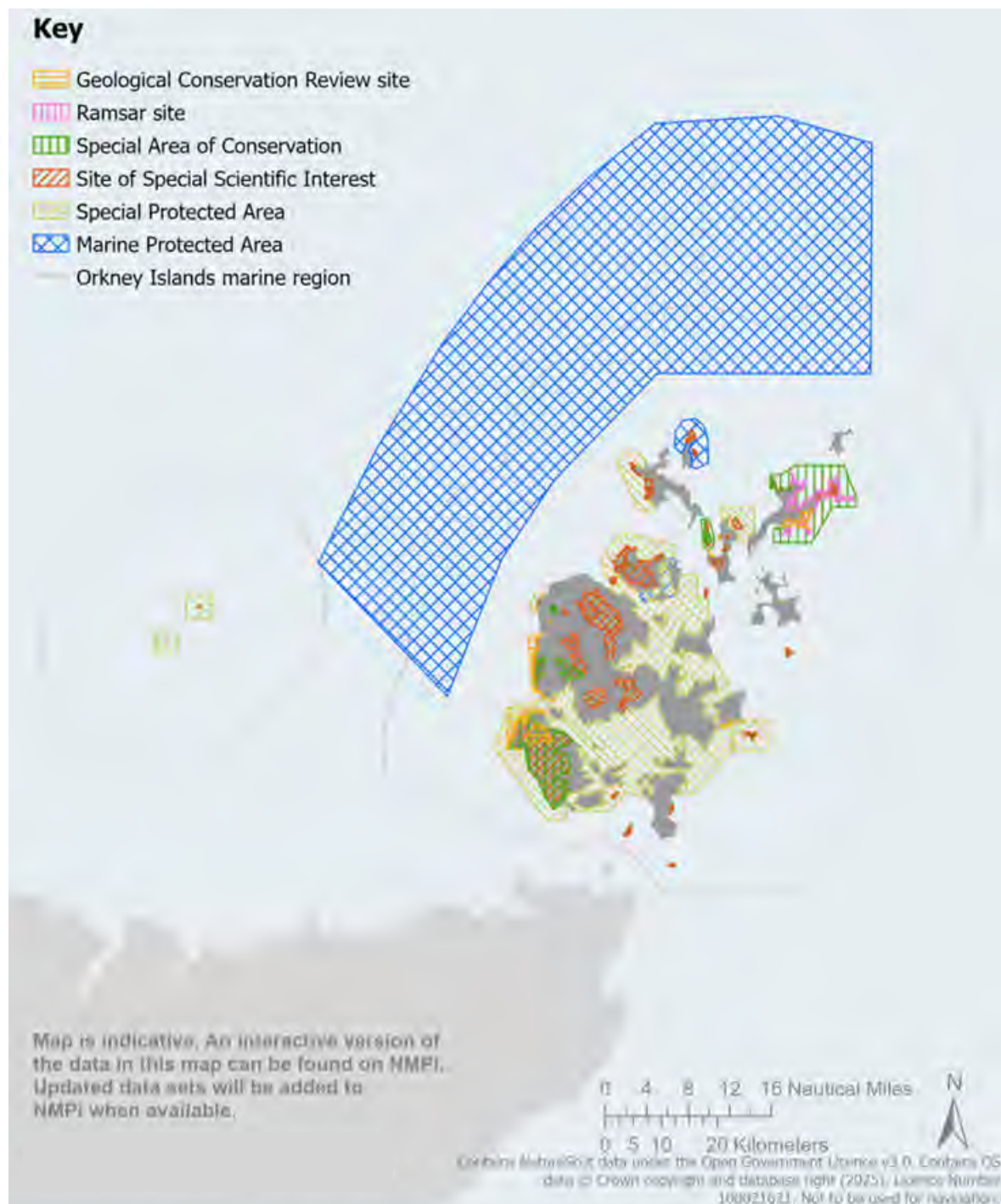
The Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment 2020 (SoEA)¹³ provides a baseline assessment of the environment of Orkney. It presents a summary of the environmental pressures and impacts of human activities affecting the Orkney Islands marine region. It includes geographical, ecological, social and economic factors and associated trends, where known. It provides a snapshot in time of the current issues facing Orkney's marine environment, as of November 2020, and the current status of the key economic sectors. This assessment therefore highlights the importance of e.g. lifeline ferries, fishing, aquaculture, energy and tourism for the island communities. Appendix 4 of the SoEA outlines the summary of the sectors and the status of the pressures and trends, along with the data confidence measures. Appendix 4 of the SoEA also provides a summary of the climate change pressures and interactions with the various ecological and commercial sectors.

¹³ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment](#)

Designated nature conservation sites

Most of the designated sites around Orkney have coastal and marine elements (see Figure 5). A full list of sites and background information can be found in Appendix 2 of the SoEA¹⁴.

Figure 5: Map of nature conservation designated sites within the Orkney marine region.



¹⁴ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment](#)

Step 3: Consultation

During the early stages of preparation of this ICIA report, input and guidance was sought from OIC officers across several departments, the Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group (OMPAG), see Appendix 2, Scottish Government and local stakeholders. Further details of the stakeholders contacted directly can be found in Appendix 3. OMPAG work closely with OIC, (the latter as sole delegate), to ensure expertise on a range of topics is considered throughout the plan-making phase. In addition, the Statement of Public Participation¹⁵ sets out the indicative timescales and methodology for engaging and consulting a wide range of stakeholders on the consultation draft OIRMP and associated supporting documents.

Appendix 5 contains some feedback received during early engagement visits from the OIC Marine Planning team outlining the purpose and scope of the regional marine plan to local communities and school pupils, and seeking early feedback. This extra stage of engagement, not outlined in the SPP, was seen to be important as otherwise local communities would likely not fully understand what they were being consulted on if presented with the draft Plan, without this earlier level of engagement to explain both what the plan was, and equally important, what it was not i.e. not a strategy/action plan type document. Visits were made to Sanday, Hoy, Stronsay, and Westray, as well as St. Margaret's Hope, Stromness and Kirkwall in Spring/Summer 2022 and included school sessions with a range of different class groups.

The OIRMP: Consultation Draft and supporting assessments including the partial ICIA were deposited for public consultation from 1 August to 25 October 2024. The aim of the consultation, and wider engagement process, was to engage a diverse audience as effectively as possible. This included targeting and designing engagement activities to each island community and capturing a diverse range of views and interests. This consultation and engagement process provided valuable information and local knowledge that has informed the preparation of the final Plan and the ICIA process.

Step 4: Assessment: Is a full ICIA required?

All the policies within the OIRMP will be applied equally to all islands within the Orkney Islands marine region area. In addition, as the adjacent island communities of Shetland have a draft regional marine plan and also have to abide by the National Marine Plan and related guidance, it will not have a significantly different effect on either the local Orkney or the Shetland island communities.

¹⁵ Orkney Islands Council 2020. State of the Environment Assessment <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

As outlined in Step 1, the intended outcomes of the Plan are to:

- Aid statutory decision-making regarding marine licensing and consenting by the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government, Local Authorities and other regulators;
- Enable sustainable development in the marine environment;
- Provide local marine regional data and information to allow greater certainty for developers regarding prospective proposals;
- Allow more local involvement, ownership and input into decision-making about specific issues within the local area;
- Provide a transparent plan-making process and promote good governance; and
- Ensure marine environment is protected.

Thus, as the demonstrated intended outcomes of the Plan are to provide a clear framework for sustainable marine development whilst safeguarding the marine environment, and this framework will apply equally to all of the marine waters and island communities within the plan's jurisdiction, and has been prepared in accordance with the National Marine Plan, with due regard to NPF4, the policy, strategy or service (i.e. the OIRMP) is not likely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities).

Following the public consultation on the draft OIRMP and its associated assessments, this ICIA has been reviewed and updated to include up to date data. No feedback was received that a full ICIA should be carried out, therefore, the above information is considered sufficient to demonstrate that a full ICIA is not required for the OIRMP.

Step 5: Preparing the ICIA

As a full ICIA is not required, Step 5 of the process in accordance with '*Island Communities Impact Assessments: Guidance and Toolkit*' is not applicable.

Step 6: Making adjustments

The published Plan will be subject to ongoing monitoring, evaluation and review, which will include an assessment of ICIA status.

Blank page

Appendix 1: Orkney Islands Council Islands Communities Impact Assessment

Preliminary Considerations	Responses
Please provide a brief description or summary of the policy, strategy or service under review for the purposes of this assessment.	Determine if an Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA) is required for the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP). The OIRMP will guide sustainable development, activities and use in the Orkney Islands marine region, whilst ensuring environmental protection. The statutory policies and supporting spatial information will guide decision making on marine licensing and other relevant consenting decisions. See above for further detail.
STEP 1 - Develop a clear understanding of your objectives	Responses
What are the objectives of the policy, strategy or service?	To enable sustainable development in the Orkney Islands marine region. See OIRMP ICIA for further detail.
Do you need to consult?	Yes
How are islands identified for the purpose of the policy, strategy or service?	The plan applies to all islands within Orkney equally and there are no differential impacts to any individual island or community.
What are the intended impacts/outcomes and how do these potentially differ in the islands?	See above.
Is the policy, strategy or service new?	Yes
STEP 2 - Gather your data and identify your stakeholders	Responses
What data is available about the current situation in the islands?	See above.
Do you need to consult?	Yes

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Islands Communities Impact Assessment

How does any existing data differ between islands?	See above.
Are there any existing design features or mitigations in place?	See above.
STEP 3 - Consultation	Responses
Who do you need to consult with?	See above.
How will you carry out your consultation and in what timescales?	See above.
What questions will you ask when considering how to address island realities?	See above.
What information has already been gathered through consultations and what concerns have been raised previously by island communities?	See above.
Is your consultation robust and meaningful and sufficient to comply with the Section 7 duty?	Yes: see above.
STEP 4 - Assessment	Responses
Does your assessment identify any unique impacts on island communities?	No: see above. The plan applies to all islands within Orkney equally and there are no differential impacts to any individual island or community.
Does your assessment identify any potential barriers or wider impacts?	No: see above.
How will you address these?	See above.

You must now determine whether in your opinion your policy, strategy or service is likely to have an effect on an island community, which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities).

If your answer is **NO** to the above question, a full ICIA will NOT be required and **you can proceed to Step**

SIX. If the answer is **YES**, an ICIA must be prepared and **you should proceed to Step FIVE**.

To form your opinion, the following questions should be considered:

- Does the evidence show different circumstances or different expectations or needs, or different experiences or outcomes (such as different levels of satisfaction, or different rates of participation)?
- Are these different effects likely?
- Are these effects significantly different?
- Could the effect amount to a disadvantage for an island community compared to the Scottish mainland or between island groups?

STEP 5 – Preparing your ICIA	Responses
In Step Five, you should describe the likely significantly different effect of the policy, strategy or service:	N/A The plan applies to all islands within Orkney equally and there are no differential impacts to any individual island or community.
Assess the extent to which you consider that the policy, strategy or service can be developed or delivered in such a manner as to improve or mitigate, for island communities, the outcomes resulting from it.	N/A
Consider alternative delivery mechanisms and whether further consultation is required.	N/A
Describe how these alternative delivery mechanisms will improve or mitigate outcomes for island communities.	N/A

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Islands Communities Impact Assessment

Identify resources required to improve or mitigate outcomes for island communities.	N/A
STEP 6 - Making adjustments to your work	Responses
Should delivery mechanisms/mitigations vary in different communities?	No. The plan applies to all islands within Orkney equally and there are no differential impacts to any individual island or community.
Do you need to consult with island communities in respect of mechanisms or mitigations?	Yes: see above.
Have island circumstances been factored into the evaluation process?	Yes: see above.
Have any island-specific indicators/targets been identified that require monitoring?	Yes: see above.
How will outcomes be measured on the islands?	See above.
How has the policy, strategy or service affected island communities?	See above.
How will lessons learned in this ICIA inform future policy making and service delivery?	See above.
STEP 7 - Publishing your ICIA	Responses
Have you presented your ICIA in an Easy Read format?	Yes: see above.
Does it need to be presented in Gaelic or any other language?	No
Where will you publish your ICIA and will relevant stakeholders be able to easily access it?	OIC website; file sizes are minimized to ensure they are downloadable. As part of the wider public consultation process; where to access the documents has been widely publicised.
Who will sign-off your final ICIA and why?	Scottish Ministers, as they have the relevant authority to do so.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Islands Communities Impact Assessment

ICIA completed by:	Daniel Morris
Position:	Marine Planner
Signature:	D.Morris
Date complete:	07/10/2025

ICIA approved by:	Gavin Barr
Position:	Head of Planning and Regulatory Services
Signature:	
Date complete:	21/10/25

Appendix 2: Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group members

Organisation	Category
NatureScot	Environment
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Environment
International Centre for Island Technology	Academic
Orkney Regional Inshore Fisheries Group	Commercial
Historic Environment Scotland	Environment
Orkney Harbour Authority	Commercial
Visit Scotland	Commercial
Crown Estate Scotland	Commercial
Salmon Scotland	Commercial
Flotta Oil Terminal operator	Commercial
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland	Environment
Orkney Renewable Energy Forum	Commercial
Orkney Marinas	Recreational
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks	Commercial
Orkney Marine Services Association	Commercial
Orkney Sub-Aqua Club	Recreational

Appendix 3: Orkney Islands Council officers and organisations contacted during early plan-making process.

Organisation
OIC solicitor (former seconded Scottish Government Islands team member)
OIC Environment Officer, Development and Marine Planning (D&MP)
OIC Climate Change Officer, D&MP
OIC Biodiversity Technician, D&MP
OIC North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme officers
OIC Team Leader (Policy and Planning), Education, Leisure and Housing Services
OMPAG – see Appendix 2
Sandy Development Trust
Stronsay Development Trust
Hoy and North Walls Community Association
Westray Community Association
Sanday School
Stronsay School
Westray School
Oceans of Value Project, Scottish Wildlife Trust
Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government
Orkney marine planning stakeholders*

* These c. 360 stakeholders receive updates on the plan-making process via a newsletter circulated c.2-3 times per annum (see [Marine Planning \(orkney.gov.uk\)](http://Marine Planning (orkney.gov.uk)) 'Related Sites' section).

Appendix 4: Summary of the sectors and the status of the pressures and trends, along with the data confidence measures for the Orkney Islands marine region and climate change summary (source: SoEA (2020)).

3a) State of the Environment Assessment (SoEA) Summary

Category	Topic	Pressure	Assessment	Trend	Data confidence
Physical	Geological and coastal	Erosion; Disturbance.	Some concerns	Deteriorating	High
	Landscape and Seascape	Erosion of special qualities of landscape and seascape; Coastal erosion, sea-level rise, flooding and change to vegetation types due to climate change.	Some concerns	Deteriorating	Medium
	Coastal Water Quality	Pollution	Some concerns	Static	High
	Air Quality	Pollution	Few concerns	Unknown	Low
	Marine litter	Entanglement; Ingestion; Amenity	Some concerns	Unknown	Medium
	Underwater noise	Disturbance; Injury;	Some concerns	Deteriorating	Low
Historic Coastal and Marine Environment	Historic Coastal and Marine Environment	Climate change; Erosion; Corrosion; Removal of artifacts.	Many concerns	Deteriorating	High
Climate Change	Climate Change	Multiple pressures: see Table 13	Many concerns	Deteriorating	Medium

Table 3a) cont

Category	Topic	Pressure	Assessment	Trend	Data confidence
Biodiversity	Designated Nature Conservation Sites	Climate change; Barrier to species movement; Collision; Disturbance; Overfishing; Pollution.	As there are many designated sites with varying site condition status, an overview assessment of the sites would be of limited value. Refer to Appendix 2 for individual site condition assessments.		
	Birds	Climate change; Collision; Disturbance; Marine litter	Many concerns	Deteriorating	Medium
	Grey Seals	Climate change; Disturbance; Pollution	Few concerns	Static	Medium
	Harbour Seals	Climate change; Competition; Disturbance; Pollution	Many concerns	Deteriorating	Medium
	Cetaceans	Climate change; Barrier to species movement; Collision; Disturbance: visual and displacement; Entanglement; Marine litter; Noise; Pollution	Some concerns	Unknown	Low
	Commercial Fish and Shellfish	Climate change; Disturbance; Removal of target species.	Unknown	Unknown	Not applicable
	Wider Fish Community	Climate change; Disturbance; Removal of non-target species.	Unknown	Unknown	Not applicable
	Invasive Non-native Species	Alter food webs; Outcompete native species.	Some concerns	Static	High

3b) SoEA Productive sector assessment summary adapted from the SoEA¹⁶

Category	Topic	Economic contribution	Employment	Production	Data confidence
Productive coasts and seas	Commercial Fisheries	Increasing	Stable	Decreasing	High
	Aquaculture	Increasing	Increasing	Increasing	High
	Harbours, Port, Shipping and Marine Transport	Increasing	Stable	Stable	High
	Offshore Wind Energy	Unknown	Unknown	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Wave and Tidal Energy	Stable	Stable	Stable	Medium
	Oil and Gas	Stable	Stable	Decreasing	High
	Marine Supply Chain, Research and Services	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Not applicable
	Tourism, Recreation, Sport and Leisure	Increasing	Increasing	Increasing	High

¹⁶ Orkney Islands Council 2020. State of the Environment Assessment <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

3c) Climate Change pressures: adapted from SoEA¹⁷

Topic	Climate Change pressures and interactions
Physical	Sea level rise and erosion, along with changes in temperature, salinity and weather patterns, will alter the physical characteristics and dynamics of marine and coastal areas and have landscape impacts. Coastal flooding can arise from a combination of factors including high tides, wind and wave exposure and storm surge. Such events are predicted to be further exasperated by increases in sea level and storm conditions attributed to climate change. Physical features containing marine inorganic carbon can be disturbed by processes of erosion and impacts from development and activities.
Historic coastal and marine environment	Sea level rise, along with the potential for changing weather patterns and coastal processes due to climate change, pose a significant risk to coastal and marine historic assets in Orkney. Storms, and the combine erosive effects of wave and tidal action, particularly in recent years, have caused substantial damage to historic coastal sites and monuments. Climate-change causing rising sea-levels has been identified as the single greatest threat to Orkney's coastal built heritage.
Biodiversity	Multiple species may be affected by changes in temperature, salinity and changing weather patterns as food webs are disrupted or altered. The pressures on seabirds, around Orkney and beyond, include the effects of climate change on their food supply, due in part to risks from increased storminess, which can impact bird colonies by both physical disturbance and ability to catch prey. Increasing sea temperatures have been seen to affect the timing of reproduction in different ways from species to species, leading to trophic mismatch between predators and the availability of their prey species (e.g. key prey species may bloom before predators have produced young that would normally feed on the prey). Changing acidity of sea water can have an effect on biogeochemical and ecosystem processes including planktonic calcification, carbon and nutrient assimilation, primary production and physiology. Changes due to climate change may impact a variety of ecological processes e.g. specialist species are at risk from increased salinity. Climate related pressures can affect species distribution and invasive non-native species could become established. Coastal lagoons, such as the internationally significant habitats within

¹⁷ Orkney Islands Council 2020. State of the Environment Assessment <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/>

Topic	Climate Change pressures and interactions
	the Loch of Stenness Special Area of Conservation (SAC), are particularly sensitive to relative sea level rise changes related to climate change. Overall, the impacts on marine ecosystems, particularly changes in acidity and on ecosystem services provision are poorly understood for Orkney waters.
Productive coasts and seas	Climate change impacts can affect the distribution of commercial fish species. Increased potential for harmful effects from invasive non-native species (INNS). Increased potential of algal blooms affecting fisheries and aquaculture. Increased risk of storm damage to fishing gear and finfish aquaculture sites. Increased adverse operational impacts on ports, harbours ferries and shipping, along with marine renewable energy activity due to sea level rise and potential increases in storminess.
Social	The climate change related pressures on Orkney's physical environment, historic assets and biodiversity will significantly affect Orkney communities. Climate change pressures including sea level rise, coastal erosion and potential increases in storminess are likely to increase impacts on coastal infrastructure, property and services.

Appendix 5: Feedback from early engagement island visits (Spring 2022)

The following comments have been paraphrased from notes of face-to-face discussions at community engagement events to outline the purpose and scope of the regional marine plan:

When discussing commercial fishing representation: *"I'm pleased to hear that the Orkney Fisheries Association and Orkney Sustainable Fisheries are being included in the plan making process, as fishermen from smaller islands are increasingly getting squeezed out [from development plans]"* Westray

"I'm concerned about the level of litter washing up that doesn't originate from here. It washes up from elsewhere and we are stuck with it". Sanday

"Development plans often overlook the people who live in the remote areas. Plans can sometimes see remote islands as areas for commercial development and nature conservation. There should be emphasis on the people that live here and their wellbeing" Hoy

"The biggest worry for people living here [Stronsay] is the ferries" Stronsay

"I'm concerned about big decisions being made elsewhere, such as the Scottish Government and Marine Scotland, as they don't understand what life is like for fishermen on small islands" Westray

This publication is available at www.orkney.gov.uk

Published by Orkney Islands Council 2025.



Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment



BLANK PAGE

Title of Proposal:

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Purpose and intended effect**Background**

Marine planning in Scotland's inshore waters is governed by the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and in offshore waters by the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009). Following the creation of the National Marine Plan (NMP) in 2015, 11 Scottish Marine Regions were created in Scotland each extending to 12 nautical miles. Within these regions, regional marine plans may be developed by delegates, often referred to as Marine Planning Partnerships (MPPs). MPPs are made up of marine stakeholders who reflect marine interests in their region and are established to take account of local circumstances.

The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP) has been prepared by Orkney Islands Council (OIC), as per the Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020. The preparation of the OIRMP is supported by the Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group (OMPAG), which comprises stakeholders representing environmental, social, economic and recreational interests. Collectively, OIC and the OMPAG form the Orkney Marine Planning Partnership. For clarity, the delegated regional marine plan making functions remain with OIC as the single delegate identified in the Direction.

The Plan conforms with both the National Marine Plan (NMP), unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise, and the Marine Policy Statement. It adds value to the existing policy frameworks outlined in the NMP by taking into account local circumstance and reflecting local priorities and opportunities. It seeks to achieve a balance between national and local interests, helping to address local challenges. The OIRMP sits alongside and integrates with land use planning policy, in particular the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), the indicative Orkney Regional Spatial Strategy and the Orkney Local Development Plan (OLDP).

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a long-term plan for Scotland that sets out where development and infrastructure is needed. Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) looks forward to 2045 to guide spatial development, sets out national planning policies, designates national developments and highlights regional spatial priorities. NPF4 forms part of the development plan and so influences planning decisions across Scotland.

OIRMP Objectives

The OIRMP has been developed to help ensure that development and activities in the Orkney Islands marine region are sustainable. Orkney's vision for the marine and coastal environment is:

Orkney Islands' regional marine waters are clean, healthy, safe and productive; the marine and coastal environment is rich in biodiversity and managed sustainably to support thriving and resilient local communities.

The objectives of the OIRMP are:

- 1 A clear strategic direction is provided for development, activities and use in the Orkney Islands marine region and there is greater certainty for prospective developers, investors and local communities.
- 2 Development, activities and use are managed within an ecosystem approach, to protect and, where appropriate, enhance the biological, chemical and physical functioning of the marine and coastal environment, including the management of cumulative impacts.
- 3 A rapid and just transition to a low-carbon economy is supported to achieve net-zero commitments.
- 4 Mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change is supported.
- 5 Socio-economic benefits and prosperity are delivered for local communities and the wider economy.
- 6 The well-being of local communities and the amenity of marine and coastal places are protected and enhanced.
- 7 Reliable information is provided on existing and proposed coastal and marine development, activities, use and assets.
- 8 Spatial planning and data are provided, enabling sustainable coexistence and synergies between existing and new marine development, activities and use, and the environment.
- 9 Plan users are assisted in navigating the relevant legislative and policy frameworks more easily and effectively.
- 10 Local communities are effectively engaged in decisions affecting the Orkney Islands marine region.

The Plan objectives align with the shared vision of the UK and Scottish Governments as set out in the UK Marine Policy Statement and National Marine Plan respectively, for the marine environment: clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas, managed to meet the long-term needs of nature and people.

The main purpose of the OIRMP is to provide policies and supporting guidance to assist current and future planning, regulation and management of marine and coastal development and activities.

Rationale for Government intervention

The marine environment around Scotland contains a wide variety of important and rare natural features and species, which support a range of valuable goods and services. The National Marine Plan provides a high-level strategic direction to decision-makers in Scottish Waters. Regional marine plans aim to provide a similar strategic direction to decisions within their regions. The OIRMP aims to provide a strategic framework for the management of development and activities in the Orkney Islands marine region, as defined in the Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015, and

associated decision-making. By providing this framework, a high level of detail will be available to decisions makers and developers to assist in the planning process, thus improving clarity, improving efficiency and providing more certainty to the consent application processes. It will ensure that decisions within the Orkney Islands marine region will not be made in isolation and will consider both the complex nature and the different uses and users of the marine environment.

The OIRMP vision is that the marine and coastal environment is one that is clean, healthy, safe and productive; the marine and coastal environment is rich in biodiversity and managed sustainably to support thriving and resilient local communities. The Plan will therefore contribute to National Outcomes in the National Performance Framework including for the environment, economy and communities.

Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation

Advisory Group

Regular meetings with the OMPAG have been held to guide the development of the Plan. In addition, general and sectoral specific policy sub-group meetings have been held with environmental, community and industry interests to inform the preparation of all the OIRMP policies, the results of which were reported back to the main advisory group and subject to further discussion and refinement.

The Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group comprises:

Organisation	Category
NatureScot	Environment
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Environment
International Centre for Island Technology	Academic
Orkney Regional Inshore Fisheries Group	Commercial
Historic Environment Scotland	Environment
Orkney Harbour Authority	Commercial
Visit Scotland	Commercial
Crown Estate Scotland	Commercial
Salmon Scotland	Commercial
Repsol Sinopec	Commercial
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland	Environment
Orkney Renewable Energy Forum	Commercial
Orkney Marinas	Recreational

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks	Commercial
Orkney Marine Services Association	Commercial
Orkney Sub-aqua Club	Recreational

Within Government

Consultation with officials within the Marine Directorate and the wider Scottish Government has been conducted from the outset of the plan-making process. In addition, the following statutory bodies have been consulted throughout the plan-making process and have representation on the OMPAG:

- NatureScot
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
- Historic Environment Scotland (HES)

Six-monthly reports are provided to the Marine Directorate outlining the progress made in the plan-making process. Orkney Islands Council meet regularly with the Marine Directorate to discuss regional marine plan making matters.

Stakeholder/Community Engagement

Early stakeholder engagement has been undertaken in the form of stakeholder workshops to inform the preparation of the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment (SoEA). This included meetings with island development trusts e.g. Westray and public presentations on North Ronaldsay. As part of these engagement events, participants were able to raise issues and were introduced to the principles of marine planning and the proposed outline for the Orkney marine plan-making process.

The Regional Marine Plan for the Orkney Islands: Statement of Public Participation provides information on the plan making timeline and opportunities for stakeholder engagement.

During April to June 2022, further public engagement events were held in Stronsay, Hoy, Sanday and Westray to engage with island communities on the development of the marine plan. OIC Development and Marine Planning delivered a range of activities in the Stronsay, Sanday and Westray schools to support learning on marine planning, the environment and the purpose of OIRMP. Community engagement workshops were held for mainland communities in Kirkwall, Stromness and St Margaret's Hope.

Through these early engagement methods, opinions and comments were sought on a variety of issues including opportunities and challenges for business growth and locations where economic growth is considered less suitable.

Formal public consultation

A public consultation on the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Consultation Draft was held from 1 August to 25 October 2024. This consultation included a Strategic

Environmental Assessment (SEA), Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA), partial Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (pBRIA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA), Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) and Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA). Stakeholder workshops, public drop-in sessions and individual meetings with stakeholders have and will continue take place to discuss the Plan and supporting assessments.

Engagement with businesses

Representatives from relevant sectors have frequently been involved in the development of the Plan's aims, objectives and policies throughout the development of the Plan. Representatives from many business sectors are represented on the OMPAG, as outlined above e.g. aquaculture, oil and gas, harbours, commercial fishing, tourism and recreation and the local marine supply chain.

In February 2022, sector policy subgroups were set up to support the preparation of all the Plan's sector policies i.e. for fishing, aquaculture, harbours and shipping, cables, renewable energy, zero carbon fuels/oil and gas and tourism and recreation.

In addition, several informal meetings have been conducted with businesses and industry organisations. These include the Orkney Shellfish Hatchery, European Marine Energy Centre, Scottish and Southern Energy Networks, Orkney Sustainable Fisheries, Orkney Regional Inshore Fisheries Group, Salmon Scotland, Orkney Islands Council Marine Services, Orkney Marinas and Visit Orkney.

Initial discussions with the businesses and industry organisations indicate that the predominant concerns are:

- the need to strike an appropriate balance between sustainable economic growth and the conservation of the natural and historic environment e.g. the impact of European sites, and associated regulation, on their ability to develop business opportunities. European sites (Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation) are afforded protected by Scottish Law under Conservation (Natural habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994.
- the need for infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth e.g. piers and harbours.
- the ability for businesses to coexist in an increasingly busy marine space.
- the need for greater clarity and certainty when seeking consent for marine development and activities.
- the need to access new markets.

As part of the initial Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment, business-specific questionnaires were publicised and circulated to gather baseline information on business and economic activities. The information received informed the data in Section 6: Productive seas and coasts in the assessment.

As part of the formal consultation on the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Consultation Draft interview meetings have been held with six businesses from across Orkney's marine economy. These meetings were held between November and December 2024. Businesses involved in these discussions included those potentially affected by the OIRMP from a range of sectors:

- Fish Processing
- Aquaculture
- Tourism
- Renewable energy

The meetings focused on drawing out the potential business impacts associated with the implementation of the OIRMP including the identification of potential costs and benefits

Face-to-face discussions were conducted with businesses representing various sizes and sectors. Questions relating to the potential costs and benefits of implementing the OIRMP, and questions relating to competition assessment and business size were covered in the interviews as detailed in the questionnaire (Appendix 2).

Further engagement with fishing, aquaculture, ports and harbours, and recreation businesses has been carried out utilising industry organisation networks via the OMPAG and regular stakeholder updates to c. 360+ stakeholders to disseminate information about the OIRMP and collect and collate any responses. The results of the informal and formal consultation with businesses, including any results obtained during the public consultation, will form the main part of the Scottish Firms Impact Assessment.

Options

The options to be considered in this BRIA are:

Option 1. Do nothing: continue under the current approach to marine planning and management including using the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine and Spatial Plan (PFWO MSP) that was adopted as non-statutory planning guidance in 2016, the National Marine Plan and National Planning Framework.

Option 2. Use the policies within the PFWO MSP to form a regional marine plan without updates or additions.

Option 3. Adoption of the OIRMP after stakeholder engagement on the preparation of the policies guided by the public consultation and further engagement with stakeholders.

Option 1 Do nothing Appraisal: Continue under the current approach to marine planning and management including using the PFOW MSP as non-statutory planning guidance, National Marine Plan and National Planning Framework.

Under this option a regional marine plan would not be developed/adopted and there would be no change to current arrangements. As the PFOW MSP is non-statutory it does not carry the same weight in decision making as a statutory regional marine plan and would therefore provide less certainty in decision making.

The PFOW MSP has been adopted by the Scottish Government, Highland Council and Orkney Islands Council as non-statutory planning guidance. The Plan has not been adopted by other decision makers. This option therefore potentially creates inconsistency and uncertainty in decision making.

Option 1 does not bring marine planning in Orkney in alignment with:

- the provision for Regional Marine Planning set out in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, National Marine Plan or the National Planning Framework.

Option 1 is not perceived as a viable option

Option 2: Use the policies within the PFOW MSP to form a regional marine plan without updates or additions.

Under this option the PFOW MSP would be put forward unamended, to be adopted as a regional marine plan. This option would place the existing local marine planning framework on a statutory footing. However, this would not allow for the review and refinement of the objectives, policies and supporting data in light of changing legislation, priorities, opportunities, challenges and new data. This option would not align with current national policy or deliver local community objectives and priorities.

Option 2 does not bring marine planning in Orkney in alignment with:

- the provision for Regional Marine Planning set out in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, National Marine Plan or the National Planning Framework.

Option 2 is not perceived as a viable option

Option 3: Adoption of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (Preferred Option) after stakeholder engagement on the preparation of the policies guided by the public consultation and further engagement with stakeholders.

Under this option an OIRMP will be prepared giving all stakeholders the opportunity to contribute towards setting objectives and policies to achieve sustainable development in the Orkney Islands marine region. This option will ensure that regional marine planning policy in Orkney contributes towards national priorities and outcomes e.g. climate change mitigation and adaption, reversing biodiversity loss and sustainable economic development. It would also ensure that the impacts of the Plan would be fully assessed via SEA, HRA, ICIA, BRIA, CRWIA and EqIA.

Option 3 is the preferred viable option

Sectors and groups affected

A range of sectors will be affected by the adoption of the OIRMP:

- Developers including renewable energy, ports and harbours, oil and gas, aquaculture and all other development and activities requiring authorisation from a public authority. These developments and activities could be Scottish-owned, rest of UK-owned or foreign-owned;
- Marine users exercising use under a public right or use that does not require authorisation from a public authority e.g. shipping/navigation or recreational activities;
- Commercial fishing and processing businesses;
- Public bodies and regulators/authorities discharging statutory duties, and;
- Local communities and businesses.

Benefits

Option 1. Do nothing: No additional benefits are expected to arise from this option.

The potential benefits to businesses from this option is that they would continue to work to existing arrangements. There would therefore be no direct additional costs. Although national marine planning policies are over 10 years old and may become outdated and not reflect current national or regional priorities on policy matters, for example, climate change and nature. This could lead to possible uncertainty and delays to the preparation of development proposals and decision making on planning or consent applications. Such uncertainties would likely have significant impacts on businesses and could lead to greater costs in bringing forward development proposals. On balance, the potential benefits are anticipated to be outweighed by the potential risks and costs to businesses.

Option 2: Use the policies within the PFOW MSP No additional benefits are expected to arise from this option.

The potential benefits to businesses from this option is that they would continue to work broadly to existing arrangements. There would therefore be no direct additional costs. Although, the PFOW MSP is nine years old and may not reflect current national or regional priorities on policy matters, for example, climate change and nature. This could lead to possible uncertainty and delays to the preparation of development proposals and decision making on planning or consent applications. Such uncertainties would likely have significant impacts on businesses and could lead to greater costs in bringing forward development proposals. On balance, the potential benefits are anticipated to be outweighed by the potential risks and costs to businesses.

Option 3: Adoption of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Adopting and implementing the OIRMP will provide an up-to-date statutory policy framework for decision making and help to deliver the following benefits:

- A reduction in authorisation uncertainty and the associated risk to investment in development and activities.
- The provision of statutory policies and supporting spatial guidance to inform site selection process for development and activities.
- Efficient use of Orkney's marine space and resources.
- Reduced conflict between existing marine users and future/existing development and activities.
- Increased stakeholder engagement and involvement of local communities in setting objectives and policy.
- Compliance with plan policies can help businesses to demonstrate their social licence to operate by delivering for example socioeconomic benefits, contribution to renewable energy targets and supporting research and development.
- Greater clarity and consistent implementation of protection of internationally, nationally and locally important nature conservation and biodiversity sites and interests.
- Incorporation of environmental, economic and community objectives into the planning process and decision making.
- Improvement in the natural environment and sustainability would result in potential benefits to businesses.

The identification of these benefits has been informed by responses to the public consultation on the OIRMP and the BRIA meetings with businesses.

Costs

Option 1: Do nothing

This option would not create direct additional costs to the sectors and groups identified in this BRIA as none of the existing policies or associated costs would change.

However, developers could experience a lack clarity and uncertainty with licence applications/decisions, due to differences in local and national policy, which could result in inefficiencies in project development and assessment, and higher costs.

Option 2: Use the policies within the PFOW MSP to form a regional marine plan without updates or additions.

Under this option the PFOW MSP would be put forward unamended, to be adopted as a regional marine plan. This would not allow for the review and refinement of the objectives, policies and supporting data in light of changing legislation, priorities, opportunities, challenges and new data. There is potential for this option to provide outdated information to developers on the legislative requirements and create unforeseen costs and delays in licensing and consenting processes.

Option 3: Adoption of the OIRMP after stakeholder engagement on the preparation of the policies guided by the public consultation and further engagement with key stakeholders.

The OIRMP updates many existing policies in the PFOW MSP and creates new policies where appropriate. All policies have been either updated, replaced or amended to meet the OIRMP objectives, align with national/local policy and the current legal framework providing greater clarity and further guidance.

The OIRMP will be a statutory marine plan once adopted by Scottish Ministers after a statutory public consultation. The policies within the Plan may influence:

- The preparation of consent/licence applications by developers.
- The assessment of consent/licence applications by public authorities.
- The choice of location of marine developments and activities.
- Specific requirements for the construction, operation, expansion and decommissioning of marine developments and activities.

The potential impact and costs specifically associated with the implementation of the OIRMP has been assessed and recorded, based on each policy, as shown in Table 1 below.

The OIRMP policies should be applied proportionately by public authority decision makers, as detailed in Section 1 of the Plan. Section 1 of the Plan states that *'decision makers need to consider whether the type, location and/or scale of a development or activity, and its associated impacts or effects, justify the application of a specific policy or a provision within a policy'*, and that *'the level of detail required to demonstrate compliance with Plan policies should be proportionate to a proposal's scale and potential impacts, and in accordance with any relevant assessment requirements'*. This approach has been taken so that a reasonable and proportionate approach is taken by decision makers when implementing the Plan policies. This is intended to appropriately manage potential costs for consent applicants (e.g. smaller projects/applications by small businesses) whilst ensuring a robust approach to the assessment of the impacts and benefits associated with development or activities proposals.

OIRMP policies may require additional assessment by developers resulting in additional costs, for example, in the form of employee time or consultancy costs. The

additional nature of any assessment requirements for developers, and associated costs, are considered in Table 1. It should be noted that OIRMP policies may provide further clarity on existing assessment requirements, for example, existing assessments required under the NMP, NPF4, OLDP or PFOW MSP. Where this is the case, the implementation of OIRMP policy may not result in additional costs over and above existing requirements. The OIRMP could result in cost reduction by providing further clarity on existing assessment requirements.

Following the consideration of relevant responses received during the formal consultation process, the OIRMP and its policies have been re-assessed and modified, as appropriate.

During the consultation process and face-to-face meetings with businesses, respondents stated it was hard for them to quantify costs at this time, therefore a qualitative approach has been taken, as appropriate.

Table 1: Potential impacts, on business, of policies contained within the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Policy	Costs
General Policy 1: Sustainable development, activities and use	Limited Additional Costs to Business The requirement to deliver sustainable development has been embedded within Scottish and UK planning policy since the early 1990s. General Policy 1 provides clarity on how the social, economic and environmental factors of sustainable development will be considered in public authority decision making in the Orkney Islands marine region. General Policy 1a reflects the policy approach in NMP and broadly supports sustainable development and associated business development. No additional costs are anticipated for businesses as a result of implementing General Policy 1a. General Policy 1b reflects the sustainable development principles and wider related policies in NMP, NPF4, OLDP and PFOW MSP. The implementation of this policy could result in costs to developers by implementing requirements for data collection or assessment, for example, to demonstrate benefits from development proposals, and/or remove or minimise uncertainty regarding impacts. There are existing policies in NMP, NPF4, OLDP and PFOW MSP on the assessment of environmental, social and economic benefits; effective community engagement; addressing direct, indirect and cumulative impacts; effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure and services; addressing impacts on existing development and marine users and using sound science responsibly. It is therefore

Policy	Costs
	challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of General Policy 1b would result in additional costs. It is concluded that there would be limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements. General Policy 1c supports the implementation of the precautionary principle which reflects the policy provision in NPF4 (Policy 4e). General Policy 1c states that: <i>1c The precautionary principle</i> <i>The precautionary principle should be applied in decision making in accordance with relevant legislation and Scottish Government guidance.</i> As the application of the precautionary principle is embedded within existing national legislation, policy and guidance, no additional costs are anticipated as a result of adopting General Policy 1c in the OIRMP.
General Policy 2: Safety	Limited Additional Costs to Business The requirement to consider safety in the authorisation of coastal and marine development and activities is established in the existing statutory provisions. General Policy 2 states that the Orkney Harbour Authority should be consulted on proposals for development and/or activities that would have implications for any aspect of safety in harbour areas. This expectation to consult the Orkney Harbour Authority on development in harbour areas is established good practice. Including this policy provision in a statutory plan could result in additional costs for business that do not already consult the Orkney Harbour Authority. Consultation with the Orkney Harbour Authority could result in additional administrative requirement for businesses, and associated costs. Depending on the outcome of this consultation, it could also result in significant cost savings for businesses if this consultation is undertaken at an early stage in the project planning process.
General Policy 3: Climate Change	Limited Additional Costs to Business General Policy 3a includes provisions for significant weight in decision making to be given to the global climate crisis. Relevant proposals for development and/or activities should also demonstrate that measures have been taken to mitigate climate change including, where appropriate, measures to

Policy	Costs
	minimise greenhouse gas emissions over the proposal's life cycle as far as possible. Design changes may be required to comply with this policy that incur additional development costs. Demonstrating that measures have been taken to minimise greenhouse gas emissions over the proposal's life cycle may also incur additional costs for developers. These requirements are set out in NPF4, so no significant additional costs are anticipated as a result of adopting General Policy 3 for aquaculture, harbour, cables/pipelines (that make landfall) and other coastal development types. Consultation with renewable energy businesses has identified that they do not foresee having to incur additional development costs or adaptation requirements as the climate crises and minimising greenhouse gas emissions are already embedded within their current vision and business practice. Therefore, no significant additional costs to the renewable energy sector are anticipated. Consultation with aquaculture companies has identified that their business aligns with the purpose and aims of this policy by delivering carbon reduction measures, building capacity for adaptation and climate resilience, and delivering local community resilience. The climate change adaption requirements are likely to incur costs for developers though these are existing policy requirements in NMP, NPF4 and the non-statutory PFOW MSP, so limited additional costs are anticipated as a result of adopting this policy. The risk of incurring significant additional costs would be high, if adequate climate change adaption measures were not adopted in the design of development and activities, and further adaptations were required as a result over the projects lifetime. Therefore, costs saving for businesses may be secured through policy implementation.
General Policy 4: Supporting Sustainable Social and Economic Benefits	Limited Additional Costs to Business General Policy 4a seeks to secure/support local economic benefits. It is anticipated that this policy will result in limited costs to businesses in addition to those associated with existing policy on social and economic impact/assessment set out in NMP, NPF4, OLDP, PFOW MSP and the OIC Aquaculture Supplementary Guidance.

Policy	Costs
	The policy will require developers to demonstrate that their proposals social and/or economic benefits outweigh any significant adverse impacts on existing social and/or economic activities. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) developments, and where appropriate other types of development, are already required to carry out socio-economic assessment of this kind. Therefore, limited additional costs to business are anticipated. The policy provides greater clarity on the scope of socio-economic impact assessments which should assist businesses when carrying out these assessments and enable businesses to clearly demonstrate the social and economic benefits associated with their developments and activities. These benefits play an important part in making the case for a development proposal, It has been identified through the consultation analysis that guidance to support the implementation of this policy would be helpful for developers and decision makers. The policy has been modified to make provision for this guidance. Consultation with aquaculture and renewable energy companies has identified that their businesses align with the purpose and aims of this policy within their current business practice. Consultation with renewable energy and aquaculture companies has identified that they are actively involved in numerous research and development projects, that they support local communities through many aspects of their supply chain and create local employment. It was identified that this policy's establishment of these socio-economic aspects' importance in decision making will highlight their businesses valuable contribution to delivering social and economic benefits. Businesses considered that demonstrating compliance with this policy was straight forward and should not incur significant additional costs. It was further highlighted that requirements already exist in NMP, OLDP and the PFOW MSP to mitigate adverse impacts on existing marine users, where necessary, and demonstrate social and economic benefits within the area where proposed developments reside. The implementation of the policy could result in cost savings for businesses by supporting opportunities for synergistic benefits between new development and existing activities e.g. sharing infrastructure.

Policy	Costs
General Policy 5: Safeguarding the Marine Ecosystem	Moderate Additional Costs to Business General Policy 5 aims to safeguard the marine ecosystem and maintain, and where appropriate, enhance ecosystem services. NMP requires that reducing human pressure and safeguarding ecosystem services such as natural coastal protection and natural carbon sinks (e.g. seagrass beds, kelp and saltmarsh) should be considered. NPF4 also includes policies to safeguard and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems. General Policy 5 does not introduce a wholly new policy requirement. The policy adds clarity to how national policies should be implemented at the local level. General Policy 5 iii. makes provision for the preparation of Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services Guidance which will support the implementation of this policy and provide greater clarity for businesses. When drafting this guidance, due consideration will be given to ensuring that assessment provisions are both reasonable and proportionate with regard to costs for businesses. Consultation with aquaculture companies has identified that their business aligns with the purpose and aims of this policy within their current vision and business practice. Safeguarding ecosystem services will have significant social and economic benefits for businesses and local communities e.g. by supporting healthy fisheries and protecting coastal infrastructure assets. It is acknowledged that the assessment of development and/or activities under General Policy 5 could result in additional costs to businesses. Though it is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of General Policy 5 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be moderate additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
General Policy 6: Water Environment	Limited Additional Costs to Business The requirements in General Policy 6 are already contained within the non-statutory PFOW MSP and in the requirements of the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003. The policy provides clarity on these matters for decision makers and businesses to support efficient and effective implementation.

Policy	Costs
	Consultation with aquaculture companies has identified that their business aligns with the purpose and aims of this policy within their current vision and business practice. It is acknowledged that the assessment of development and/or activities under General Policy 6 could result in additional costs to businesses. Though it is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of General Policy 6 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
General Policy 7: Coastal Development and Coastal Change	Limited Additional Costs to Business General Policy 7b reflects and supports the implementation of existing policy provisions in NMP, OLDP and PFOW MSP. General Policy 7c reflects and supports the implementation of existing policy provisions in NPF4 and the OLDP. The implementation of General Policy 7 would result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing policy set out in NPF4, NMP, OLDP and PFOW MSP. The risk of incurring significant additional costs for businesses would be high, if inappropriate coastal development or coastal protection measures were permitted e.g. in places that are vulnerable to coastal change in the face of rising sea levels. Therefore, costs saving may be secured through policy implementation by avoiding development in locations that are not viable in the long-term and by implementing cost effective nature-based solutions.
General Policy 8: Historic Environment	Limited Additional Costs to Business General Policy 8 reflects and supports the implementation of existing policy provisions in NPF4, NMP and the OLDP. The implementation of General Policy 8 would result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing policy set out in NPF4, NMP and the OLDP. The policy provides clarity on historic environment matters for decision makers and businesses to support more efficient and effective implementation.

Policy	Costs
General Policy 9: Nature	Moderate Additional Costs to Business General Policy 9a will result in no significant costs for businesses as it relates to the weight given to the nature crisis by public authority decision makers. It does not direct result in any additional requirements for businesses. General Policy 9b supports the implementation of NMP policy GEN9c which states that ‘Development and use of the marine environment must: protect and, where appropriate, enhance the health of the marine area’. OIRMP Policy 9b also supports the implementation of NPF4 Policy 3 for aquaculture, harbour, cables/pipelines (that make landfall) and other coastal development types. As the policy provisions for environmental and biodiversity enhancement already exist in national policy, OIRMP General Policy 9b is expected to introduce limited additional costs for businesses. In response to feedback from business through the consultation on the OIRMP: Consultation Draft additional wording was added to General Policy 9b to state that best practice assessment and implementation methods should be used to better align with NPF4 Policy 3. General Policy 9b iii makes provision for the preparation of Marine Enhancement and Restoration Guidance which will support the implementation of this policy and provide greater clarity for businesses. When drafting this guidance, due consideration will be given to ensuring that enhancement provisions are both reasonable and proportionate with regard to costs for businesses. The requirements in General Policy 9c are required under existing statutory provisions for European and nationally designated sites, the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 in relation to Marine Protected Areas and seal haul-out sites and the OLDP for Local Nature Conservation Sites. The implementation of this policy provision will therefore not result in additional costs for businesses. The implementation of General Policy 9d will result in moderate costs in addition to costs associated with existing policy set out in the OLDP, and the NMP in relation to Priority Marine Features. These policy provisions provide greater clarity on assessment requirements and the implementation of the mitigation hierarchy. Consultation with the aquaculture and renewable energy companies has identified that their businesses align with the

Policy	Costs
	purpose and aims of this policy within their current vision and business practice. A specific question (Q13a) in the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan consultation was included on a potential regional approach to Priority Marine Feature policy. It was highlighted by businesses in response to the consultation that an Orkney specific Priority Marine Feature policy could create regional disparities in environmental protection, which could be a deterrent for investment and development in Orkney and incur significant associated costs for innovation projects and wider development. Therefore, as there are identified potentially significant adverse economic and development related cost implications, it was not considered appropriate to take forward a regional Priority Marine Feature policy at this stage on lower magnitude impacts. OIC Marine Planning will continue to engage with the preparation of National Marine Plan 2 (NMP2) and will consider the implications for future regional marine planning policy for Priority Marine Features following the adoption of NMP2.
General Policy 10: Seascape and Landscape	Limited Additional Costs to Business The implementation of General Policy 10 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing landscape/seascape policy set out in NPF4, NMP, OLDP and the non-statutory PFOW MSP. It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of General Policy 10 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
General Policy 11: Surface and Underwater Noise, and Vibration	Limited Additional Costs to Business The implementation of General Policy 11 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing noise and amenity policy set out in NPF4, NMP, OLDP and the non-statutory PFOW MSP. It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of General Policy 11 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.

Policy	Costs
General Policy 12: Marine Litter and Waste	Limited/No Additional Costs to Business The implementation of General Policy 12 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing marine litter policy set out in NMP and the PFOW MSP. It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of General Policy 12 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
General Policy 13: Invasive Non-Native Species and Non-Native Species	Limited/No Additional Costs to Business The implementation of General Policy 13 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing invasive non-native species and non-native species policy set out in NMP and the PFOW MSP. It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of General Policy 13 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
General Policy 14: Amenity, Well-being and Quality of Life of Local Communities	Moderate Additional Costs to Business Businesses have identified potential costs associated with the implementation of this policy and the resulting additional assessment requirements. In response to these concerns, General Policy 14 has been modified to include provision for amenity, wellbeing and quality of life guidance to provide clarity on the implementation of this policy and any resulting assessment requirements. When drafting this guidance, due consideration will be given to ensuring that policy provisions are both reasonable and proportionate with regard to costs for businesses. The requirement to assess, and potentially avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on amenity due to factors including, but not limited to, waste, noise, air quality, light and odour are existing requirements under NPF4, NMP, OLDP and the PFOW MSP. The requirement for development to be designed to a high standard and quality, so that the nature and scale of the development and/or activities contribute positively to the character and sense of place of the area in which they are proposed to be located is required for relevant development under NPF4 (Policy 14). Early and effective public and stakeholder engagement to facilitate the planning and consenting process is required under NMP (GEN 18).

Policy	Costs
	It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of General Policy 14 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be moderate additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
Sector Policy 1: Commercial Fishing	Limited Additional Costs to Business The implementation of Sector Policy 1 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing Commercial Fisheries Policy set out in the NMP, OIC Aquaculture Supplementary Guidance and the non-statutory PFOW MSP. It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of Sector Policy 1 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
Sector Policy 2: Aquaculture	Limited Additional Costs to Business The implementation of Sector Policy 2 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing aquaculture policy set out in NPF4, NMP, OLDP, OIC Aquaculture Supplementary Guidance, Marine Scotland Seaweed Policy Statement, the non-statutory PFOW MSP and licensing requirements (Marine Directorate and SEPA). It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of Sector Policy 2 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements. The suite of spatial guidance identified in Sector Policy 2 will help developers to undertake site selection and assessment of development proposals. This could result in cost savings for developers.
Sector Policy 3: Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries	Limited Additional Costs to Business The implementation of Sector Policy 3 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing shipping, ports, harbours, ferries, dredging and climate change policy set out in NPF4, NMP, Orkney Harbours Masterplan (Phase 1) – Planning Policy Advice, OIC Aquaculture Supplementary Guidance and the non-statutory PFOW MSP.

Policy	Costs
	It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of Sector Policy 3 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
Sector Policy 4: Pipelines, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure	Limited Additional Costs to Business The implementation of Sector Policy 4 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing pipelines, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure policy set out in NPF4, NMP, OIC Aquaculture Supplementary Guidance and the non-statutory PFOW MSP. It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of Sector Policy 4 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
Sectoral Policy 5: Offshore wind and marine renewable energy	Limited Additional Costs to Business The implementation of Sector Policy 5 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing renewable energy policy set out in NPF4, NMP and the non-statutory PFOW MSP. It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of Sector Policy 5 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.
Sectoral Policy 6: Zero Carbon Fuels, Oil and Gas Transition	Limited Additional Costs to Business The implementation of Sector Policy 6 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing renewable energy, oil and gas and zero carbon fuels policy set out in NPF4, NMP and the non-statutory PFOW MSP. It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of Sector Policy 6 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.

Policy	Costs
Sectoral Policy 7: Tourism, recreation, sport and leisure	Limited Additional Costs to Business The implementation of Sector Policy 7 will result in limited costs in addition to costs associated with existing tourism, recreation, sport and leisure policy set out in NPF4, NMP, OLDP, OIC Aquaculture Supplementary Guidance and the non-statutory PFOW MSP. It is challenging to determine and quantify the extent to which the implementation of Sector Policy 7 would result in additional costs over and above existing policy requirements. It is concluded that there could be minor limited additional costs over and above existing statutory and non-statutory policy requirements.

Other Costs

The structured BRIA interviews with businesses investigated the potential for other costs not directly associated with a specific policy or policies. Businesses interviewed raised concerns about potential additional administrative process and costs rather than direct impacts on their day-to-day operational costs. They were concerned about the possibility of overlapping policy requirements from different regulating authorities. Businesses were concerned that this could cause delays and additional costs when navigating multiple regulatory frameworks.

These views from businesses regarding overlapping policy requirements from different regulating authorities have been carefully considered. In accordance with OIRMP objective 9, the plan policies have been prepared to assist plan users to navigate the relevant legislative and policy frameworks more easily and effectively.

Another concern raised was the amount of evidence needed to support applications, particularly when it came to potential additional survey requirements resulting from the OIRMP policies. Businesses identified that additional requirements could potentially lead to higher costs and time delays. This was attributed to the OIRMP policy emphasis on environmental protection and climate change, which could create further requirements for evidence in applications to ensure compliance.

These views from businesses regarding additional survey costs have been assessed under the relevant policies in Table 1.

Scottish Firms Impact Test

This section has been informed by the evidence gathered during the formal consultation held from 1 August to 25 October 2024. The consultation process involved consultation and meetings with six businesses of different sizes and sectors

that are likely to be affected by the Plan's policies. This engagement with business was undertaken to quality assure the assessment of cost or benefit to businesses and to build on consultation feedback from business in response to the formal consultation.

Face-to-face discussions were conducted with businesses representing various sizes and sectors. Questions relating to the potential costs and benefits of implementing the OIRMP, and questions relating to competition assessment and business size were covered in the interviews as detailed in the questionnaire (Appendix 2).

Policies within the OIRMP may affect a variety of marine developments and activities, specifically those which already require a licence to carry out new activities or for amended operations such as renewable energy developments, aquaculture sites, ports and harbours.

Sectors affected by the Plan include small/micro businesses. The consultation has further informed the final BRIA and the impact of Plan policies on small/micro businesses and self-employed.

Small Business Impact Assessment

The BRIA process has included an assessment of impacts on small businesses.

Feedback received from small businesses interviewed and via the formal consultation includes:

- *Concerns were raised that larger businesses are increasingly being used by developers in Orkney rather than smaller local supply chain businesses. The approach taken in General Policy 4 was broadly supported by small businesses interviewed as part of the BRIA process.*
- *Orkney lacks the infrastructure to support small scale businesses that operate in the marine environment. For example, there are limited suitable cranes or boat lifts, making it extremely expensive and difficult to service vessels. Views were expressed that available infrastructure is mostly utilised by larger businesses such as aquaculture and renewables. It was suggested that the OIRMP should encourage better local infrastructure, if possible.*
- *Concerns were raised that development investment is being secured by companies outwith Orkney. It was suggested that procurement policies need to prioritise the use of local companies and that OIRMP policy requiring the use of local supply chains needs to be stronger.*
- *Marine decision-making in general does not have the same protections for local companies as land-based decision-making, which was a concern for businesses interviewed.*
- *Concern that 'newer' developments and larger businesses, particularly fish farming and offshore wind farms, are taking workers away from some of the more*

traditional industries e.g. fishing and farming, and this is decimating local workforces for these traditional sectors.

Careful consideration has been given to the issues raised by small businesses as part of the Small Business Impact Assessment. The key policy provisions that addressed the issues raised are:

- General Policy 4 makes provision for developers to demonstrate that opportunities have been considered to maximise sustainable employment benefits and create skilled employment in local communities, support local businesses, skills development, supply chains and research and development.
- General Policy 4 includes provisions for the consideration of impacts on local infrastructure, services and other marine and coastal users.
- General Policy 1 makes provision to ensure the effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure and/or services, and that new development and activities will not create an unacceptable burden on existing infrastructure and/or services that cannot be addressed as part of the consenting process.

It has been identified through the consultation analysis that guidance to support the implementation of General Policy 4 would be helpful for developers and decision makers. This policy has been modified to make provide for this guidance. This guidance will aim to address how displacement effects on the local workforce in Orkney should be assessed and potentially mitigated.

Will the measure directly or indirectly impact small businesses in a greater capacity than businesses of greater size?

Limited impact. In light of the OIRMP policy and guidance provisions outlined in this Small Business Impact Assessment, it is not anticipated that the OIRMP will disproportionately impact small businesses to a significant degree compared to businesses of greater size.

Competition Assessment

Policies within the OIRMP may affect a variety of marine developments and activities, specifically those which require consent and/or a licence to carry out new development, activities or for amended operations, such as renewable energy developments, aquaculture, ports and harbours.

Will the measure directly or indirectly limit the number or range of suppliers?

No/Limited impact. It is not likely that the number or range of suppliers will be directly limited by the adoption of the OIRMP. All policies will apply to new and existing developers in equal measure. The policies will not be applied retrospectively to existing consented development or activities.

Will the measure limit the ability of suppliers to compete?

No/Limited impact. The policies within the OIRMP will not directly limit suppliers' ability to compete. The policies will not affect businesses' route to market or the geographical markets they can sell to.

Will the measure limit suppliers' incentives to compete vigorously?

No/Limited impact. The policies within the OIRMP will not directly limit the suppliers' incentives to compete.

Will the measure limit the choices and information available to consumers?

No/Limited impact. The policies within the OIRMP will not directly limit the choices and information available to consumers.

Will the measure affect suppliers' ability and/or incentive to introduce new technologies, products or business models?

No/Limited impact. The policies within the OIRMP will not directly limit suppliers' ability and/or incentive to introduce technologies, products or business models.

Competition Assessment Conclusion

It is concluded that OIRMP will not distort or restrict competition between firms or suppliers selling the same or similar products or services as it does not:

- directly limit the number or range of suppliers;
- indirectly limit the number or range of suppliers;
- limit the ability of suppliers to compete;
- reduce suppliers' incentives to compete vigorously; or
- limit the ability of suppliers to introduce new technologies, products or business models.

The OIRMP General Policy 4 aims to enable incentives to introduce new technologies, products or business models by supporting research and development, and skills development.

Consumer assessment

The OIRMP will not affect the consumer as the quality, availability or price of goods or services in a market are not likely to be affected.

Upstream and downstream assessment

The OIRMP will not negatively impact the businesses upstream and downstream within the local marine supply chain.

Digital impact assessment

The OIRMP has been designed for use in both a digital and non-digital format and can be applied effectively in both a digital and non-digital format. Therefore, no effects are anticipated.

Test run of business forms

No new forms will be introduced.

Legal Aid Impact Test

It is not envisaged that the OIRMP will have any impact on the current levels of justice through availability of legal aid or on the possible expenditure from the legal aid fund.

Enforcement, sanctions and monitoring

Monitoring the effectiveness of the OIRMP will be undertaken as part of the 5-year review process.

Enforcement advice from the Delegate will be provided through responses to marine licence and planning consultations from the relevant regulatory authorities.

Implementation and delivery plan

The Plan will be kept under review to consider the effectiveness of the policies in securing that the Plan objectives, and other relevant matters, in accordance with the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.

Summary and recommendation

Option 3: **Adoption of the OIRMP** following public consultation and in accordance with statutory requirements. The final OIRMP has been informed by the public consultation and further engagement with key stakeholders. During the consultation process and face-to-face interviews, businesses stated that the implementation of the plan would have limited additional cost impacts on their sectors. Where potential additional costs were identified by businesses, this BRIA has identified appropriate mitigation to address these matters.

Adopting and implementing the OIRMP will build on the work of the PFOW MSP and help deliver the benefits of a marine planning system as set out in the Final Regulatory Impact Assessment for the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.

Under Option 3, the OIRMP would be reviewed in accordance with the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 requirements, providing the opportunity to consider whether the Plan is still fit for purpose.

This option will create consistency between national and local policy and decision making, and the impacts of the OIRMP have been fully assessed via SEA, HRA, ICIA, BRIA, CRWIA and EqlA.

Appendix 1: Acronyms			
BRIA	Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment	OIRMP	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
CRWIA	Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment	OLDP	Orkney Local Development Plan
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	OMPAG	Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group
EqIA	Equalities Impact Assessment	pBRIA	Partial Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment
HES	Historic Environment Scotland	PFOW MSP	Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan
HRA	Habitat Regulations Appraisal	SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
ICIA	Island Communities Impact Assessment	SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
NMP	National Marine Plan	SoEA	State of the Environment Assessment
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4	SPP	Statement of Public Participation
OIC	Orkney Islands Council		

Appendix 2

Assessing the potential impacts of implementing the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan on businesses – A survey to inform the Business Regulatory Impact Assessment

What is the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan?

The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan will provide a framework for decision making to help deliver the Plan's environmental, social, economic, marine ecosystem and community well-being objectives, including the provision of social and economic benefits for local communities and businesses.

The Plan will provide a policy framework for public authorities to make decisions on proposed developments and activities and will be used by public authorities in the determination of relevant licences and consents within the Orkney Islands Marine Region.

Orkney Islands Council on behalf of the Scottish Ministers, has developed the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan through an inclusive process of partnership working and stakeholder participation. The vision of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan is 'The Orkney Islands marine region is clean, healthy, safe and productive; Orkney's marine and coastal environment is rich in biodiversity and managed sustainably to support thriving and resilient local communities'.

What is the relationship between the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan and other existing legislation?

The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan must be in accordance with Scotland's National Marine Plan, the UK Marine Policy Statement and will be adopted in accordance with the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. The Plan does not replace or remove existing regulatory regimes or legislative requirements. It provides a localised overarching framework to be used when reaching decisions about development and activities in the Orkney Islands marine region.

The policies in the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Consultation Draft aim to add value to the National Marine Plan and other legislation and regulations; based on local priorities and relevant matters identified in the Orkney Islands State of the Environment Assessment (2020). The policies express intent and guide decisions in order to deliver the vision, aims and objectives of the Plan and the delivery of sustainable development in Orkney. Some policies integrate existing regulations to provide clarity to marine users. Other policies provide additional detail to help deliver existing national policies at a regional level.

What is the purpose of this survey?

This survey aims to gather evidence about any potential positive and negative impacts on businesses as a result of implementing the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan. Data collected will contribute towards informing the final Business Regulatory Impact Assessment. This data will support an assessment of the potential impacts the Plan may have on businesses. Findings from this survey may lead to further policy updates if appropriate. Initial

policy impacts have been assessed in the partial Business Regulatory Impact Assessment which accompanies the consultation draft of the Plan and which can be read [here](#).

START SURVEY

Name of business:

.....
.....

Type of business / sector:

.....
...

Location of your business and/or area in which your business operates:

.....

Estimated annual turnover (*optional*) (£):

.....

How many people do you employ in total:

.....

How many people do you employ locally in Orkney:

.....

1. POLICY IMPACTS ON BUSINESSES

1.1. OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESSES

1. When thinking about the future of your business, including any intentions you may have to expand/grow, which of the policies in the Plan do you feel might provide benefits or opportunities? Please select a **maximum of five** policies and for each one, explain briefly why you think it represents an opportunity and/or a benefit. Give examples if possible.

Policy number	Explain opportunity/benefit, with examples if possible

- No opportunity/benefit identified [GO TO 4.]

2. Considering all the potential opportunities and/or benefits listed above, approximately how much benefit do you think your business might gain as a result of the implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan? It is OK to tick an answer in each column if relevant.

- If the benefit of the Plan is unknown or non-economic [GO TO 3]

Amount	One-off benefit	Annual benefit	Explain what is included in the benefit(s), if possible
Less than £,5000			
£5,000 to £10,000			
£10,000 to £50,000			
£50,000 to £100,000			
£100,000 to £500,000			
£500,000 to £1 million			
More than £1 million			

3. In addition to the opportunities/benefits noted above, do you think the implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan will provide any other opportunities/benefits to your business? Please include any benefits that are harder to value/monetise, such as providing greater clarity/certainty in consenting processes, supporting ecosystem services¹ or improved social licence to operate², in your answer. Please quantify the value of the benefit and give examples where possible.
- *For example, reflect on some of the marine and coastal ecosystem services your business relies on and think about whether the Plan will enhance some of the benefits you receive from these ecosystem services. Thinking about the community in which your business operates, could the Plan help improve your business' social licence to operate and how could this benefit your business?*

Explain benefits/opportunities, with examples if possible

4. Thinking about how your business accesses investment, do you think the implementation of the Plan would positively impact your business' ability to access investments? *i.e. In the absence of the plan would this be more or less straightforward? Does the Plan clarify the probability of success of an investment or not? Does the plan help to de-risk consenting and therefore help to unlock investment?*
- Yes []
 - No []

Explain why, with examples if possible

5. Overall, do you consider the benefits associated with implementing the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan to be:
- Very significant? []
 - Significant? []
 - Moderate? []
 - Insignificant? []

¹ Marine habitats and species provide society with a range of ecosystem services. These include: the provision of food (e.g. fish, shellfish and seaweed); coastal protection; waste breakdown; carbon storage; climate regulation; access to recreation, tourism, education and research opportunities; and improved water quality.

² A social license to operate refers to the perceptions of local stakeholders that a project, a company, or an industry that operates in a given area or region is socially acceptable or legitimate.

1.2. COSTS TO BUSINESSES

6. When thinking about the future of your business, including any intentions you may have to expand/grow, which of the policies in the Plan do you feel might provide additional costs and/or risks and why? Please select a **maximum of five** policies and for each one, explain briefly why you think it represents a cost and/or risk. Give examples if possible. Many of the plan policy aim to clarify existing requirements. Consideration should be given to the extent to which the plan policies do or not introduces new requirements.

Policy number	Explain cost/risk, with examples if possible

- No cost/risk identified [GO TO 8.]

7. Considering all these potential costs and/or risks together, please indicate the approximate extra cost to your business associated with the implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan. Treat a loss of income as an extra cost. It is OK to tick an answer in each column if this is relevant.

Amount	One-off cost (or loss)	Annual cost (or loss)	Explain what is included in the cost or loss, if possible
Less than £,5000			
£5,000 to £10,000			
£10,000 to £50,000			
£50,000 to £100,000			
£100,000 to £500,000			
£500,000 to £1 million			
More than £1 million			

8. In addition to the costs/risks noted above, do you think the implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan will provide any other costs/risk to your business? You may want to include costs/risks that are harder to value/monetise, such as reputational damage if policies are not adequately adhered to or unknown additional costs associated with changes in technological requirements/staff capacity/additional research, in your answer. Give examples where possible.

Explain costs/risks, with examples if possible

9. Thinking about how your business accesses finance/investment, do you think the implementation of the Plan would negatively impact your business' ability to access finance and/or investments?

- Yes []
- No []

Explain why, with examples if possible

10. Overall, do you consider the costs (or losses) associated with implementing the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan to be:

- Very significant? []
- Significant? []
- Moderate? []
- Insignificant? []

2. COMPETITION ASSESSMENT

Competition is a process of rivalry between businesses within industries and, where it is effective, encourages businesses to deliver benefits to consumers in terms of lower prices, higher quality and more choice. The impact on consumers should be noted, for example when their access to goods or services is restricted or is likely to become more expensive. When considering the impact of policies, the effect on the ability of businesses to compete in the market and what effect this might have on consumers should be considered.

11. Within your industry, do you think there are any competition related impacts within the Plan?

- Yes [GO TO 12]
- No [GO TO 3]

12. Within your industry, do you think the Plan will directly or indirectly limit the number or range of suppliers within your sector/industry? e.g. will the Plan result in exclusive rights to a supplier or significantly raise the cost of existing suppliers relative to new suppliers and cause them to exit the market?

- Yes []
- No []

Explain why, with examples if possible

13. Within your industry, do you think the Plan will limit the ability of suppliers to compete? e.g. will the Plan reduce the geographic area a supplier can operate in compared to other suppliers, or substantially influence the price a supplier may charge?

- Yes []
- No []

Explain why, with examples if possible

14. Within your industry, do you think the Plan will reduce suppliers' incentives to compete vigorously? Will it encourage or enable the exchange of information on prices, costs, sales or outputs between suppliers?

- Yes []
- No []

Explain why, with examples if possible

15. Within your industry, do you think the Plan will limit the choices and information available to consumers? Will it limit the ability of consumers to decide from whom they purchase?

- Yes []
- No []

Explain why, with examples if possible

16. Within your industry, will the Plan affect suppliers' ability and/or incentive to introduce new technologies, products or business models? e.g. will the Plan limit the prospect of future innovation?

Explain why, with examples if possible

3. IMPACTS ON BUSINESSES BY SIZE

3.1. INTRODUCTORY QUESTION

17. How many employees does your business have?
- Self-employed [GO TO 3.2]
 - <10 employees (micro business) [GO TO 3.2]
 - 10 – 49 employees (small business) [GO TO 3.2]
 - 50 – 249 employees (medium-sized business) [GO TO 3.3]
 - 250+ employees (large business) [GO TO 3.3]

3.2. IMPACT ON SMALL AND MICRO BUSINESSES

18. Thinking about how your small/micro business operates, which of the policies in the Plan would benefit your business more than businesses of greater size and why? Please select a **maximum of five** policies and for each one, explain briefly why you think it will positively impact your small/micro business.

Policy number	Explain positive impact, with examples if possible

- No positive impact identified [GO TO 19.]

19. Thinking about how your small/micro business operates, which of the policies in the Plan would negatively impact your business more than businesses of greater size and why? Please select a **maximum of five** policies and for each one, explain briefly why you think it will negatively impact your small/micro business.

Policy number	Explain negative impact, with examples if possible

- No negative impact identified [GO TO 3.3]

3.3. IMPACT ON ALL BUSINESSES

20. Does your business have a good understanding of some of the upstream and downstream businesses within your sector/industry?

Upstream and downstream businesses refer to different stages in a supply chain or production process:

- *Upstream activities occur earlier in the process, such as raw material production (e.g. equipment providers).*
- *Downstream activities happen later in the process, such as refining, distribution, and sales (e.g. fish processing plants, supermarkets).*
- Yes [GO TO 3.4]
- No [GO TO 3.5]

3.4. IMPACT ON DOWNSTREAM AND UPSTREAM BUSINESSES

21. Given your understanding of some of the downstream and upstream businesses within your sector/industry, do you think the implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan will positively and/or negatively impact these businesses? Please explain why you think the Plan would positively and/or negatively impact some businesses and which businesses would be impacted (either specific businesses or types of businesses, e.g. fish processing plants).

- Positive impact(s) []
- Negative impact(s) []
- Both positive and negative impacts []

Explain why, with examples if possible

3.5. FURTHER INFORMATION

22. Do you have any further comments, or would you like to provide additional information? For example, complete the box below if you would experience losses or benefits if the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan is NOT adopted and implemented. Give examples if possible.

To find out how Orkney Islands Council handles your personal data, please see our [privacy policy](#). By providing your response, you are agreeing to the privacy policy.

This publication is available at www.orkney.gov.uk
Published by Orkney Islands Council 2025.



Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
**Strategic Environmental
Assessment:
Environmental Report**



SEA Environmental Report – Cover Note

Part 1

To: SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

or

SEA Gateway
Scottish Executive
Area 1 H (Bridge)
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ.

Part 2

An Environmental Report is attached for:

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

The Responsible Authority is:

Orkney Islands Council (OIC)

Part 3

Contact Name.	Daniel Morris
Job Title.	Marine Planner
Contact Address.	OIC, School Place, Kirkwall
Contact Tel No.	01856 873535
Contact E-mail.	Daniel.morris@orkney.gov.uk

Part 4

Signature (electronic signature is acceptable).	D.Morris
Date.	08/10/2025

BLANK PAGE

Contents

SEA Environmental Report – Cover Note	2
Non-technical Summary	6
1. Introduction.....	9
1a. Purpose of this Environmental Report and Key Facts.....	9
1b. SEA activities to date	11
2. Context	13
2b Outline and objectives of Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.....	13
2c. Relationship with other PPS and environmental protection objectives.....	19
2d. Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment	20
2e. Environmental problems	28
2f. Likely evolution of the environment without the OIRMP	32
2g. SEA Objectives	32
3. Assessment of environmental effects and measures envisaged for prevention, reduction and offset of any significant adverse effects	35
3a Alternatives to which the SEA was applied	35
3b Assessment methods.....	36
3c Assessment of Environmental Effects of the OIRMP	37
3d. Measures envisaged for the prevention, reduction and offsetting of significant adverse effects.....	37
Table 8: Assessment of Environmental Effects of the OIRMP	38
4. Monitoring	45
5. Next steps	45
 Appendix A: Relationship with other Plans, Programmes and Strategies (PPS) and their environmental objectives	 47
 Appendix B – Environmental Baseline Report.....	 91
1. Climatic Factors	92
2. Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	95
3. Water	98
4. Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	101
5. Geology.....	103
6. Landscape.....	109
7. Cultural Heritage	112
8. Population and Human Health	114
9. Material assets.....	118
10. Summary of Baseline	119

Appendix B.1: Internationally and nationally designated sites in Orkney (at the time of writing).....	123
Appendix B.2: List of Priority Marine Features recorded within 12 nm of Orkney (at the time of writing)	137
Appendix B.3: Water quality and overall status classification (at the time of writing).....	140
Appendix B.4: Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area	143
Appendix B.5: Scheduled Monuments in the Orkney Islands	150
Appendix B.6: Orkney Scheduled Monuments in the Care of Historic Scotland	159
Appendix C.1: Assessment of the Vision for the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.....	161
Appendix C.2: Assessment of the Policies of the OIRMP for their Compatibility with the SEA Objectives	163
Appendix C.3: Summary of assessment of the likely environmental effects of implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan Policies	183
Appendix D: Map of Nature Designated Sites in Orkney.....	189
Appendix E: SEA activities	190
Appendix F: Copy of indicative timetable for preparation of the OIRMP from the Statement of Public Participation	192

Non-technical Summary

1. Outline of contents and main objectives

The main purpose and scope of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP) is to support the delivery of a vision for Orkney's coastal and marine environment, economy and communities. This vision will be delivered through agreed objectives, implemented through decision-making made in accordance with the OIRMP policies. The OIRMP aligns, where appropriate, with the National Marine Plan (NMP), any neighbouring regional marine plans, the Orkney Local Development Plan and national land use policy e.g. National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4).

Regional marine plans have a specific statutory purpose set out in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. In summary, this is:

- Regional marine plans need to set economic, social and marine ecosystem objectives, and objectives relating to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.
- Regional marine plans state policies for and in connection with the sustainable development of the area to which the OIRMP applies and policies on the contribution of Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas, and other relevant nature conservation sites, to the protection and enhancement of the area.
- Public authorities must take any authorisation or enforcement decision in accordance with the appropriate regional marine plan, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise.
- Public authorities must have regard to the appropriate regional marine plan in making any decision which relates to the exercise by them of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the Scottish marine area, but which is not an authorisation or enforcement decision.

Thus, in order to deliver this statutory purpose, the OIRMP contains General Policies to ensure the environmental, social and economic factors upon which sustainable development depends are appropriately protected and Sector Policies to enable sustainable economic development.

2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the OIRMP.

The current state of the environment was assessed, using the Orkney Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment 2020 (SoEA)¹, the SEA Scoping Report and the documents in Appendix B as baseline information.

An assessment of options demonstrated that from three alternatives, shown below, Option 3 was the most appropriate:

Option 1. Do nothing: continue under the current approach to marine planning and management including using the Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan (PFOW MSP) as non-statutory planning guidance, NMP and NPF.

¹ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA](#)

Option 2. Use the policies within the PFOW MSP to form a regional marine plan without updates or additions.

Option 3. Adoption of the OIRMP after stakeholder engagement on the preparation of the policies, guided by the public consultation and further engagement with stakeholders.

3. Environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected

From the assessments outlined above, a set of SEA objectives was refined, using an iterative process (see Sections 2c, 2g and Table 7). Assessments of the Vision (Appendix C.1), policies of the OIRMP for compatibility (Appendix C.2) and environmental effects of implementation of the OIRMP's policies (Appendix C.3) against the SEA receptors were undertaken. The nine SEA receptors (i.e. environmental characteristics) are: Climate factors; biodiversity, water, coastal processes/benthic sediments/soils, geology, landscape, cultural heritage, population and human health, and material assets.

4. Existing environmental problems which are relevant to the OIRMP

Climate change and biodiversity loss are and will continue to be global issues with local impacts. Impacts on water, coastal processes/ benthic sediments/ soils, geology, landscape, cultural heritage, population and human health, and material assets vary at the regional level depending on the nature and scale of development and/or activities that impact upon them.

5. Environmental protection objectives

Appendix A outlines the key plans, policies and strategies (PPS) against which the implications for, and/or relationship with, the OIRMP have been taken into account. These are shown in relationship to the nine SEA receptors outlined above.

6. Likely significant effects

Table 8 summarises the likely environmental effects of the OIRMP in relation to the SEA receptors. Further detail is provided below.

7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the OIRMP.

The high level summary of the OIRMP-level effects on the SEA receptors are summarised in Table 8, including an assessment of cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects. This information is based on the assessments of each policy in relation to the SEA receptors as outlined in Appendix C.3, which in turn is informed by the information found in Appendices B and B.1 – B.6, the Islands Communities Impact Assessment and the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment.

8. Outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives chosen

Option 3: Adoption of the OIRMP after stakeholder engagement on the preparation of the policies guided by the public consultation and further engagement with stakeholders.

Under this option an OIRMP will be prepared giving all stakeholders the opportunity to contribute towards setting objectives and policies to achieve sustainable development in the Orkney Islands marine region. This option will ensure that regional marine planning policy in Orkney contributes towards national priorities and outcomes e.g. climate change mitigation and adaptation, reversing biodiversity loss and sustainable economic growth. It would also ensure that the impacts of the OIRMP would be fully assessed via SEA, Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA), Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA), Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CWRIA) and Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA).

A summary of the assessment framework established during the SEA scoping process, using the framework shown in Section 3a, has been amended and augmented following stakeholder input, and is provided in Table 8. The detailed assessments, including an analysis of short, medium and long-term effects; permanent and temporary effects; positive and negative effects; and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, is provided in Appendices A - C. Further supporting information is provided in Appendices D – F.

The identification of potential adverse socio-economic and environmental effects through the iterative development of the OIRMP and this SEA will likely add further weight to their consideration by prospective developers, marine users and consenting authorities. An opportunity for the OIRMP to improve efficiencies, for example in streamlining of current consenting processes around which applicant-led engagement with stakeholders is considered to be key, was also identified. As a consequence, there is the potential for overall positive effects.

9. Measures envisaged concerning monitoring

The monitoring of sectoral growth and environmental and socio-economic parameters will continue to be undertaken on an ongoing basis, in accordance with the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 requirements, alongside the filling of data gaps through targeted research and studies, as capacity allows. A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework will be prepared in due course.

1. Introduction

1a. Purpose of this Environmental Report and Key Facts

As part of the preparation of Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, Orkney Islands Council (OIC) is carrying out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is a systematic method for considering the likely environmental effects of certain Plans, Policies and Strategies (PPS). SEA aims to:

- Integrate environmental factors into PPS preparation and decision-making.
- Improve PPS and enhance environmental protection.
- Increase public participation in decision making.
- Facilitate openness and transparency of decision-making.

SEA is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The key SEA stages are:

- **Screening:** determining whether the PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects and whether an SEA is required.
- **Scoping:** deciding on the scope and level of detail of the Environmental Report, and the consultation period for the report; this is done in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage (now known as NatureScot), The Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.
- **Environmental Report:** publishing an Environmental Report on the PPS and its environmental effects, and consulting on that report.
- **Adoption:** providing information on the adopted PPS; how consultation comments have been taken into account; and methods for monitoring the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the PPS.
- **Monitoring:** monitoring significant environmental effects in such a manner so as to also enable the Responsible Authority to identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and undertake appropriate remedial action.

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to:

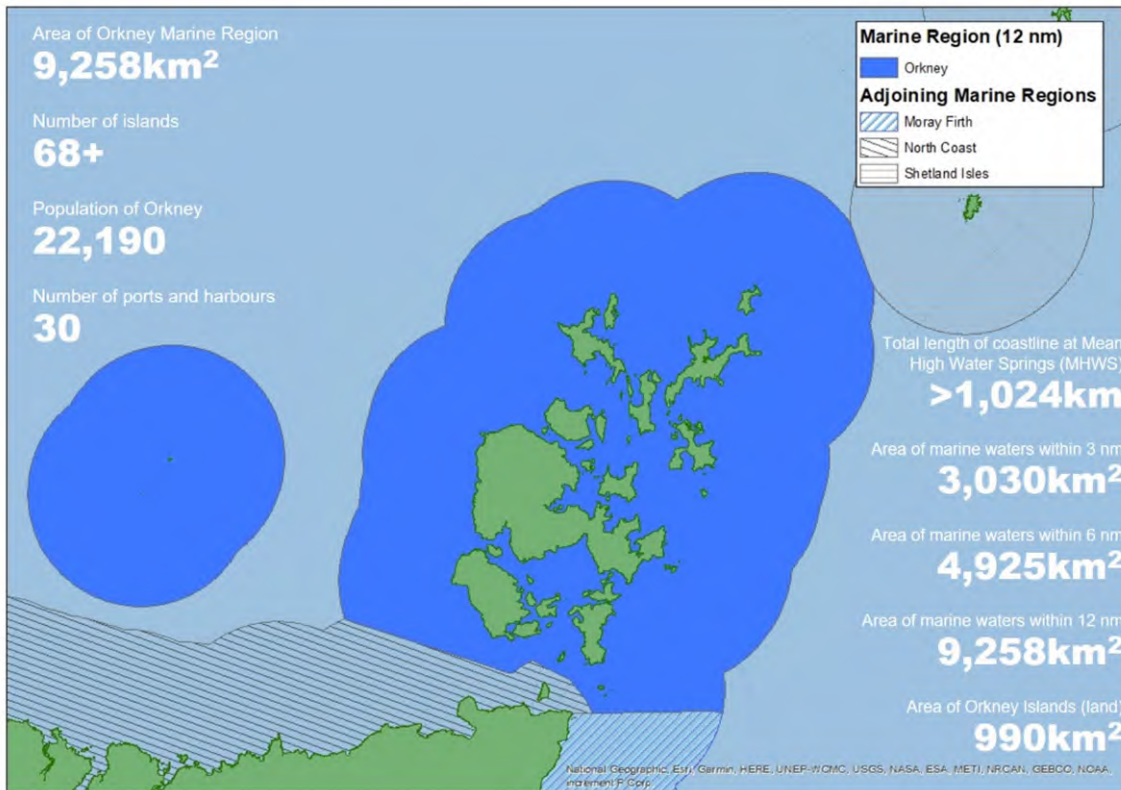
- Provide information on the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (see Map 1).
- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the PPS and its reasonable alternatives.
- Provide an early and effective opportunity for the Consultation Authorities and the public to offer views on any aspect of this Environmental Report.

The key facts relating to the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Key facts relating to Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.

Name of Responsible Authority	Orkney Islands Council (OIC)
Title of PPS	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP)
What prompted the PPS	Legislative: Marine (Scotland) Act 2010; Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.
Subject	Marine planning
Period covered by PPS.	20 years from date of publication
Frequency of updates	The Plan will be kept under review and a report detailing this review will be published a minimum of every five years from the date of the Plan's adoption, as per Marine (Scotland) Act 2010
Area covered by PPS	Mean High Water Springs of the Orkney Islands out to 12 nautical miles (see Map 1 below)
Purpose and/or objectives of PPS	To support sustainable development of the Orkney Islands marine region. See Table 3 for more detail.
Contact point	Marine.planning@orkney.gov.uk

Map 1: Boundary of Orkney Islands Marine Region



1b. SEA activities to date

Table 2 below is a summary of the key SEA activities undertaken to date. Further detail can be found in Appendix E. The screening, scoping and preparation of this draft Environmental Report has been undertaken in accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Table 2 summarises the SEA activities in relation to the OIRMP.

Key Activity	Date	Comments
Screening to determine whether the PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects.	April 2021	Screening responses issued to OIC, as Responsible Authority.
Scoping report to SEA Gateway	January 2022	Consultation Authorities responses received via SEA Gateway 25/2/2022.
Review of Responses to Scoping	March 2022	The OIC Marine Planning team reviewed the comments received from the Consultation Authorities and these have been addressed in this Environmental Report.
Draft Environmental Report	May 2022 - July 2024	The OIRMP is assessed against the SEA objectives and the potential implications of development and

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Key Activity	Date	Comments
		activities on the marine environment. Mitigation, environmental enhancement and monitoring are detailed in this Environmental Report.
Public Consultation	August 2024 - October 2024	Draft SEA deposited for public consultation alongside the OIRMP.
Finalise Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan and supporting assessments	2025-26	SEA updated in response to comments received.
Publish Post Adoption Statement	2026	To be completed.

2. Context

2a Introduction

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes “an outline of the contents and main objectives of the OIRMP or programme”. The purpose of this section is to explain the nature, contents, objectives, and timescale of the PPS.

The OIRMP will support the delivery of a vision for Orkney’s coastal and marine environment, economy and communities. This vision will be delivered through agreed objectives, implemented through decision-making made in accordance with the OIRMP policies.

Regional marine plans have a specific statutory purpose set out in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. In summary, this is:

- Regional marine plans need to set economic, social and marine ecosystem objectives, and objectives relating to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.
- Regional marine plans state policies for and in connection with the sustainable development of the area to which the OIRMP applies and policies on the contribution of Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas, and other relevant nature conservation sites, to the protection and enhancement of the area.
- Public authorities must take any authorisation or enforcement decision in accordance with the appropriate regional marine plan, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise.
- Public authorities must have regard to the appropriate regional marine plan in making any decision which relates to the exercise by them of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the Scottish marine area, but which is not an authorisation or enforcement decision.

2b Outline and objectives of Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

The OIRMP has been prepared to guide decision making on sustainable development, activities, and use in the Orkney Islands marine region.

The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 requires that the purpose of a regional marine plan is to state the Scottish Ministers’ policies for and in connection with the sustainable development of the area to which the OIRMP applies. Regional marine plans should state Scottish Ministers’ policies on the contribution of Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas, and other relevant conservation sites, to the protection and enhancement of that area. The OIRMP has been prepared in accordance with this statutory purpose.

The OIRMP has been prepared by Orkney Islands Council (OIC), in accordance with the Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands) Direction 2020. The Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group (OMPAG) has provided expert input on environmental, social, economic and recreational matters to inform the preparation of the OIRMP².

² [Marine Planning Advisory Group \(orkney.gov.uk\)](https://www.orkney.gov.uk/marine-planning-advisory-group)

The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 requires public authorities to take any authorisation or enforcement decision in accordance with the appropriate regional marine plan, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. The Act also requires public authorities to have regard to the appropriate regional marine plan in making any decision which relates to the exercise by them of any function capable of affecting the Scottish marine area.

The OIRMP provides a policy framework to assist public authorities, including regulators, decision-makers and planners, to make decisions on sustainable development and activities that take place within, or that affect, the Orkney Islands marine region. Appendix 1 within the OIRMP also contains a summary of the relevant licensing and consent regimes, and associated processes, administered by public authorities to manage marine development and activities in the Orkney Islands marine region.

The OIRMP is structured into four sections:

1. Introduction,
2. General Policies,
3. Sector Policies and
4. Monitoring and review.

These sections are supported by appendices that provide further information to assist Plan users.

The OIRMP's policy framework consists of a suite of general policies and sector policies. These policies express intent and guide decisions to achieve the OIRMP's aim and objectives (see Table 3). The suite of general policies provides a framework for decision making to help deliver the Plan's environmental, social, economic, marine ecosystem and community well-being objectives. These types of policies are often referred to as cross-cutting policies as they can be applied to many different types of decision, for example decisions on renewable energy, aquaculture or harbour developments, to address a specific policy issue e.g. nature conservation. The Sector Policies are designed to support sustainable development and management of specific sectors e.g. aquaculture and renewable energy.

All the policies should be considered alongside the relevant legislation, policies and plans.

Table 3 Vision, Guiding Principles, Aim and Objectives for the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Vision - – looking forward to 2045 The Orkney Islands marine region is clean, healthy, safe and productive; Orkney's marine and coastal environment is rich in biodiversity and managed sustainably to support thriving and resilient local communities.	
Guiding principles The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan has been developed in accordance with five guiding principles adopted to help steer the plan-making process, strategy and policies.	
A	Sustainable development and use Sustainable development and use are enabled whilst living within environmental limits; ensuring a strong, safe, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; using sound science responsibly; and supporting the delivery of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.³
B	Ecosystem approach An ecosystem approach is used to manage the marine environment and enable climate change mitigation, as well as adaptation to the predicted effects of climate change in response to the twin global climate and nature crises.
C	Coexistence Coexistence between marine development, activities and use is supported to minimise potential conflict and maximise synergistic benefits.
D	Partnership working and stakeholder participation This Plan is developed through an inclusive process of partnership working and stakeholder participation.
E	Integrated approach to marine and land-use planning Land and marine development and/or activities are planned in a joined-up way to address development and infrastructure requirements, and associated impacts, across the interface between land and sea.

³ United Nations Sustainable Development Goals <https://unric.org/en/united-nations-sustainable-development-goals/>

Aim	
Sustainable development, activities and use of the marine and coastal environment of Orkney is supported, helping to tackle the twin climate and nature crises.	
Sustainable development, activities and use should maintain, and where appropriate enhance, biodiversity and ecosystem services; protect natural capital for future generations; and maximise social, economic and wellbeing benefits for local communities.	
Objectives	
Number	Objective
1	A clear strategic direction is provided for development, activities and use in the Orkney Islands marine region and there is greater certainty for prospective developers, investors and local communities.
2	Development, activities and use are managed within an ecosystem approach, to protect and, where appropriate, enhance the biological, chemical and physical functioning of the marine and coastal environment, including the management of cumulative impacts.
3	A rapid and just transition to a low-carbon economy is supported to achieve net-zero commitments.
4	Mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change is supported.
5	Socio-economic benefits and prosperity are delivered for local communities and the wider economy.
6	The well-being of local communities and the amenity of marine and coastal places are protected and enhanced.
7	Reliable information is provided on existing and proposed coastal and marine development, activities, use and assets.
8	Spatial planning and data are provided, enabling sustainable coexistence and synergies between existing and new marine development, activities and use, and the environment.
9	Plan users are assisted in navigating the relevant legislative and policy frameworks more easily and effectively.
10	Local communities are effectively engaged in decisions affecting the Orkney Islands marine region.

The topics, policies and supporting appendices contained in the OIRMP are outlined in Table 4 below. The indicative timescale for the production of the OIRMP⁴ and the associated documents are:

- Delegation of Functions to OIC: November 2020.
- Statement of Public Participation (SPP) to Scottish Minsters: May 2021.
- Preparation of consultation draft Plan, draft SEA and other supporting draft documents: February 2021 – October 2022.
- All drafts to OIC committees for endorsement: November 2022 – December 2022.
- Draft Plan reviewed by the Scottish Government’s Marine Directorate and approval of the draft Plan by Scottish Ministers for public consultation: December 2023 – July 2024.
- Consultation on draft documents: 1 August 2024 – 25 October 2024.
- Consultation analysis and plan modifications: Winter 2024/ Summer 2025.
- Approvals stage: Autumn-Winter 2025.
- Adoption of Plan, independent investigation as required: Winter 2025/Spring 2026.
- Post publication: Plan kept under review, with a report detailing this review being published a minimum of every five years from the date of the Plan’s adoption, as per Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.

Further detail is provided in Appendix F.

Table 4: Topics included in the OIRMP. (GP = General Policy; SP = Sector Policy)

Section	Title
1	Introduction
2	General Policies
	Introduction
GP1	Sustainable development, activities and use
GP2	Safety
GP3	Climate change
GP4	Supporting sustainable social and economic benefits
GP5	Safeguarding natural capital and ecosystem services
GP6	Water environment

⁴ See Statement of Public Participation section: <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/>

GP7	Coastal development and coastal change
GP8	Historic environment
GP9	Nature
GP10	Seascape and landscape
GP11	Surface and underwater noise, and vibration
GP12	Marine litter and waste
GP13	Non-native and invasive non-native species
GP14	Amenity, wellbeing and quality of life of local communities
3	Sector Policies
	Introduction
SP1	Commercial fishing
SP2	Aquaculture
SP3	Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries
SP4	Pipelines, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure
SP5	Offshore wind, wave and tidal renewable energy generation
SP6	Zero fossil carbon fuels, and oil and gas transition
SP7	Tourism, recreation, leisure and sport
4	Monitoring and Review
Appendix 1	Licensing and Consenting Decisions
Appendix 2	Relevant Legislation, Plans, Strategies and Policies
Appendix 3	National Marine Plan interactive
Appendix 4	Natural Capital and Marine Ecosystem Services
Appendix 5	Priority Marine Features
Appendix 6	Seaweed harvesting
Appendix 7	Definition of Key Concepts, Acronyms and Glossary

Assessment

This SEA assesses the Vision (see Table 3) and Policies (see Table 4) of the OIRMP and provides a summary assessment of the likely environmental effects of implementation of the OIRMP's policies. These assessments are in Appendices C.1 – C.3).

2c. Relationship with other PPS and environmental protection objectives

It is important to ensure that regional marine plans are appropriately aligned with wider relevant plans, programmes, and strategies (PPS). One of the early stages of the SEA process was to consider the relationship of the OIRMP to other relevant PPS and their environmental objectives. This allowed key environmental objectives to be identified for consideration during the OIRMP preparation process. It was also important to identify both the PPS that will influence the OIRMP and those that will be influenced by the OIRMP itself.

An understanding of the context and the hierarchy that the OIRMP sits within is also useful for giving insight to mitigation measures and where they may be best implemented. Appendix A outlines the PPS taken into consideration during the SEA process.

Where specific marine management issues are currently being addressed by other bodies through existing plans, strategies, and programmes (e.g., fisheries management by the Inshore Fisheries Group), it may not be appropriate for the OIRMP to take forward detailed policy on these matters. There will however be a requirement for appropriate integration and alignment, along with signposting where appropriate.

The OIRMP will have a significant influence on, and will draw from, other plans produced by OIC. It aligns with the Orkney Local Development Plan (2017) and the Indicative Orkney Regional Spatial Strategy, as well as NPF4 which forms part of the Development Plan. The NMP is also a key consideration to ensure effective integration with national policy.

Appendix A to this report contains a detailed review of the list of key plans, programmes, and strategies, as well as current legislation considered to be most directly relevant to the Gateway Programme, and includes details of how their environmental objectives have been considered as part of the SEA process.

The key environmental messages and initial objectives identified from this review are to:

1. Promote responsible stewardship of the coastal and marine environment, with particular focus on the twin threats of the climate emergency and biodiversity decline.
2. Encourage a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) and be positioned to respond to the predicted effects of climate change (adaptation).
3. Help halt the loss of biodiversity and seek to reverse previous losses through targeted protection for species, habitats, and ecosystems.
4. Enhance habitats and ecosystems, where this is appropriate and feasible.

5. Protect and enhance the water environment, ensuring that the status of all waters is protected from deterioration.
6. Protect against developments which have potential to cause or exacerbate coastal erosion and flooding.
7. Protect and, where appropriate, enhance landscape and seascape character, local distinctiveness, and scenic value.
8. Protect and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment.
9. Ensure that development which would have a significant adverse impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site, or its setting, does not occur.
10. Increase awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the natural and historic environment.
11. Protect opportunities for access to, and enjoyment of, coastal and marine environments.
12. Prepare a regional marine plan which meet the needs and ambitions of local people, and which gives weight to the voices and views of local communities.
13. Maximise the use/reuse of existing infrastructure assets to meet future needs.
14. Contribute towards a reduction in marine litter.
15. Promote the sustainable development of marine renewable energy.
16. Promote sustainable development.
17. Support planning outcomes that focus on the priorities identified in NPF4: net-zero emissions, a well-being economy, resilient economy, and better, greener places.
18. Revitalise our communities, particularly considering the COVID-19 pandemic which has changed the way we all live, work and learn.

The findings above are used, along with the baseline data in Appendix B, to further refine a set of SEA objectives (see section 2g).

2d. Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of “the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the OIRMP or programme”, and “the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected”. This section aims to describe the environmental context within which the PPS operates and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the PPS.

The ‘State of the Environment Assessment (SoEA): A baseline assessment of the Orkney Islands Marine Region’ provides the relevant aspects of the current marine environment in Orkney’s marine waters⁵. To avoid excessive replication, the

⁵ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA](#)

extensive detail will not be replicated here, but in summary, it provides a snap-shot of the following environments and associated environmental pressures:

- Physical;
- Historic Coastal and Marine;
- Climate Change;
- Biodiversity;
- Productive Coasts and Sea; and
- Social and Community Value.

In addition, an outline of the data gaps is provided. For each topic and sub-topic assessed, there are also data on the trend and data confidence, where known, along with an extensive reference list of data sources. A summary of these data is in Tables 5 and 6 below.

These baseline data were assessed using the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC's) Marine Activities and Pressures Evidence tool, which contains a Pressures-Activities Database (PAD)⁶. This is a compilation of evidence base for relationships between 112 marine-based human activities and their associated pressures (based on the OSPAR pressure list).

The PAD incorporates information on activities in Scotland based on Marine Directorate's Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool (FeAST) and a range of new activities that may occur in UK waters. In addition, information provided by expert organisations and stakeholders, such as Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage), the International Centre of Island Technology (ICIT), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Orkney Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (RIFG), has informed the assessment for the Orkney marine region and has informed the identification of additional pressures.

These identified pressures, and the supporting baseline information, are therefore helpful in informing this SEA process by providing:

- an identification of environmental problems and any data gaps;
- supports the process of assessing the environmental effects and;
- provides a baseline against which future monitoring data can be compared.

⁶ <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/marine-activities-and-pressures-evidence/#jncc-pressures-activities-database>
This SoEA contains JNCC data © copyright and database right 2018

Table 5: SoEA Summary (source SoEA⁷)

Category	Topic	Pressure	Assessment	Trend	Data confidence
Physical	Geological and coastal	Erosion; Disturbance.	Some concerns	Deteriorating	High
	Landscape and Seascape	Erosion of special qualities of landscape and seascape; Coastal erosion, sea-level rise, flooding and change to vegetation types due to climate change.	Some concerns	Deteriorating	Medium
	Coastal Water Quality	Pollution	Some concerns	Static	High
	Air Quality	Pollution	Few concerns	Unknown	Low
	Marine litter	Entanglement; Ingestion; Amenity	Some concerns	Unknown	Medium
	Underwater noise	Disturbance; Injury;	Some concerns	Deteriorating	Low
Historic Coastal and Marine Environment	Historic Coastal and Marine Environment	Climate change; Erosion; Corrosion; Removal of artifacts.	Many concerns	Deteriorating	High
Climate Change	Climate Change	Multiple pressures: see Table 13	Many concerns	Deteriorating	Medium

⁷ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA](#)

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Category	Topic	Pressure	Assessment	Trend	Data confidence
Biodiversity	Designated Nature Conservation Sites	Climate change; Barrier to species movement; Collision; Disturbance; Overfishing; Pollution.	As there are many designated sites with varying site condition status, an overview assessment of the sites would be of limited value. Refer to Appendix 2 for individual site condition assessments.		
	Birds	Climate change; Collision; Disturbance; Marine litter	Many concerns	Deteriorating	Medium
	Grey Seals	Climate change; Disturbance; Pollution	Few concerns	Static	Medium
	Harbour Seals	Climate change; Competition; Disturbance; Pollution	Many concerns	Deteriorating	Medium
	Cetaceans	Climate change; Barrier to species movement; Collision; Disturbance: visual and displacement; Entanglement; Marine litter; Noise; Pollution	Some concerns	Unknown	Low
	Commercial Fish and Shellfish	Climate change; Disturbance; Removal of target species.	Unknown	Unknown	Not applicable
	Wider Fish Community	Climate change; Disturbance; Removal of non-target species.	Unknown	Unknown	Not applicable
	Invasive Non-native Species	Alter food webs; Outcompete native species.	Some concerns	Static	High

Table 6 summary of the OIRMP area (see SoEA for further detail⁸)

SEA Issue / summary	Data used	Source of Data
Climatic factors Orkney Islands marine region is subject to global climate change issues. Key considerations are sea level rise, ocean acidification and temperature changes, coastal processes and change, ecological impacts to food webs etc (see SoEA ⁹).	CO ² emissions data	www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics
	SNIFFER Online Handbook of Climate Trends across Scotland	www.sniffer.org.uk/climate-trends-handbook-for-web-pdf
	United Kingdom Climate Change Impacts Programme (UKCIP Climate Modelling)	www.ukcip.org.uk
	SEPA flood maps	www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/flooding/flood-maps
	Dynamic Coast: Improving the evidence base of coastal change in Scotland.	https://www.dynamiccoast.com/
	Climate Risk Assessment for the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site (2019)	https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=c6f3e971-bd95-457c-a91d-aa77009aec69
Biodiversity 25% of Orkney's marine waters are designated to protect biodiversity (see Map 2 below). Some qualifying features in unfavourable condition.	Statutorily designated sites • 15 SPAs • 6 SACs (3 of which are designated for marine features) • 1 RAMSAR • 3 NC MPAs • 33 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (most of which have a coastal	https://sitelink.nature.scot

⁸ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA](#)

⁹ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA](#)

SEA Issue / summary	Data used	Source of Data
	and/or marine component	
	European Protected Species.	
	Locally designated sites	Supplementary Guidance Natural Environment https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/ustbse0o/nat_env_sg.pdf
	RSPB reserves	https://www.rspb.org.uk/
	Local Nature Reserves	https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/natural-and-built-environment/natural-heritage/natural-heritage-areas/local-nature-reserves/ https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/N/local-nature-reserves.htm
	Priority Marine Features	https://www.nature.scot/doc/naturescot-commissioned-report-406-descriptions-scottish-priority-marine-features-pmfs https://marinescotland.atkinsgeospatial.com/nmpi/default.aspx
Water Coastal water quality is classified as good or very good; this should be maintained.	Water quality data	www.sepa.org.uk/data-visualisation/water-classification-hub
Coastal processes/ benthic sediments/ soils For marine context, includes benthic seabed and coastal processes; these should be protected.	Broad scale seabed habitat	Figure 8 of SoEA Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA

SEA Issue / summary	Data used	Source of Data
Geology Varied ancient geology and geomorphology should be protected.	Statutorily designated sites: SSSI and Geological Conservation Review (GCR)	https://sitelink.nature.scot
	Local Nature Conservation Sites	Orkney Islands Council: Supplementary Guidance: Natural Environment
	Wider geodiversity interests	The Nature Conservancy Council's publication Orkney Localities of Geological and Geomorphological Importance (1978) provides information on the distribution and extent of important geological and geomorphological sites in Orkney.
Landscape / seascape 70+ islands provide rich and varied landscapes that should be protected.	Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area	https://sitelink.nature.scot
	Landscape Character types	https://www.nature.scot/doc/landscape-character-assessment-orkney-landscape-evolution-and-influences
	North Caithness and Orkney Coastal Character Assessment	Coastal Character Assessment NatureScot
	Historic land use	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/79dfB.69c-d7C.3-4894-adda-5227a99295a1/national-record-of-the-historic-environment-historic-land-use-assessment
Cultural heritage Ancient cultural heritage assets and traditions should be protected.	The Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site	Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site Management Plan (2014-2019)
	Designated Sites, Buildings, Landscapes and Battlefields	Historic Environment Scotland GIS Downloader

SEA Issue / summary	Data used	Source of Data
	Regionally / locally important archaeological sites and unscheduled archaeology	Scotland's Historic Environment Audit Scotland's Environment Web Orkney Sites and Monuments Record
	Conservation Areas	Orkney Local Development Plan https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/development-planning-land/orkney-local-development-plan/
Population and Human health Varying population trends across the islands.	Socio-economic data	Scotland's Environment Web Orkney Islands Economic Review 2020 Orkney Islands economic review FAI (fraserofallander.org)
	Health and Place data	Welcome - Scottish Health and Social Care Open Data (nhs.scot)
Material assets improving transport infrastructure and services, reducing waste and promoting the waste hierarchy, with underpinning themes that seek to reduce emissions and shift towards a low carbon energy mix.	Core Paths	Orkney Core Paths Plan https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/outdoor-access/core-paths/
	Infrastructure	Phase 1 report Orkney Ports Handbook. www.orkneyharbours.com/info/docs . Orkney Harbours Master Plan – Phase 1 https://www.orkneyharbours.com/documents/orkney-

SEA Issue / summary	Data used	Source of Data
		harbours-masterplan-phase-1
	Waste	OIC.
Cross sectoral issues	SoEA (2020). A baseline assessment of the Orkney Islands Marine Region	OIC https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/state-of-the-environment-assessment/

Map 2: Map of designated sites in Orkney Islands Marine Region (Note a larger scale map is in Appendix D.)

Appendix B contains the detailed environmental baseline report, which provides a description of the key environmental characteristics of Orkney. This allows any existing problems to be identified and provides the benchmark against which the forecast and monitored levels of environmental effects will be evaluated.

2e. Environmental problems

Schedule 3 paragraph 4 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of existing environmental problems, in particular those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance. The purpose of this section is to explain how existing environmental problems will affect or be affected by Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, and whether the PPS is likely to aggravate, reduce or otherwise affect existing environmental problems, which have already been summarised in Tables 5 and 6 above.

Climate

It is widely accepted that the increasing atmospheric levels of certain gases are causing significant changes to global climates by reducing the rate of radiative heat loss and allowing temperatures around the world to rise. This is described as the enhanced greenhouse effect. Key considerations are sea level rise, ocean acidification and temperature changes, coastal processes and change, ecological impacts to food webs etc (see SoEA¹⁰).

Cultural heritage and historic environment assets are vulnerable to climate change via erosion, inundation and weathering.

¹⁰ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA](#)

The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should seek to help ensure appropriate mitigation and adaptation measures are considered.

Biodiversity

Appendix B.1 provides a detailed summary of the site condition of all the internationally and nationally designed sites relevant to the OIRMP area. In summary, the key qualifying features that are in an unfavourable declining condition are:

- Some species of seabirds and seabird assemblages
- Harbour seals
- Some loch SSSIs and SACs

Appendix B.2 provides a list of the Priority Marine Features in Orkney.

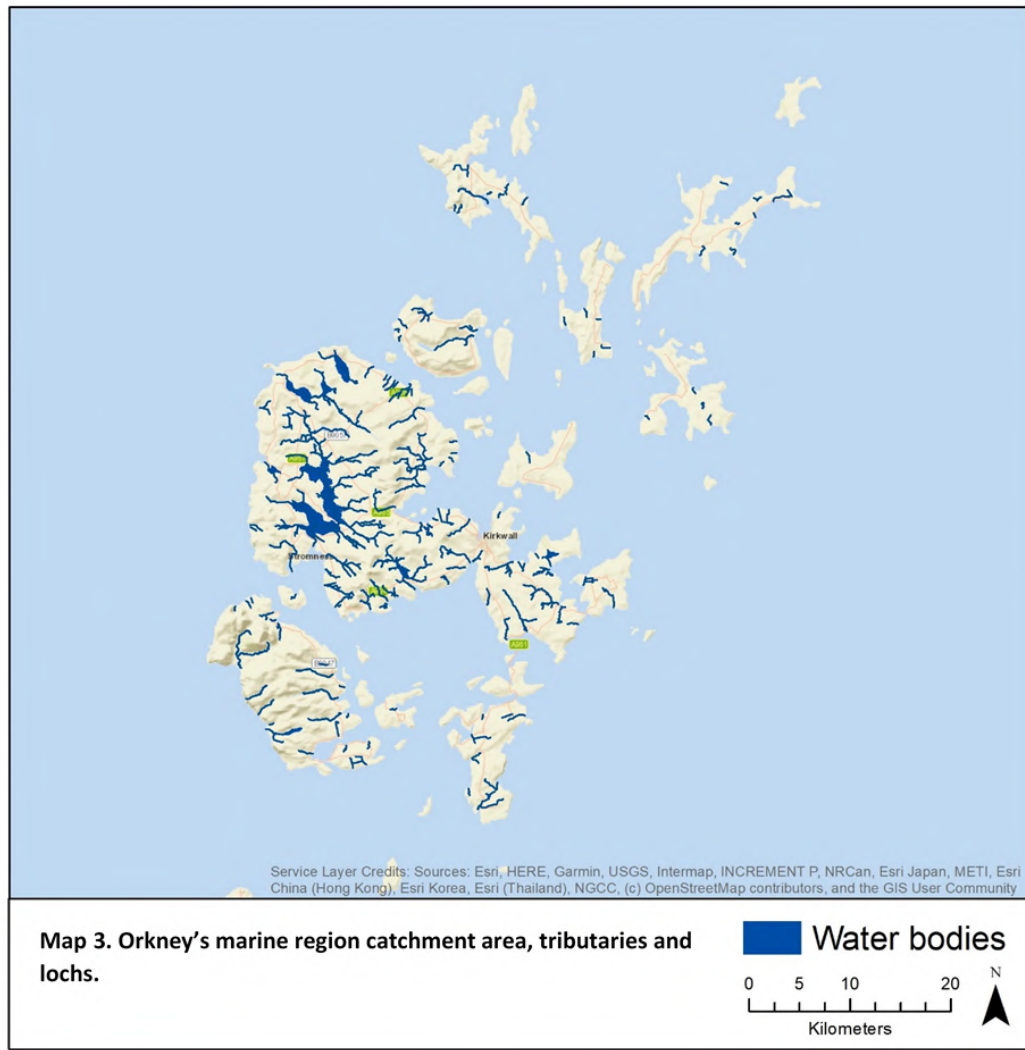
The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should seek to protect and where practicable, enhance, biodiversity in Orkney's coastal and marine waters.

Water

As a planning authority, OIC has a duty to protect and improve Scotland's water environment (The Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003). Appendix B.3 provides a detailed breakdown of the lochs, burns and coastal waters, which are shown in Map 3 below.

Water quality in Orkney is generally good but locally there are waters which are polluted by wastewater, effluents and discharges from agriculture, mineral working, and other industries. The EC Water Framework Directive seeks to achieve the continuous improvement of all water bodies through the implementation of River Basin Management Frameworks. Town and country planning has a significant role to play in ensuring an appropriate distribution of land uses and protecting the environment from pollution.

The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should seek to protect and improve the quality and overall status of the water environment in and around Orkney. Sustainable solutions to waste-water treatment, including ballast water, should be promoted.



Coastal processes/Benthic sediments/Soils

Marine and coastal development can result in changes to coastal process which, in turn, can affect rates of erosion, accretion and deposition. Coastal sand dunes are particularly vulnerable to disturbance which can cause blow-outs and loss of integrity.

Coastal erosion, predicted sea level rise and changes to coastal processes linked to climate change are also a key issue, as outlined in the climate change section above.

Sandy and muddy sedimentary habitats support large populations of invertebrates which in turn support species at higher trophic levels. Many of these benthic habitats also store immense quantities of carbon (known as Blue Carbon)¹¹.

¹¹ <https://data.marine.gov.scot/dataset/blue-carbon-audit-orkney-waters>

The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should seek to protect and improve the quality and overall status of the coastal processes and benthic sediments in and around Orkney.

Geology

Geological and geomorphological sites may be vulnerable to the effects of new developments and/or activities. Examples of development and/or activities which cross the interface between land and sea include new and replacement pipelines as well as energy and telecommunications cables.

The predicted effects of climate change are likely to subject coastal sites to enhanced rates of erosion, inundation, and weathering.

The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should provide effective protection to sites which are designated for their geological or geomorphological interest, and which illustrate Orkney's geological history.

Landscape

Orkney's relatively low-lying and undulating topography and open coastal seas provide long unobstructed views, with new features being highly visible in the landscape/seascape.

The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should provide effective protection to sites which are designated for their landscape/seascape quality and ensure the site condition of the National Scenic Area (NSA) is not eroded.

Cultural heritage

Cultural heritage sites and their settings may be vulnerable to the effects of new developments and/or activities. The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should provide effective protection to sites and their setting.

Population and human health

Population increase due to new major development may lead to increased pressure on existing infrastructure, for example housing, roads and sewage treatment plant. In this respect, any crossover with the Local Development Plan will be highlighted in the Environmental Report.

Material assets

Litter is already a problem in the Orkney marine and coastal environment. Plastics are especially long-lasting and pose a significant hazard to wildlife, e.g. in terms of accidental ingestion or entanglement. Coastal and marine litter impacts amenity in coastal areas. Fishing and fish farm waste is also an issue and includes redundant equipment which has been washed up on the coast and abandoned.

An increasing level of marine development is likely to put additional pressure on port and harbour infrastructure.

Cumulative Impacts

It is important to consider the cumulative impacts of developments on the marine environment, economic receptors and infrastructure, due to Orkney's rich but sensitive marine environment and high level of existing activity. While individual projects may appear sustainable in isolation, their combined effects can lead to significant impacts on the environment, habitats and coastal communities.

By assessing cumulative impacts, decision makers and developers can make more informed decisions that protect Orkney's natural assets, support long-term ecosystem health, and ensure that economic benefits are balanced with the need for environmental and social sustainability.

Summary of Environmental problems

Environmental problems were identified through discussions with the Consultation Authorities, the OMPAG and local stakeholders, along with an analysis of the baseline that is presented in Appendix B of this report. Experience gained from the preparation of other SEA reports also assisted in highlighting the main environmental issues that are likely to affect Orkney during the lifetime of the OIRMP.

2f. Likely evolution of the environment without the OIRMP

Without the OIRMP, it is considered that the likely future changes to the area will be a less coordinated and sustainable approach to marine development and activities. This would lead to increased adverse environmental effects, particularly due to cumulative pressures from development and activities being planned in isolation and assessed/mitigated to varying standards.

As the Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan is non-statutory, marine planning decisions are not required to be made in accordance with it, as prescribed in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010; rather it is a key guidance document and does not carry the same weight as a statutory regional marine plan.

2g. SEA Objectives

The SEA objectives are outlined in Table 7 below. SEA objectives are measures by which the environmental impacts of the PPS may be assessed. These have been refined using an iterative process during the scoping and development of the draft SEA phases, including the baseline report (see Section 2c and Appendix B).

Table 7: SEA Objectives

SEA OBJECTIVES
Climate factors:
Contribute to national net zero targets to address the cause of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
Support the transformational change to a low carbon economy, consistent with national objectives and targets.
Address Orkney's vulnerability and resilience to the likely effects of climate change.
Biodiversity:
Conserve, and where appropriate enhance, protected sites and species.
Safeguard valuable habitat from significant loss or damage as a result of development, activities and use.
Protect and enhance coastal and marine biodiversity and the health of the natural environment.
Maintain healthy ecosystems and work with the natural processes which provide important services to communities, including maintaining, and where appropriate enhancing, natural capital and ecosystem services.
Minimise the risk posed by non-native and invasive non-native species and associated effects on the marine environment and economy.
Water:
Promote the protection and improvement of the water environment, including burns, lochs, estuaries, wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater.
Coastal processes/Benthic sediments:
Adapt to the effects of coastal erosion, flooding, and wider coastal change.
Manage development that may significantly affect coastal process, thereby reducing effects on coastal and marine habitats, species and geomorphological features
Reduce the threat of contamination and seek to protect the benthic environment from damage such as erosion or scouring.
Geology:
Protect designated and undesignated sites which are recognised and valued for their geological or geomorphological importance.

Landscape:
Protect and enhance the distinctiveness and qualities of landscape and seascape character, and appropriately mitigate impacts that cannot be avoided.
Cultural Heritage:
Promote the care and protection of the designated and non-designated historic environment.
Enable positive change in the historic environment which is informed by a clear understanding of the importance of Orkney's heritage assets and ensures their future use.
Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and siting of development.
Population and Human Health:
Improve community environments and quality of life.
Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities.
Material assets:
Promote sustainable and efficient use of natural resources.

3. Assessment of environmental effects and measures envisaged for prevention, reduction and offset of any significant adverse effects

3a Alternatives to which the SEA was applied

The SEA objectives identified above have been used as assessment criteria. Each alternative will be assessed in turn, and this assessment will identify options which would have environmental effects, and therefore require further assessment. Assessment will inform the nature of the preferred options that will be taken forward for development, refinement, and further assessment.

From the scoping report, the initial alternatives were:

Alternative 1: Do nothing.

Alternative 2: Update the existing Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan (PFOW MSP).

Alternative 3: Develop an Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.

Following an iterative process to SEA, the alternatives, now called options, were refined as follows:

Option 1. Do nothing: continue under the current approach to marine planning and management including using the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine and Spatial Plan (PFOW MSP) as non-statutory planning guidance, NMP and NPF.

Option 2. Use the policies within the PFOW MSP to form a regional marine plan without updates or additions.

Option 3. Adoption of the OIRMP after stakeholder engagement on the preparation of the policies guided by the public consultation and further engagement with stakeholders.

Option 1 Do nothing: continue under the current approach to marine planning and management including using the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan (PFOW MSP) as non-statutory planning guidance, NMP and NPF.

Under this option a regional marine plan would not be developed/adopted and there would be no change to current arrangements. As the PFOW MSP is non-statutory it does not carry the same weight in decision making as a statutory regional marine plan and would therefore provide greater certainty in decision making.

The PFOW MSP has been adopted by the Scottish Government, Highland Council and OIC as non-statutory planning guidance. The OIRMP has not been adopted by other decision makers. This option therefore potentially creates inconsistency and uncertainty in decision making.

Option 1 does not bring marine planning in line with the provision for Regional Marine Planning set out in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.

Option 1 is not perceived as a viable option

Option 2: Use the policies within the PFOW MSP to form a regional marine plan without updates or additions.

Under this option the PFOW MSP would be put forward unamended, to be adopted as a regional marine plan. This option would place the existing local marine planning framework on a statutory footing. However, this would not allow a review and refinement of the objectives, policies and supporting data in light of changing legislation, priorities, opportunities, challenges and new data. This option would not meet current national policy or deliver current local community objectives and priorities.

As noted above, the existing NMP is somewhat dated therefore the existing statutory guidance is not as robust as it could be.

Option 2 does not bring marine planning in line with the provision for Regional Marine Planning set out in the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.

Option 2 is not perceived as a viable option

Option 3: Adoption of the OIRMP after stakeholder engagement on the preparation of the policies guided by the public consultation and further engagement with stakeholders.

Under this option an OIRMP will be prepared giving all stakeholders the opportunity to contribute towards setting objectives and policies to achieve sustainable development in the Orkney Islands marine region. This option will ensure that regional marine planning policy in Orkney contributes towards national priorities and outcomes e.g. climate change mitigation and adaption, reversing biodiversity loss and sustainable economic growth. It would also ensure that the impacts of the OIRMP would be fully assessed via SEA, HRA, ICIA, BRIA, CRWIA and EQIA.

Option 3 is a viable option

In summary, as the OIRMP is being developed, Option 1 and 2 have been scoped out to leave Option 3: Adoption of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, in accordance with the Direction made¹². Unlike the PFOW MSP, it will be a statutory plan, with more up to date information.

3b Assessment methods

The reasonable alternatives described above have been assessed against the range of environmental issues set out in Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Comments from the Consultation Authorities: SNH (now NatureScot), SEPA and Historic Environment Scotland have been taken into account

¹² [Delegation of Functions \(regional marine plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Orkney Islands\) Direction 2020 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/delegation-of-functions-for-the-scottish-marine-region-for-the-orkney-islands/pages/12.aspx)

regarding the methods, scope and level of detail in this Environmental Report. The detailed assessments are in Appendix A - C. It will be further revised in light of any comments received during the public consultation phase.

3c Assessment of environmental effects of the OIRMP

A summary of the assessment framework established during the scoping process, using the framework shown in Section 3a, has been amended and augmented following stakeholder input, is provided in Table 8 below. The detailed assessments, including an analysis of short, medium and long-term effects; permanent and temporary effects; positive and negative effects; and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, is provided in Appendices A - C. Further supporting information is provided in Appendices D – F.

The identification of potential adverse socio-economic and environmental effects through the iterative development of the OIRMP and this SEA will likely add further weight to their consideration by prospective developers, marine users and consenting authorities. An opportunity for the OIRMP to improve efficiencies, for example in streamlining of current consenting processes around which applicant-led engagement with stakeholders is considered to be key, was also identified. As a consequence, there is the potential for overall positive effects.

3d. Measures envisaged for the prevention, reduction and offsetting of significant adverse effects

Schedule 3 paragraph 7 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires an explanation of “the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the OIRMP or programme.” These aspects are outlined in Table 8 and Appendix C.2.

Table 8: Assessment of Environmental Effects of the OIRMP

The high level summary of the OIRMP-level effects on the SEA receptors are summarised here, including an assessment of cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects. This information is based on the assessments of each policy in relation to the SEA receptors as outlined in Appendix C.3, which in turn is informed by the information found in Appendices B and B.1 – B.6, the Islands Communities Impact Assessment and the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment.

The Plan General and Sector Policies identify how significant impacts can be addressed through the application of the mitigation hierarchy. These will be implemented through decision making including the identification of mitigation measures as part of consent application processes.

Legend:

++	Significantly positive effects.
+	Positive effects.
0	Minor or neutral effect.
?	Uncertain effects.
-	Adverse effects.
--	Significantly adverse effects.

SEA receptor / assessment	Assessment pre-mitigation	Suggested mitigation	Assessment post-mitigation	Cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects	Comment
Climatic factors (+)	The effects of climate change are many and far-reaching, including changing weather patterns, sea level rise causing increased	The OIRMP's policies will contribute toward national targets, such as achieving net zero by 2045, by ensuring that the requirement to	Moderate benefit is likely in terms of climatic factors, biodiversity, flora and fauna, water, landscape and	Measures to enable adaptation to the effects of climate change will be integrated into the OIRMP and this will include planning to take	Climate change will remain a global issue.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor / assessment	Assessment pre-mitigation	Suggested mitigation	Assessment post-mitigation	Cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects	Comment
	flooding and coastal erosion, and changes to the sea's temperature and acidification levels. Climate change is a global issue and national targets are in place to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.	reduce carbon emissions is factored into new development and/or activity proposals in a sustainable manner. The OIRMP's policies will contribute toward addressing the climate crisis by the introduction of provision for giving significant weight in decision making to this issue. The policy provisions encourage, promote and facilitate development, activities, and use that minimise greenhouse gas emissions, and that are adapted to the current and future impacts of climate change.	population/human health. The Plan will moderately enhance flood risk management, benefit biodiversity (see below), and improve access to coastal open space.	account of flood risk and coastal erosion. Addressing climatic factors indirectly reduces impacts on other SEA receptors e.g. Biodiversity The Plan integrates with wider strategic policy to support the transformational change required to address the Global Climate Emergency; the Climate Change Plan update, Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029, NPF4, National Marine Plan 2015, and the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017.	
Biodiversity (+)	The continuing decline of biodiversity is another issue of global concern, Sites of international,	The OIRMP's policies will contribute toward addressing the nature crisis by the introduction of provision for giving	Moderate benefit is likely in terms of biodiversity. The OIRMP makes provision for new	The balance of policies applied will help ensure biodiversity loss is minimised.	Biodiversity loss will remain a global issue. Positive effects for Biodiversity (often

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor / assessment	Assessment pre-mitigation	Suggested mitigation	Assessment post-mitigation	Cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects	Comment
(see appendix B.1)	national and local importance are designated throughout Orkney, on account of the habitats and species they support. The wider terrestrial and marine environments are also rich in biodiversity including significant records of Priority Marine Features. The spread of non-native and potentially invasive species is also a potential issue both around Orkney and the world. Impacts of INNS include, but are not limited to, competition with native species over resources, changes to habitat and/or water quality, and transmission of disease. All these factors can be	significant weight in decision making to this issue. It will protect designated sites, species and habitats in accordance with international/ national requirements. The Plan policies include provisions to encourage development and/or proposals for activities to contribute to the enhancement and/or restoration of the coastal and/or marine environment utilising best practice assessment and implementation methods. For INNS, good biosecurity practice should consider the risk of planned development and activities to establish new pathways for the spread of INNS, and mitigate the risks accordingly. The OIRMP's policies will	development to provide benefits for biodiversity. The plan assists in reducing the spread of INNS through policy and directing to relevant guidance. It ensures the continued availability of opportunities for enjoying and learning about Orkney's natural environment.		referred to as Net Gain or Biodiversity Enhancement) is a relatively novel process for the Scottish marine environment. The OIRMP will support the development of this process and enhancement of the marine environment, where appropriate, and in line with the latest national guidance and legislation.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor / assessment	Assessment pre-mitigation	Suggested mitigation	Assessment post-mitigation	Cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects	Comment
	exacerbated by climate change.	contribute toward ensuring this is done appropriately.			
Water (+) (see appendix B.3)	Under the River Basin Management Plans (RBPM), Orkney's coastal waters are classified as good or high for water quality. However on a finer scale there are waters which are polluted by waste-water, effluents and discharges from agriculture, mineral working, and other industries.	The OIRMP's policies will contribute toward ensuring continued water quality in accordance with international/national requirements. The policies aim to protect the water environment and improve the ecological status of coastal waterbodies.	Town and country planning has a significant role to play in ensuring an appropriate distribution of land uses and protecting the environment from pollution. The marine plan will assist with this integration of land/coastal/marine water protection.	Overall positive benefit for the water environment, which is vital for healthy and diverse ecosystems, a successful economy and human population.	
Coastal processes / benthic sediments / soils (?)	The combined forces of wave action and tidal currents are responsible for the constant reworking of seabed sediments which surround the coasts of Orkney. The growing demand for marine development and/or activities continues to	Significant positive benefit for the protection of biodiversity, coastal processes, geology and materials as development and/or activities will have to be in accordance with multiple protection plans and frameworks and negative impacts on coastal processes and coastal protection should	Integrated application of land use and marine policies should help ensure impacts are minimised. The Plan General and Sector Policies identify how any significant impacts can be addressed through the	Mixed impact due to general policies providing protection against significant impacts and sectoral policies acknowledging some negative impacts.	

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor / assessment	Assessment pre-mitigation	Suggested mitigation	Assessment post-mitigation	Cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects	Comment
	add pressure to the seabed and coast.	be minimised. All other SEA receptors are also given positive policy support.	application of the mitigation hierarchy		
Geology (+)	Orkney's geological history is most clearly visible and interpreted along its coastlines where the rock has been subject to sea level change, deformation, erosion and localised deposition; and also, in quarries where rock extraction has exposed a sequence of rock strata.	The OIRMP's policies will contribute toward ensuring SSSIs and GCR sites are not significantly impacted by development and/or activities.	The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should provide effective protection to sites which are designated for their geological or geomorphological interest, and which illustrate Orkney's geological history.	Neutral or minor positive impacts from most general policies and sectoral policies.	
Landscape (0)	Orkney has one National Scenic Area: the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area. The great ice-rounded eminences of the hills of North Hoy dominate the Orkney scene with a power that is scarcely in tune with their modest	The OIRMP's policies will contribute toward ensuring continued landscape/seascape quality in accordance with national requirements.	Overall moderate benefit for the setting of cultural heritage and public enjoyment of the landscape, and major benefit in terms of protection seascape/landscape.	Neutral or minor positive impacts from most general policies and potential for minor negative impacts sectoral policies. There is potential for the policy to promote greater consistency in the consideration of visual impacts in the development process,	

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor / assessment	Assessment pre-mitigation	Suggested mitigation	Assessment post-mitigation	Cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects	Comment
	height (479 metres). Their bold shape, fine grouping, soaring cliffs and headlands, includes the famous stack of the Old Man of Hoy.			and in the early stages of consenting processes. As a consequence, the potential for significant benefits for the many recognised for landscape/seascape areas in the OIRMP area were identified in the SEA.	
Cultural heritage (+)	Orkney is internationally renowned for the preservation and richness of 6,000 years of its archaeology upon which its successful tourism economy is based. Erosion and sea level rise due to climate change, along with deterioration and/or removal of artifacts are key considerations for cultural heritage	The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should provide effective protection to sites which are designated for their cultural heritage interest.	Moderate benefit is likely in terms of cultural heritage. The OIRMP general policies makes provision for the protection/enhancement of cultural heritage assets and ensures the continued availability of opportunities for enjoying and learning about Orkney's cultural environment.	Cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects will be considered on a case by case basis, based on the nature and scale of a development or activity proposal.	

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor / assessment	Assessment pre-mitigation	Suggested mitigation	Assessment post-mitigation	Cumulative, synergistic and secondary effects	Comment
Population and human health (+)	On 30 June 2020, the population of Orkney Islands was 22,400. This is an increase of 0.6% from 22,270 in 2019.	The OIRMP's objectives and policies, such as GP4 Supporting sustainable social and economic benefits, will contribute toward ensuring continued viability and safety of the island communities.	The potential for enhanced involvement of communities in the future growth of the use of the OIRMP area was seen as a key positive effect, particularly in relation to the consideration of potential social and economic impacts and opportunities for fostering further community involvement in the decision-making process.	Potential benefits for population and human health were identified with the promotion of the long-term sustainability objectives of the group of policies, and through supporting social and economic benefits and promotion of economic and wellbeing considerations.	
Material assets (+)	The seabed, intertidal zone, water environment and the species and habitats they contain are vital components of natural resources, that perform a variety of ecosystem services.	The OIRMP's policies will contribute toward ensuring material assets are used in a sustainable way, including provision to safeguard and enhance natural capital and ecosystem services	Overall largely positive effects on material assets.	Potential benefits for materials assets were identified with the promotion of the long-term sustainability objectives of the policies.	

4. Monitoring

The monitoring of sectoral growth and environmental and socio-economic parameters will continue to be undertaken on an ongoing basis, in accordance with the requirements of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, alongside the filling of data gaps through targeted research and studies, as capacity allows. Together, the information obtained from this wide range of sources, complemented by targeted monitoring and research on specific sectoral and environmental effects, would likely help to further inform the development of the OIRMP.

A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework will be prepared in due course, subject to funding/capacity. The public consultation may provide additional information regarding data sources that may be helpful in the monitoring process and the SEA will be updated accordingly, linked to the objectives outlined for the SEA in Section 2g: Table 7 above and the effectiveness of measures proposed for prevention, reduction and offsetting of significant adverse effects, where any remain.

5. Next steps

The next key planning and SEA outputs, including indicative timescales, are:

- Update draft documents following public consultation Summer 2025;
- OIC committee process Autumn 2025;
- Submission to Scottish Ministers for approval Autumn/Winter 2025;
- Publish Plan Winter 2025/Spring 2026 or independent investigation post Winter 2025/26;
- Post adoption statement for SEA Winter/Spring 2025/26; and
- Ongoing monitoring of Plan post adoption.

Should Scottish Ministers require an independent investigation of the OIRMP, this would likely add another year to the publication process.

Appendix A. Links to other PPS and environmental objectives

Appendix B. Full assessment results: Baseline Assessment

APPENDIX B.1 Orkney's internationally and nationally designated sites

APPENDIX B.2 List of Priority Marine Features in Orkney

APPENDIX B.3 Water quality

APPENDIX B.4 Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area

APPENDIX B.5 Orkney's Scheduled Monuments

APPENDIX B.6 Orkney's Historic Properties in Care

Appendix C. Full assessment results

APPENDIX C.1 Assessment of the Vision

APPENDIX C.2 Assessment of the policies for compatibility with SEA objectives

APPENDIX C.3 Assessment of the of the environmental effects of the policies

Appendix D. Map of natural heritage designations

Appendix E. Detailed list of SEA activates to date

Appendix F. SPP indicative timetable for preparation of the OIRMP.

Appendix A: Relationship with other Plans, Programmes and Strategies (PPS) and their environmental objectives

Relationship with other plans, programmes and strategies and their environmental objectives

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
OVERARCHING MARINE PPS	
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982 provides an overarching framework for the marine environment, setting national jurisdictions and establishing rights of navigation and the legal regime of the high sea. It provides the legal basis for the protection and sustainable development of the marine environment and addresses environmental control, UNCLOS scientific research economic activities and the settlement of disputes. UNCLOS introduced the concept of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). UNCLOS covers virtually all uses of the sea including navigation and over-flight, resource exploration and exploitation, conservation and pollution fishing and shipping.	In the OIRMP consideration should be given to protecting the right of navigation. The seas around Orkney include important navigational routes for ferries, fishing vessels and freight vessels.
The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR) 1992 aims to contribute to the control and prevention of marine pollution within the waters of the North East Atlantic (which includes all UK waters), as well as scientific co-operation in assessing the quality of these waters. Annex V of the Convention also provides for the adoption of programmes and measures to assist management of human activities that can have an adverse impact on the marine environment. Marine spatial planning was included in the OSPAR Biodiversity Committee's work programmes in 2003-04. Currently there are five	The OIRMP should include policies to prevent pollution and protect and conserve the ecosystem of the maritime area; and include provision for priority species and habitats. Activities should be compliant with national legislation implementing

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
annexes in force which deal with: prevention and elimination of pollution from land-based sources, by dumping or incineration and from offshore sources; assessment of the quality of the marine environment; and protection and conservation of the ecosystem and biological diversity of the marine area.	OSPAR recommendations and decisions.
Safeguarding Our Seas: A Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Development of our Marine Environment. Defra (2002) sets out a vision for the marine environment - clean, healthy, safe, productive, and biologically diverse oceans and seas. It is underpinned by the principles of sustainable development, integrated management, the conservation of biological diversity, robust science, the precautionary principle, and stakeholder involvement. It outlines an ecosystem-based approach to marine management to better integrate marine protection objectives with sustainable social and economic goals. It covers the broad spectrum of policies that affect the marine environment.	The OIRMP should reflect the vision and principles set out in the UK Strategy for the marine environment.
EC Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union (Blue Paper) COM (2007) 575 is based on the clear recognition that all matters relating to Europe's oceans and seas are interlinked, and that sea-related policies must develop in a joined-up way. This integrated inter-sectoral approach ensures stakeholder participation, reinforcing co-operation and co-ordination of all sea related policies. The Communication "Roadmap for Maritime Spatial Planning: Achieving common principles in the EU" was adopted by the Commission on 25 November 2008.	The OIRMP should consider how to fulfil the objective of the policy, including promoting the sustainable use of the marine environment to enable economic growth.
Guidelines for an Integrated Approach to Maritime Policy: Towards Best Practice in Integrated Maritime Governance and Stakeholder Consultation. (COM/2008/395) aims to provide a holistic approach on how to handle maritime affairs as an increasing number of governments, in Europe, and all over the world, are signing	The OIRMP should consider how best to support the implementation of a holistic approach to marine governance.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
up to a new, cross-cutting, integrated approach to the governance of maritime affairs. Member States should develop their own national integrated maritime policies, embracing economic, social, cultural, and environmental contexts, with active stakeholder participation and being implemented through marine spatial planning.	
The EC Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (2008/56/EC) establishes an overarching approach to the management of Europe's seas. It requires the UK to put in place measures to achieve or maintain good environmental status (GES) in the marine environment by 2020. The MSFD is transposed for the whole of the UK by the Marine Strategy Regulations 2010, providing a UK-wide framework for meeting the requirements of the Directive. As a member of the EU, the UK was required to collaborate with other Member States in the north east Atlantic, to monitor, assess and report progress towards GES; and to implement a programme of measures to achieve or maintain GES targets. Scotland's NMP adopts the GES descriptors as strategic objectives.	The policies of the OIRMP should support and contribute towards national strategic objectives to achieve or maintain good environmental status in the marine environment. It should consider the implications of the OIRMP on biodiversity, flora and fauna; habitats; contaminants; marine litter; and underwater noise.
Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 The 2009 and 2010 Acts provide a statutory framework for a more simplified marine planning and licensing system. The main management measures introduced as part of the 2010 Marine Act include marine planning, marine licensing, marine conservation, seal conservation, and enforcement.	The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 provides the legal basis for the development of national and regional marine plans. The OIRMP should therefore address the legislative requirements detailed within the Act.
UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS) has been prepared and adopted for the purposes of section 44 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.	The OIRMP should conform to the UK MPS as set out in the 2010 Act.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
It will facilitate and support the formulation of Marine Plans, ensuring that marine resources are used in a sustainable way in line with the high-level marine objectives and thereby: Promote sustainable economic development. Enable the UK's move towards a low-carbon economy, in order to mitigate the causes of climate change and ocean acidification and adapt to their effects. Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and our heritage assets. Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues.	
UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS) (2011) sets the framework for preparing Marine Plans and taking decisions affecting the marine environment. The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, section 6(1) requires a NMP and a regional marine plan to be in conformity with any marine policy statement currently in effect for the Scottish marine area, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise.	The objectives and policies of the OIRMP should align with the UK Marine Policy Statement High-level Marine Objectives.
The EC Directive Establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning (2014/89/EU) sets out the fundamental elements that must be included in Maritime Spatial Plans. These include taking an ecosystem-based approach to spatial planning of marine resources; and promoting the coexistence of relevant uses and activities. The intention was to set out a planning framework within which all human activities at sea could fit.	The OIRMP should take account of the requirements of the Directive, including the adoption of an ecosystems approach.
Scotland's NMP (NMP) (2015) provides a comprehensive overarching framework for all marine activity in both Scottish inshore waters (out to 12 nautical miles) and offshore waters (12 to 200 nautical miles). The NMP sets out guidance specifically for regional planners to inform the development of regional marine plans.	The objectives and policies of the regional marine plan should:

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Scotland's NMP 2015 - Policies and Regional Policy Guidance. The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, section 6(1) requires a NMP and a regional marine plan to be in conformity with any marine policy statement currently in effect for the Scottish marine area, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Note: An updated NMP is being developed	• be in conformity with the objectives and policies in the NMP. • identify any requirements to take a regionally specific approach to any particular objectives and/or policies, Identify proposed deviation from the national approach and agree this at an early stage with the Marine Directorate. A PPS integration exercise will ensure that key policies, strategies and plans (PPS) are considered in the development of the OIRMP.
The Pilot Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters Marine Spatial Plan aimed to establish a coherent strategic vision, objectives and policies to further the achievement of sustainable development including the protection and, where appropriate, enhancement of the health of the OIRMP area	The OIRMP will be informed by the Marine Spatial Plan and will further develop its objectives.
Guidance to the UK Marine Policy Statement from 2021 (2020) is published on behalf of all the UK Administrations by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. It explains how references to EU law in the UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS) should be interpreted from 1 January 2021 following the UK's withdrawal from the EU. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 will convert many EU measures into UK law. Former EU measures converted into UK law are referred to as 'retained EU law' with statutory instruments amending the retained EU law to ensure it is operable.	The OIRMP will adopt the relevant current terminology.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
References in the MPS to EC or EU legislation, EU legislative requirements, European legislation and EU requirements are to be read as references to retained EU law from 1 January 2021.	
The UK Marine Strategy (2019) consists of a 3-stage framework for achieving Good Environmental Status (GES) in our seas. Achieving GES is about protecting the marine environment, preventing its deterioration and restoring it where practical, while allowing sustainable use of marine resources. The strategy covers 11 elements: biodiversity; non-indigenous species; commercial fish; food webs; eutrophication; sea-floor integrity; hydrographical conditions; contaminants; contaminants in seafood; marine litter and underwater noise. The updated UK Marine Strategy Part 1 marks the beginning of its second implementation cycle and reports on progress made, along with further action that is necessary. In October 2022, DEFRA published the Marine Strategy Part Two which sets out the monitoring programmes proposed to provide the evidence to support the assessment of progress towards achieving GES within the UK Marine Strategy area.	An integration exercise will ensure that key plans, policies and strategies (PPS) are considered in the development of the OIRMP.
The Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015 The Marine Act provides for the delegation of marine planning functions to a regional level. It designated 11 Scottish marine regions for the Scottish marine area and defines their boundaries, the coordinates establishing the marine region boundaries, and the suggested names of the regions. The Orkney Marine Region is defined within the Order.	The OIRMP should cover the area defined as the Orkney Islands Marine Region.
The Coast Protection Act 1949 is the key legislation for matters relating to coastal erosion risk on the open coast.	The OIRMP should include policy on coastal erosion.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The Scottish Crown Estate Act 2019 makes provision for the management of the Scottish Crown Estate; and for connected purposes.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to the Act and any necessary requirements.
The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 introduced measures to support and help meet the unique needs of Scotland's islands now and in the future. It will also seek to help create the right environment for sustainable growth and empowered communities.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to the measures introduced in the Islands Act and the National Plan for Scotland's Islands.
The National Plan for Scotland's Islands 2019 and associated Implementation Plan provides a framework for action to meaningfully improve outcomes for island communities.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to the National Plan for Scotland's Islands.
The Submarine Telegraph Act 1885 underpinned an International Convention for the Protection of Submarine Telegraph Cables.	The OIRMP should include policy for the installation and protection of submarine cables.
The Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 replaced the Dumping at Sea Act 1974 with fresh provision for controlling the deposit of substances and articles both in the sea and under the sea-bed.	The OIRMP should include policy for the deposit of substances and articles in the sea and on the seabed.
The Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 deals with wrecks of both aircraft and ships, and all military aircraft are automatically protected under this legislation.	The OIRMP should include policy on protected wrecks and aircraft.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The Orkney County Council Act 1974 authorised the County Council of Orkney to exercise harbour jurisdiction and powers in respect of development, including powers to license the construction of works and dredging in certain areas of and adjacent to the county. Also introduced the right of compulsory purchase of land for development.	The Orkney Harbour Authority forms part of the OMPAG to ensure relevant matters are considered.
The OIC Harbour Revision Order 1989 adds two areas to the Schedule of the Orkney County Council Act 1974 and thereby confers jurisdiction as a harbour authority on OIC within those areas, together with the powers contained within the 1974 Act.	These additional harbour areas should be reflected in the appropriate OIRMP policies.
CLIMATE CHANGE	
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change entered into force on 21 March 1994 and now has near-universal membership. The ultimate objective of the Convention is to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations "<i>at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system.</i>"	
The Second European Climate Change Programme (2005) established the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP) in 2000 to help identify the most environmentally and cost-effective policies and measures that can be taken at European level to cut greenhouse gas emissions; and explored further cost-effective options for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in synergy with the EU's Lisbon strategy for increasing economic growth and job creation.	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Limiting Global Climate Change to 2 degrees Celsius. The way ahead for 2020 and beyond (EC, 2007) proposed that, through international negotiations, the EU should pursue a 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by developed countries by 2020 (compared to 1990 levels). This was deemed necessary to ensure that the world stays within the limit of a 2°C increase in average global temperatures.	The policies of the OIRMP have a role to play in contributing towards achievement of these high-level objectives and should promote a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, in line with national and international targets.
The UK Climate Change Act 2008 and the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 focus on the need to cut greenhouse gas emissions. As of June 2019, national targets were for a 100% reduction by 2050, contributing to climate change abatement targets set at the UK, EU and international levels. In May 2019 amendments to the Scottish Climate Change Bill were lodged to set a legally binding target of net-zero (100% reduction) greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 at the latest, with Scotland becoming carbon neutral by 2040.	
The Paris Agreement 2015 is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. To achieve this long-term temperature goal, countries aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century. The Paris Agreement is a landmark in the multilateral climate change process because, for the first time, a binding agreement brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects.	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan: vision is that by 2045 Scotland will have a flourishing, climate friendly energy system that delivers affordable, resilient and clean energy supplies for Scotland's households, communities and business.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to the draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan and includes a policy on Net Zero.
OIC has commitments to reduce the Islands' total carbon dioxide emissions by 42% from the 2004-2015 baseline by 2026; OIC Carbon Management Programme 2016-2026 sets out the Council's aims to move towards a low carbon operation, through careful planning of all their energy consuming activities and by assessing future plans in terms of their carbon impact in order to reduce their total carbon dioxide emissions in the financial year 2025 by 42% of the baseline year 2004-05. With 18% already achieved, a further 24% reduction has been committed to by the Council.	The OIRMP should be compatible with the objectives of Orkney's Carbon Management Programme, the Sustainable Energy Strategy, and the Hydrogen Strategy.
A Sustainable Energy Strategy for Orkney 2017-2025 provides a framework to ensure a secure, sustainable low carbon island economy driven uniquely by innovation and collaboration, enabling the community to achieve ambitious carbon reduction targets, address fuel poverty and provide energy systems solutions to the world.	
Orkney Hydrogen Strategy 2019-2025 seeks to aid development of an appropriate sustainable hydrogen economy for Orkney. This would provide economic benefits such as local jobs; establishing a local supply chain; and an increased resilience in the local energy system.	
Climate ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024 sets out policies and proposals to prepare Scotland for the challenges that we will face as our climate continues to change in the decades ahead. The Programme is a requirement of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and addresses the risks set	The OIRMP should be informed by Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation Framework to promote policies which increase the resilience and preparedness of the Orkney Islands to

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
out in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (UK CCRA) 2017, published under section 56 of the UK Climate Change Act 2008.	adapt to the effects of climate change. Measures to enable climate change adaptation should be integrated into the OIRMP. Holistic planning will be vital in building resilience to the impacts of climate change amongst communities, businesses and ecosystems. It includes planning to take account of flood risk and coastal erosion, identifying vulnerable land and infrastructure and making space for habitats.
Directive on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks (EC Directive 2007/60/EC) aims to establish a framework for measures to reduce the risk of floods in the EU by assessing the risk of flooding in river basins and coastal regions, mapping out areas that are prone to significant floods and drawing up flood-risk management plans based on close cooperation between the EU countries.	The OIRMP must take account of the probability of flooding from all sources and the risks involved. The potential additional influence of climate change should also be borne in mind. The OIRMP should use the Orkney Strategic Flood Risk, have regard to the flood maps prepared by SEPA and take account of finalised and approved Flood Risk Management Strategies and Plans. It should protect land with potential to contribute to managing flood risk, for example through natural flood management,
The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 requires the production of Flood Risk Management Strategies by SEPA and Local Flood Risk Plans by the Council as lead authority.	
The Orkney Flood Risk Management Strategy, SEPA 2015 includes a vision for how flooding should be managed. It identifies the main flood hazards and impacts and sets objectives to manage these, along with a series of prioritised actions that aim to achieve these objectives.	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
A Flood Risk Management Plan for Orkney 2022 identifies works and actions that are to be undertaken locally during the period 2022-2028, and how these are to be funded. The Surface Water Management Plan for Kirkwall 2019 provides information to support development of an agreed strategic approach to management of surface water flood risk within Kirkwall by ensuring the most sustainable measures are identified.	managed coastal realignment, wash-land or green infrastructure creation, or as part of a scheme to manage flood risk.
BIODIVERSITY, FLORA & FAUNA	
The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972 aims to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world, considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.	The OIRMP and its policies must reflect the objectives of these three conventions.
The Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals 1979 is an intergovernmental treaty concerned with the conservation of wildlife and habitats on an international scale. It aims to conserve marine, terrestrial, and avian species throughout their range through international cooperation. The UK is party to the Convention and to several agreements that have been concluded under its auspices. Examples include ASCOBANS (small cetaceans – Odontoceti); ARWA (migratory birds) and EUROBATS (bats).	
The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats 1979 (The Bern Convention) was established to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats, to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of those species (including migratory species).	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) is the EU's oldest piece of nature legislation. Known as the Birds Directive it was adopted unanimously by Member States in 1979 as a response to increasing concerns about the declines in Europe's wild bird populations resulting from pollution, loss of habitats as well as unsustainable use. It protects all wild birds (together with their nests and eggs) and their associated habitats. The Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora Directive (92/43/EEC), more commonly known as the Habitats Directive was adopted in 1992 to protect natural habitats and certain species of wild plants and animals. The species listed on Annexes II, IV and V of the Habitats Directive, plus those birds protected under the Birds Directive, are called species of 'Community interest'. Together these Directives established a commitment to designating a network of sites known as Natura 2000 sites. Following the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union, these sites are now described in the UK as European sites. Special Protected Areas (SPA) are designated under the Birds Directive and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are designated under the Habitats Directive. This is a key underlying international policy commitment, to be reflected in the policies of the OIRMP. The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance 1971 (amended 1982 and 1987) emphasises the special value of wetland, particularly as a key habitat for waterfowl. The Convention resulted in the designation of sites known as Ramsar Sites for management and conservation at an international level. All Ramsar sites are also European sites. The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 establishes a new power for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the seas around Scotland, to recognise features of national importance and	The OIRMP should: • Identify all international and national natural heritage designations (including potential SPAs and SACs) on maps, distinguishing clearly between international or national sites. • Make reference to local nature conservation sites which are described and mapped in Supplementary Guidance Natural Environment Annex 1. • Include marine planning policy for any areas identified as being of international national or local importance for their natural heritage and safeguard any areas being of major importance for nature conservation. • Make clear the requirement to protect the integrity and qualifying interests of European sites and indicate the criteria against which a development affecting a natural heritage designation will be assessed.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
to meet international commitments for developing a network of MPAs. The Act allows for three different types of MPAs to be set up: • Nature Conservation MPAs. • Demonstration and Research MPAs. • Historic MPAs. Supplementary Guidance Natural Environment Annex 1 Local Nature Conservation Sites (2017) OIC.	The OIMRP will be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.
When enacted to implement the Birds Directive and Bern Convention, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 provided a relatively straightforward source of wildlife law in Great Britain. However, the legal picture is now more complicated: Firstly, the introduction of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, commonly known as the Habitats Regulations, created a separate set of rules for those species (and habitats) protected under the Habitats Directive. Secondly, devolution has meant that changes to the 1981 Act through the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and the Habitats Regulations have been made differently in Scotland than in England and Wales. Part 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 details many offences in relation to the killing and taking of wild birds, other animals and plants. Schedules are attached which categorise species. This means that the degree of protection afforded varies according to which Schedule a species is listed on. The Act applies to the terrestrial environment and inshore waters (0-12 nautical miles). The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 also introduced improved protection for seals. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 draws together and updates legislation on nature conservation. It updates much of the Wildlife and	The OIRMP should: • Include policy for protected species. • Include policy for Priority Marine Features (PMFs). • Provide for the conservation of the wider biodiversity out-with designated areas. It should also address issues that enable the spread of INNS.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Countryside Act (WCA). Includes legislation relating to Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS).	
The Great Britain Invasive and Non-Native Strategy 2015 aims to protect against the adverse impacts of invasive non-native species. It aims to: • get people to work better together, including the government, stakeholders, land managers and the general public. • improve co-ordination and co-operation on issues at a European and international level.	The OIRMP should consider how to reduce the spread of INNS,
Managing Invasive Species in Scotland's Water Environment was developed by SEPA as a supplementary plan to the River Basin Management Plans. It provides guidance on a co-ordinated approach for organisations with a role in risk assessment, monitoring, classification, data collection and presentation and control mechanisms, to reduce the risk posed by INNS on the ecological quality of water bodies.	
OIC Ballast Water Management Policy aims to minimise the risk of introduction of INNS during ballast water discharge activities in Scapa Flow.	OIC has a duty, “...in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.”
The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 introduced the ‘biodiversity duty’ - a ‘duty to further the conservation of biodiversity’ - for all public bodies and sets out more specific provisions within this (e.g. for SSSIs). It also required the preparation of a Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to which all public bodies should pay regard, as well as a	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Scottish Biodiversity List of animals, plants and habitats that Scottish Ministers consider to be of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland. The purpose of the list is to help public bodies carry out their Biodiversity Duty by identifying the species and habitats which are the highest priority for biodiversity conservation in Scotland.	This duty must be reflected in the OIRMP and in development management decisions
Future Fisheries Management Strategy: sets the vision for Scotland to be a world class fishing nation, delivering responsible and sustainable fisheries management.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to the strategy.
Seafood Strategy: Affirms the importance of the seafood sector and sets out how the Scottish Government are supporting industry to contribute to achieving our blue economy aspirations.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to the strategy.
Article 6 of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity 1992 (commonly known as the Rio Convention) requires that all parties develop national biodiversity strategies, plans or programmes, and that they seek to integrate the provisions of these across other policy sectors. International targets call for a step change in efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and to restore essential services that a healthy natural environment provides.	The OIRMP should: Assist in reversing the decline of biodiversity including Priority Marine Features and other species and habitats that are identified as priorities for conservation. The role of certain marine habitats in storing carbon (blue carbon) should be
Scotland's Biodiversity It's in Your Hands 2004 aims to 'conserve biodiversity for the health, enjoyment and wellbeing of the people of Scotland, now and in the future' and sets out a vision for 2030 as well as objectives and desired outcomes.	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Biodiversity strategy to 2045: tackling the nature emergency: sets out the clear ambition for Scotland to be Nature Positive by 2030, and to have restored and regenerated biodiversity across the country by 2045.	fully recognised in the OIRMP and these habitats should be afforded protection from development. The role of planning in relation to biodiversity, and in terms of raising awareness and appreciation of natural heritage, should be reinforced, and promoted by the OIRMP as far as possible.
The overarching aim of the Great Britain Invasive and Non-Native Strategy 2015 is to minimise the risk posed by and reduce the negative impacts of INNS in Britain. It follows a hierarchical approach stressing prevention, followed by early detection and rapid response and finally long-term management and control. It aims to get people to work better together and improve coordination and cooperation on issues at a European and international level.	
Managing Invasive Species in Scotland's Water Environment: A Supplementary Plan to the River Basin Management Plans (SEPA, 2013) describes the roles of organisations and partners involved in risk assessment, monitoring, classification, data collection, and prevention and control mechanisms. Since these roles and responsibilities are shared across a number of organisations, both north and south of the border, it also aims to form a basis for cross-border discussions and partnership working with counterpart organisations in England. Most importantly, the OIRMP identifies resourcing pressures and proposes key actions to address these in order to ensure that the WFD objectives are met in future river basin planning cycles.	The OIRMP should include policies to address the threat of invasive non-native species.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Scapa Flow Ballast Water Management Policy (OIC, 2017) seeks to minimise the potential for pollution resulting from oil, chemical, heavy metals and transfer of non-native aquatic organisms and pathogens which may be contained within ships ballast water and associated sediments. The policy applies to all vessels over 400 gross tonnage within or using Scapa Flow Harbour Area. The discharge of a ship's ballast water whilst within Scapa Flow as defined by the harbour limits is prohibited unless in accordance with the policy.	
WATER	
The Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC provides an overarching strategy for the aquatic environment, including a requirement for EU Member States to ensure that water bodies achieve 'good ecological status' by 2015. The Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 (WEWS) Act transposes the Water Framework Directive into the Scottish context. Aims to protect the water environment including marine waters. The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 sets out the process by which activities which have the potential to affect the water are regulated.	Planning authorities have a duty under the WEWS Act to protect and improve Scotland's water environment. The OIRMP should include policies which protect and, where appropriate, improve the water environment. These policies should support the aims and objectives of the Water Framework Directive and the WEWS Act by preventing adverse impacts on the water environment.
River Basin Management Plans were prepared under the Water Framework Directive and the WEWS Act and set specific objectives for the protection and improvement of water resources within each river basin. Orkney lies within the area covered by the Scotland River Basin Management Plan 2021.	The policies of the OIRMP should support River Basin Management Planning aims and objectives by ensuring that adverse impacts on the water environment are avoided or

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
	appropriately mitigated. They should also contribute towards improving the ecological status of water bodies in and around Orkney.
The Water Environment (Shellfish Water Protected Areas: (Designation (Scotland) Order 2013) Regulations identifies waters as 'shellfish water protected areas'.	The OIRMP should afford an appropriate level of protection to areas designated as shellfish waters.
SOIL, GEOLOGY AND COASTAL PROCESSES	
The Scottish Soil Framework provides an overarching policy framework for the protection of soils in Scotland, in line with the European Directive. Includes coastal areas.	The OIRMP should have regard to developments which may have the potential to impact on coastal processes.
The Scottish Government's Dynamic Coast Project undertook a wide range of analysis, from coastal change due to sea level rise, to the social disadvantage of the population exposed to coastal erosion. A guidance document produced by NatureScot, Looking Ahead: Planning for Coastal Change 2019 has been prepared in partnership and promotes the use of coastal change information to plan for development and infrastructure around the coast.	The predicted effects of climate change include rising sea levels which in turn increase the risk of coastal erosion. The OIRMP should be informed by the findings of the Dynamic Coast project and the NatureScot guidance.
Scotland's Geodiversity Charter 2018-2023 encourages the promotion and management of Scotland's geodiversity and better integration of geodiversity into policy and guidance, consistent with the country's economic, social, cultural and	The OIRMP should: Identify all national and local geological and geomorphological designations within the natural heritage policy,

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
environmental needs. The Charter seeks to help protect this aspect of our natural heritage and deliver more sustainable management of Scotland's natural resources.	distinguishing clearly between national sites and sites of more local importance. It should provide for the conservation of geodiversity within and outwith designated areas by linking to the OLDP policy.
LANDSCAPE / SEASCAPE	
The policies of the Council of Europe, European Landscape Convention 2000 (The Florence Convention) aim to not only safeguard protected areas, but to recognise and conserve wider landscapes. These may not be formally designated but make an important contribution to the quality of environment.	Landscapes and the natural heritage are sensitive to inappropriately designed and/or sited development. The OIRMP should address the potential effects of development on landscapes and seascapes, including the cumulative effect of incremental change.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The overarching aim of NatureScot Landscape Policy Framework: Policy Statement No. 05/01 is: <i>“To safeguard and enhance the distinct identity, the diverse character and the special qualities of Scotland’s landscapes as a whole, so as to ensure tomorrow’s landscapes contribute positively to people’s environment and are at least as attractive and valued as they are today.”</i> These principles are based on four propositions: • Scotland’s landscapes are a shared responsibility. • All of Scotland’s landscapes deserve attention. • Scotland’s landscapes will continue to change. • Scotland’s landscapes deserve greater care. The Landscape Policy Framework is currently being revised following publication of the NatureScot and HES joint Landscape Position Statement (2019).	The OIRMP should seek to protect and, where appropriate, enhance all types of landscape character areas, and support development that is sensitive to and does not harm the quality and distinctiveness of Orkney’s landscapes and seascapes.
The shared vision expressed in the NatureScot and HES Landscape Position Statement 2019 is that <i>“All Scotland’s landscapes are vibrant and resilient. They realise their potential to inspire and benefit everyone. They are positively managed as a vital asset in tackling climate change. They continue to provide a strong sense of place and identity, connecting the past with the present and people with nature, and fostering wellbeing and prosperity.”</i> To deliver the vision the following strategic action is needed: • Talking about landscape and its range of benefits.	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
- Engaging more local communities and other stakeholders in helping shape future landscape change. - Strengthening the role of landscape approaches in the management and design of built development and other land uses.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to the information and guidance provided in both the LCA and the CCA.
Orkney Landscape Character Assessment Land Use Consultants (1998) Scottish Natural Heritage Review No. 100 Provides information on the formation and shaping of Orkney's landscape and its characteristic features. Examines the nature of recent changes in the landscape and assesses future trends and potential threats to landscape character. Develops general guidelines for planning and management throughout Orkney. Classifies the landscape by character type and provides island character area descriptions for inhabited islands. Identifies both general and area specific sensitivities or requirements for planning and management.	
The principal aim of the Coastal Character Assessment: Orkney and North Caithness prepared by LUC for NatureScot (2016) was to undertake a coastal character assessment of Orkney and the North Caithness Coast, to include classification and description of both regional and local coastal character areas. Coastal Character Assessment (CCA) is designed to complement and add to Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). An existing series of LCAs, carried out in the 1990s and currently under review, covers the whole of Scotland. These LCAs cover coastal landscapes, but the attention given to the coast, including marine influences, varies considerably. The CCA approach seeks to ensure a consistent treatment of Scotland's coastal landscapes.	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The special qualities of the National Scenic Areas. NatureScot Commissioned Report No. 374 (2010). Special qualities are defined as ‘the characteristics that, individually or combined, give rise to an area’s outstanding scenery.’ These special qualities underpin the reason for designating an area as a National Scenic Area (NSA). Defining the special qualities of a particular NSA clarifies what needs to be safeguarded to maintain its outstanding scenery and provides a firm basis for future consultation and policy development, particularly in relation to managing development and land use change within NSAs. This should help ensure that we pass on the appeal and value of our finest landscapes to future generations.	The OIRMP should ensure that development proposals should not impact significantly on the special qualities of the Hoy and West Mainland NSA.
Orkney Landscape Capacity for Aquaculture: Scapa Flow and Wide Firth NatureScot Commissioned Report 466 2011 aims to assess both the strategic and local level landscape capacity for the siting of finfish and shellfish farms within the Scapa Flow and Wide Firth waters of Orkney. The capacity assessment should provide a basis for assessing future individual lease applications and determining their suitability for location within a specific seascape.	The OIRMP policy on Aquaculture should pay due regard to the Landscape Capacity for Aquaculture document.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
CULTURAL HERITAGE	
Landscape and the Historic Environment – A Common Statement (Strategic Historic Environment Forum) The Strategic Historic Environment Forum’s vision is for the historic dimension of landscape to be fully acknowledged and valued. It is at the core of a shared and unifying approach to managing change in our landscape in ways which maximise public benefit for present and future generations.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to the effect of development proposals on the historic dimension of landscape.
Historic Environment Scotland Act 2014. Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (2019). Our Place in Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (2014). PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology. Historic Environment Scotland Corporate Plan 2019 onwards. Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Notes. These national historic environment policies aim to identify and protect historic buildings and sites from inappropriate development and damage. Policies extend beyond specific designated sites to reflect the value of undesignated/unknown sites, wider townscapes, the setting of monuments and historic buildings, and wider cultural landscapes.	The OIRMP should include policy for the protection of Orkney’s cultural heritage features, including its archaeological heritage.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
UNESCO Convention on Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage 2001 aims to ensure and strengthen the protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (UCH) over 100 years old, promoting in situ protection and preventing commercial exploitation. Responsible non-intrusive access to observe or document in situ UCH is encouraged to create public awareness, appreciation and protection of the heritage.	The OIRMP should consider how best to preserve and promote UCH sites in the region.
International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Charter on the Protection and Management of Underwater Cultural Heritage is intended to encourage the protection and management of underwater cultural heritage in inland and inshore waters, in shallow seas and in deep oceans and focuses on the specific attributes and circumstances of cultural heritage underwater.	The OIRMP should consider the protection of underwater cultural heritage.
The Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 secures the protection of wrecks in territorial waters and the sites of such wrecks, from interference by unauthorised persons; and for connected purposes.	The OIRMP should consider the protection of underwater wrecks.
Marine Protected Areas in the Seas around Scotland: Guidelines on the selection, designation and management of Historic Marine Protected Areas (HMPAs). This guidance note sets out how Historic Environment Scotland will work with the Scottish Government to apply powers under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 to select, designate and manage HMPAs, a designation to help celebrate and protect evidence of outstanding marine cultural heritage that survives in the coasts and seas around Scotland.	The OIRMP should include policy for the protection of HMPAs in the region.
The Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site Management Plan 2014 – 2019 has been developed by various partners and provides a framework document for how the Site will be managed over the next five years by identifying a series of key issues and devising specific objectives or actions to address these issues. This plan is	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
currently under review and emerging changes to its vision, objectives and actions will be taken into account where possible.	The Neolithic village of Skara Brae is one of the monuments of the WHS and occupies a coastal location at Bay of Skail. Coastal erosion is a significant issue at this site. The policies of the OIRMP should take full account of the effects of marine and coastal development proposals on Skara Brae and its setting.
The Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site Setting Project Atkins. Ltd 2008 was commissioned by Historic Scotland to provide an objective description of the setting of the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site and to provide recommendations on approaches to defining any future Buffer Zone and the nature of policies that may apply to that Buffer Zone. Supports the HONO Management Plan and the Orkney Local Development Plan.	
Climate Risk Assessment for the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site describes outcomes from a workshop in Orkney, Scotland (April 2019) to apply the Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI). The CVI is a new methodology developed to rapidly assess climate impacts – both to Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the associated ‘community’ (local, domestic and international) – for all types of World Heritage properties (natural, cultural or mixed). In its first application to a cultural World Heritage property, the CVI process was undertaken for the ‘Heart of Neolithic Orkney’ (HONO).	
HUMAN HEALTH AND POPULATION	
Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015 Community Planning Partnerships, which involve a number of public bodies, have a duty to make plans for local areas which meet the needs and ambitions of local people. Community planning priorities stress the important role played by communities in shaping and making local decisions.	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The Orkney Community Plan 2023 -2030 incorporating Orkney's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan allows for providers of public services to work together with the community to plan and deliver services that will improve long term outcomes for individuals, families, and communities where inequality persists. Its strategic priorities are: • Cost of Living. • Sustainable Development. • Local Equality.	The OIRMP should be consistent with the Council Plan and Community Planning priorities.
The Council Plan 2023-2028 The Council is a leading member of The Orkney Partnership, and the Council Plan supports the strategic priorities of the Community Plan. The Council Plan focuses on growing Orkney's economy, strengthening its communities and developing local infrastructure over the next five years.	
The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, as amended establishes rights of responsible access to most land and inland water for informal recreation and includes requirement for local authorities to draw up a plan for a system of paths (core paths) to give public reasonable access throughout their area.	The OIRMP should have a policy on tourism, sport, recreation, and leisure.
The Orkney Outdoor Access Strategy (2017) was first published in 2006 and was reviewed and updated in 2016. The strategy provides a framework to guide the development and management of outdoor access throughout the islands.	
The Orkney Core Paths Plan (2018) identifies a series of paths to promote outdoor access across Orkney and sets out the right of responsible access in Scotland. It aims	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
to promoting more widespread and functional walking, cycling and riding and thereby support improved levels of physical activity.	
The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 is legislation with provision to 'island-proof' decision-making across the public sector that will ensure the interests of islanders are reflected in future legislation and policy from the very outset.	The OIRMP will be screened for Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA).
Improving Health in Scotland – the Challenge (2003). Creating Places – A policy statement on architecture and place for Scotland. Good Places Better Health (2008). Equally Well: Implementation Plan (2008) and 2010 Review Recommendations. National policy outlines the need to seek to improve health and quality of life. There is a growing recognition of an additional need to shape places which are nurturing of positive health, wellbeing and resilience.	The OIRMP may include a policy on Amenity, Well-being and Quality of Life of coastal communities and pay due regard to the six Scottish government place principles.
The national tourism strategy Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future aims to make Scotland “the world leader in 21 st century tourism” which will see “communities embrace visitors and the stories of our destinations and world-famous assets are brought to life by Scotland’s people; where strong partnerships are in play to protect and enhance our environment whilst growing social, cultural and economic wealth.” This will be achieved by focusing on four key priorities: our passionate people, our thriving places, our diverse businesses, our memorable experiences.	The OIRMP should consider a Tourism, Recreation, Sport and Leisure Policy that promotes activities that have minimal impact on the environment.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Working in concert with the national tourism strategy, A Visitor Management Strategy for Scotland (2021) seeks “to create a dynamic, forward looking and inclusive approach to Visitor Management for Scotland.” Its mission is: “through strategic leadership and by harnessing the collective skills of our partners in the private, public and third sectors we will deliver a world class approach to Visitor Management that protects our environment, respects our communities, enhances the experience of our visitors and supports a thriving tourism sector.”	
The Orkney Tourism Strategy 2020-2025: A strategy for sustainable tourism seeks to establish Orkney as “a world-class sustainable destination enriching the lives of its people and visitors,” pursuing the following objectives: (1) increasing economic prosperity of the islands; (2) extending the visitor season and increasing visitor spend; (3) sustainably managing visitor numbers to protect the quality of experience, the key sites and routes to the sites, for visitors and local residents; (4) enhancing the islands’ natural and cultural heritage; (5) conserving and people, our visitors, our businesses and our environment at the heart of tourism objectives and their delivery. These strategies reflect the changing world we live in, our new mindset and approach to how we live and work and represents a new approach, putting our communities, our dispersing the benefits of tourism throughout the whole of Orkney	
MATERIAL ASSETS – INFRASTRUCTURE	
A National Mission with Local Impact. Draft Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 The Scottish Government has taken forward the recommendations from the Infrastructure Commission on the key challenges and opportunities for infrastructure in Scotland. The emerging National Infrastructure Investment Plan sets out a new	The OIRMP should have policies that support sustainable development and use.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
approach to investment decision making and identifies various priorities around promoting a whole-life approach to asset management, with a particular focus on supporting net-zero objectives driven by Climate Change legislation. The draft Infrastructure Investment Plan will focus on three core strategic themes for guiding investment decisions in Scotland: • Enabling the transition to net zero. Emissions and environmental sustainability. • Driving inclusive growth. • Building resilient and sustainable places.	
The Orkney Harbours Masterplan Phase 1 is an ambitious blueprint that provides a framework for the first phase of future port and harbour development in Orkney.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to the Masterplan.
MATERIAL ASSETS - ENERGY	
The Electricity Act 1989 provides the legislative background within which the energy sector functions and sets out the framework within which applications for marine energy development should seek consent. Under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (Requirements for Consent of Offshore Generating Stations) (Scotland) Order 2002, consent is required for electricity generation schemes with a capacity over 1MW.	The OIRMP should ensure compliance with the Electricity Act.
The Future of Energy in Scotland: Scottish Energy Strategy (2017) sets two targets for the Scottish energy system by 2030: • The equivalent of 50% of the energy for Scotland's heat, transport and electricity consumption to be supplied by renewable sources.	The OIRMP should include policy for renewable energy development and should seek to ensure an area's full potential for electricity and heat from

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
• An increase by 30% in the productivity of energy use across the Scottish economy. Climate Change Plan: third report on proposals and policies 2018-2032 (RPP3) presented proposals and policies to meet Scotland's annual emissions reduction targets to 2032 through a sectoral approach. The seven sectors are: electricity; buildings; transport; industry; waste; land use; land use change and forestry (LULUCF); and agriculture.	renewable sources is achieved, in line with national climate change targets, giving due regard to relevant environmental, community and cumulative impact considerations.
Securing a green recovery on a path to net zero: climate change plan 2018-2032 – an update (Scottish Government) sets new targets to end Scotland's contribution to climate change by 2045, with commitments to reduce emissions by 75% by 2030 and to net zero by 2045. It sets out the Scottish Government's approach to delivering a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.	It should include policy for types of development that are compatible with delivering a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind Energy sets out the sites to be offered via the ScotWind offshore wind leasing round – and a finalised Offshore Wind Policy statement, which sets out the Scottish Government's ambitions for the future of offshore wind in Scotland. nd the Draft Sectoral Marine Plans for Wind Wave and Tidal - 2013 identified potential future options for commercial scale offshore wind energy developments. These draft plans were never formally adopted by Scottish Ministers but the draft options were included in the National Marine Plan and are retained on Marine Directorate Maps for reference.	The OIRMP should take account of areas identified for the development of wind, wave and tidal energy generation.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
National Renewables Infrastructure Plan (N-RIP and N-RIP2) aims to assist the development of a globally competitive offshore renewables industry in Scotland through the creation of infrastructure to support largescale manufacturing, assembly, deployment and operations, as well as maintenance of offshore renewable energy devices.	The OIRMP should pay due regard to N-RIP and N-RIP2 when guiding the sustainable development of the marine environment.
MATERIAL ASSETS - WASTE	
Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010) seeks to achieve a zero waste Scotland, where we make the most efficient use of resources by minimising Scotland's demand on primary resources, and maximising the reuse, recycling and recovery of resources instead of treating them as waste.	Consider the role of the OIRMP in waste prevention and management.
Scotland: Making Things Last – a Circular Economy Strategy (2016) was developed to move the country towards a more circular economy, aligning its economic and environmental objectives. It aims to bring together business sectors and individuals to jointly work towards that goal.	
Orkney and Shetland Area Waste Plan (2003) was developed through the joint efforts of Orkney and Shetland Waste Strategy Area Groups (WSAG) to provide a strategic framework for improved waste management across the two local authority areas. The key aim of the OIRMP is to: “Contribute to the sustainable development of the Orkney and Shetland Area by developing waste management systems that will control waste generation, reduce the environmental impacts of waste production, improve resource efficiency, stimulate investment and maximise the economic opportunities arising from waste.”	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland (2022) aims to develop current and future measures to reduce litter entering the marine and coastal environment.	The OIRMP should have a policy on marine litter and waste.
MATERIAL ASSETS - AQUACULTURE	
EC Directive (2006/88/EC) Concerning the Placing on the Market of Aquaculture Animals and Products covers the placing on the market of community aquaculture animals and aquaculture products either for breeding purposes or human consumption which must satisfy general health requirements, regarding transference of diseases, introduction of exotic diseases, processing/handling and transport/storage of aquaculture animals.	The OIRMP should now consider how it can support the sustainable development of aquaculture.
The Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013 seeks to ensure that farmed and wild fisheries - and their interactions with each other - continue to be managed effectively, maximising their combined contribution to supporting sustainable economic growth with due regard to the wider marine environment.	The OIRMP should promote aquaculture which is appropriately sited and does not cause adverse impact on wild fish.
A Fresh Start, the renewed Strategic Framework for Scottish Aquaculture' was launched at a Scottish Parliamentary debate on 21 May 2009. It is based on six themes: • healthier fish and shellfish • improved systems for licensing aquaculture developments • improved containment • better marketing and improved image • improved access to finance • Shellfish Forum	The OIRMP should promote a sustainable aquaculture industry with good stewardship.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The framework sets out plans for a re-focused Ministerial Group on Aquaculture (MGA) to oversee the work of six working groups working on critical themes for the industry.	
Aquaculture Growth to 2030 – a Strategic Plan for farming Scotland's seas notes the priorities for the sector include: • industry leadership and ambition • enabling and proportionate regulation • accelerating innovation • skills development • finance • infrastructure Delivering Planning Reform for Aquaculture 2 (2016) sets out how the aquaculture industry, statutory consultees, and the planning authorities continue to work together to refine the planning system for aquaculture. The benefits as it relates to marine planning include up-to-date development plans which provide the industry and communities with greater certainty – particularly for new and previously unused sites	The OIRMP should consider how it can provide planning certainty for aquaculture by providing a clear development steer.
Locational Guidelines for the Authorisation of Marine Fish Farms in Scottish waters. Scottish Government (updated quarterly) provide guidance on the factors to be taken into account when considering proposals for new marine fish farms or modifications to existing operations.	
The Town and Country Planning (Marine Fish Farming) (Scotland) Order, 2007 applies to marine fish farms which will now be subject to statutory planning controls, for the preparation of a development plan in the area for marine fish farms and also for the purposes of preparing a National Park Plan. It designates marine planning zones for relevant planning authorities for marine fish farming and introduces transitional	The OIRMP should consider how it can support the sustainable development of aquaculture in Orkney waters.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
arrangements where an application for a Works License has not been determined before planning controls have come into force.	
Circular SEDD 1/2007: Planning Controls for marine Fish Farming explains and gives guidance to planning officers, developers, communities and regulators on the provisions contained in the following Acts, Regulations and Order which pertain specifically to marine fish farming and which come into force on the relevant dates around April 2007. • Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003. • Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. • Town and Country Planning (Marine Fish Farming) (Scotland) Order 2007. • Town and Country Planning (Prescribed Date) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. • Town and Country Planning (Marine Fish Farming) (Scotland) Regulations 2007 (amended 2012).	The OIRMP should consider how it can support sustainable aquaculture and promote understanding of relevant legislation.
The Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation Code of Good Practice is the entry point for membership of Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation. The CoGP was reviewed and revised by a CoGP Working Group. It sets out the standards that farmers must demonstrate. Compliance with the Code is independently audited.	The OIRMP should consider how it can support and promote compliance to the Code of Good practice.
The Association of Scottish Shellfish Growers Code of Good Practice targets the overall activities of shellfish growers with the aim that growers can produce a superior quality product, maintain a high standard of shellfish health and meet or exceed hygiene regulations, whilst minimising their impact of their activities on the natural environment and ensuring that they are managed in a manner that is in harmony with the needs of other marine and shoreline users.	
Statutory Instrument 1998 No. 994. The Food Safety (Fishery Products and Live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998 designates areas which are suitable or prohibited for the production or collection of live shellfish. It also covers the	The OIRMP should consider how it can support high standards of water quality

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
transportation and storage of live shellfish after dispatch. In the UK, the Shellfish Hygiene Directive and relevant Regulations are the responsibility of the Food Standards Agency (FSA). This includes responsibility for the designation of harvesting areas, setting standards and reporting the classification of harvesting areas according to the presence of faecal indicator organisms	to promote the safe production of shellfish.
MATERIAL ASSETS: FISHERIES	
The Inshore Fishing (Scotland) Act 1984 (as amended) regulates fishing in inshore waters by way of prohibiting combinations of the following: • all fishing for sea fish • fishing for a specified description of sea fish • fishing by a specified method • fishing from a specified description of fishing boat • fishing from or by means of any vehicle, or any vehicle of a specific description • fishing by means of a specified description of equipment.	The OIRMP provides spatial information on important fishing grounds as well as policies to safeguard fishing opportunities.
The Sea Fisheries (Shellfish) Act 1967 (as amended) has been amended many times. From the mid-nineties regulating orders under this Act were considered as a means of enabling more local, area management of inshore shellfish fisheries. Several Orders also under this Act have been used specifically for the localised cultivation of shellfish.	The OIRMP provides spatial information on important fishing grounds as well as policies to safeguard fishing opportunities.
The Scottish Inshore Fisheries Strategy (2015) sets out a vision to support the development of a more sustainable, profitable and well-managed inshore fisheries sector in Scotland. The 2015 inshore strategy will therefore focus on: • improving the evidence base on which fisheries management decisions are made	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
- streamlining fisheries governance, and promoting stakeholder participation - embedding inshore fisheries management into wider marine planning.	
The Sea Fish (Conservation) Act 1967 (as amended) relates to the licensing of fishing boats and places restrictions on time spent at sea. The Act also regulates size limits for fish, net size and gear type	The OIRMP supports the local management of sustainable fisheries
MATERIAL ASSETS: SHIPPING, PORTS AND TRANSPORT	
The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) is a specialised UN agency with responsibility for the safety of international shipping and the prevention of pollution from ships. Its protocols include: - The international convention on the control of harmful anti-fouling systems on ships. - The international convention for the control and management of ships ballast water and sediments. - The convention of the prevention of pollution from ships (MARPOL 73/78).	The IMO Conventions must be considered by the OIRMP to ensure it is compliant with national legislation, and in relation to management issues, development opportunities and oil spill contingency planning.
The Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention 1974 as amended includes provisions for navigation and pollution prevention. It also includes the International Ship and Port facility Security Code (ISPS), the Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships and the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) (1972).	The OIRMP must be compliant with SOLAS requirements relating to navigation.
Department of Transport. National Policy Statement for Ports 2012 is part of the system established under the 2008 Act to deal with nationally significant infrastructure proposals. It is a National Policy Statement (NPS) and provides the framework for decisions on proposals for new port development. While the NPS covers England and	Consider how the OIRMP can support an integrated transport policy for the Orkney Islands.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Wales, statistical material, including forecasts of port freight traffic, covers Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as England and Wales, and helps to inform ports policy there.	
The National Transport Strategy 2 (2020) sets out an ambitious vision for Scotland's transport system for the next 20 years. The vision is underpinned by four priorities: Reduces Inequalities; Takes Climate Action; Helps Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth; and Improves our Health and Wellbeing.	The OIRMP should be consistent with both the national and local transport strategies and should consider policies that promote the use of 'greener' transport, e.g., hydrogen ferries.
The Orkney Local Transport Strategy, OLC, (2007-2010) seeks to "promote, encourage and deliver an effective and efficient transportation network that supports the economic vitality, community well-being and environmental integrity of all of Orkney", through focusing on six objectives: • Ensuring that travel opportunities meet the needs of the whole community. • Integrating various means of travel around Orkney. • Promoting accessibility for all. • Increasing levels of active travel. • Making travel safer. • Reducing traffic in sensitive areas.	The Orkney Local Transport Strategy 2024-2044 was adopted in 2024.
PLANNING	
Under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 permission is required from the local authority for coastal developments (piers, jetties, slipways, marinas etc.) that are located above the level of Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS), and also for fish farm developments.	The policies of the OIRMP should align with those of the Orkney Local Development Plan.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The Planning Etc, (Scotland) Act 2006 establishes the NPF, a strategy for Scotland's spatial development with the objective of contributing to sustainable development. It includes management development and planning permission for marine fish farms.	Consider how the OIRMP can guide sustainable development.
Planning Circular: The relationship between the statutory land use planning system and marine planning and licensing (2013) explores the linkages between the marine and terrestrial planning systems and provides guidance about joint working.	The OIRMP should integrate land and marine planning.
National Planning Framework 4 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) provides a long-term spatial plan for Scotland that sets out where development and infrastructure is needed to support sustainable and inclusive growth. It guides spatial development, sets out national policies, designates national developments and reflects regional spatial priorities.	The OIRMP development process has considered NPF4 from the outset to ensure effective integration.
Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (ORSS) (indicative at this stage) Following the publication of NPF4 in 2022 and the adoption of statutory guidance by the Scottish Government, an Orkney's Regional Spatial Strategy (ORSS) will be prepared. The ORSS will identify the strategic priorities for development planning in Orkney over the next 25 years and beyond to 2050. The key strategic developments necessary to deliver these priorities will be identified alongside the outcomes to which they will contribute. The Regional Spatial Strategy will not be part of the "development plan" however the preparation of the NPF and Local Development Plans is to "have regard to" an adopted Regional Spatial Strategy.	The OIRMP is being developed alongside the indicative ORSS to ensure effective integration.
The Orkney Local Development Plan 2017 seeks to ensure that effective planning policies are in place to strengthen and support Orkney's communities by enabling those developments which will have a positive and sustainable socio-economic impact, and utilise locally-available resources, whilst striving to preserve and enhance the rich	The OIRMP should be consistent with the policies and proposals of the Orkney LDP.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
natural and cultural heritage assets upon which Orkney's economy and society depends.	
Sustainable Development	
A key principle of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, Earth Summit) , the ' Rio Declaration ' (1992) produced conventions dealing with climate change, biodiversity, forestry and recommended a list of development practices called Agenda 21. It gave the concept of sustainable development to be combined economic growth with ecological responsibility.	Ensuring that future development is sustainable should be a key principle of the OIRMP.
The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) (2002) sought to focus the world's attention and direct action toward meeting difficult challenges, including improving people's lives and conserving our natural resources in a world that is growing in population, with ever-increasing demands for food, water, shelter, sanitation, energy, health services and economic security.	
Securing the Future – UK Government sustainable development strategy (2005) sets out five principles for sustainable development and shared priorities agreed across the UK, including the Devolved Administrations: • living within environmental limits, • ensuring a strong, healthy, and just society, • using sound science responsibly, • promoting good governance • achieving a sustainable economy.	

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
Choosing Our Future: Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy (2005) sets out action which would be taken in Scotland to turn the shared priorities of the UK framework for sustainable development into action.	
Thematic Strategy on the Protection and Conservation of the Marine Environment (2002) Scottish Government provides strategic direction for the protection and conservation of the marine environment.	The OIRMP should consider the strategy in the context of protection of the water environment.
Seas the Opportunity: A Strategy for the Long-term Sustainability of Scotland's Coasts and Seas. Scottish Government (2005) is founded on the same five sustainable development guiding principles as the Securing the Future – UK Government sustainable development strategy (2005). It specifically states that these will be delivered through developing the concept of Marine Spatial Planning.	The OIRMP should adopt the guiding principles of the Strategy.
In September 2015, the 193 countries of the United Nations General Assembly, including the United Kingdom, adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which included 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focused on the three key dimensions of sustainability: economic prosperity, social equity and the environment. The Scottish Government signed up to deliver the UNSDGs in 2015.	Local government has been identified as being best-placed to link the global goals with local communities. The key goals that can be supported through coastal and marine planning should be identified to consider alignment with regional marine planning objectives and policies.
Europe 2020 (2010) is a European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth which sought to enable Europe to emerge stronger from the financial crisis of 2008. The Commission proposed five measurable EU targets for 2020 that would steer the process and be translated into national targets: for employment; for research and innovation; for climate change and energy; for education; and for combating poverty.	Ensuring that future development is sustainable should be a key principle of the OIRMP.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
The Environment Strategy for Scotland: vision and outcomes. (2020) creates an overarching framework for Scotland's existing environmental strategies and plans, including the Climate Change Plan. These will be reviewed over time, to reflect international targets and other policy developments. The Strategy will sit alongside existing high-level Scottish Government policy frameworks, including Scotland's Economic Strategy, the Fairer Scotland Action Plan, the National Transport Strategy and the NPF.	The OIRMP should contribute to the vision of the Environment Strategy for Scotland.
UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Bill 2020 aims to make sure that Scottish law can continue to align with EU law after 31 December 2020. It sets up a new organisation called Environmental Standards Scotland which will be responsible for making sure that: • public bodies in Scotland apply environmental law, and • environmental law in Scotland is effective in protecting the environment and our wellbeing.	The OIRMP should be consistent with the requirements of the Continuity Bill.
The Scottish Government has developed a Blue Economy Action Plan, a Blue Economy Vision, and Delivering Scotland's Blue economy approach to have a programme of collaborative projects across the public sector, Scotland's science base, marine industries and the marine environmental sector. The OIRMP sets out clear actions to strengthen the resilience of Scotland's marine industries ranging from renewable energy to fisheries (and the marine science, research and innovation which underpin them) and to support coastal communities, recognising the vital importance to our marine economy of the abundant natural capital in Scotland's seas and rivers.	The OIRMP pays due regard to the aims and objectives of the Blue Economy Action Plan and Blue Economy Vision.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
CROSS SECTORAL PPS	
The Aarhus Convention (1998) establishes a number of rights of members of the public (individuals and their associations) regarding the environment: access to environmental information; public participation in environmental decision making; and access to justice. The Convention is not only an environmental agreement; it is also a Convention about government accountability, transparency and responsiveness.	The OIRMP should consider how best to ensure inclusivity and transparency in the development and dissemination of the OIRMP.
The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC aims to ensure that environmental consequences of certain plans, programmes and policies are identified and assessed during their preparation and before their adoption. The process contributes to more transparent planning by involving the public and by integrating environmental considerations, helping to achieve the goal of sustainable development.	The OIRMP is a type of plan which qualifies for strategic environmental assessment (SEA).
The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 transposes the SEA Directive into Scottish legislation. It requires the preparation of an environmental report and a period of public consultation. The environmental report and the result of the consultation exercise must be taken into account in decision making.	The OIRMP should be informed by the SEA and responses to public consultation on the Environmental Report.
The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (85/337/EEC) amended (97/11/EC) requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and a public consultation document, an Environmental Statement (ES), to be submitted for certain projects likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The provisions of the EIA Directive have been transposed in part into the following Scottish legislation:	The OIRMP should consider how it can best provide baseline information to inform site selection for development and EIA. It should also consider how best it can inform an effective EIA using marine spatial planning.

Name of PPS, Convention, Treaty or Directive and their environmental objectives.	Implication for, and/or relationship with, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.
• The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2017. • The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. • The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2017.	

Appendix B – Environmental Baseline Report

To enable the current state of environment features of Orkney to be assessed, a search has been carried out of a range of baseline data which are relevant to the SEA issues considered in this Environmental Report. A summary is produced in this section which provides a brief description of the key environmental characteristics of Orkney. This allows any existing problems to be identified and provides the benchmark against which the forecast and monitored levels of environmental effects will be evaluated. The following features of the environment are examined:

1. Climatic effects
2. Biodiversity, fauna and flora
3. Water
4. Coastal processes/Benthic sediments/Soils
5. Geology
6. Landscape
7. Cultural heritage
8. Population and human health
9. Material assets

This report provides a baseline under each of these features, together with the relevant Strategic Environmental Assessment objectives which have been identified as criteria against which to assess the possible environmental effects of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan. Each topic will include a section on the background information, current status and the environmental issues linked to the policies and text in the OIRMP.

Baseline Overview of Orkney

Number of islands:	68+
Number of inhabited islands:	16
Total (land) area of the Orkney Islands:	990 km ²
Total length of coastline:	over 980 km
Dimensions:	Approximately 85 km north to south and 37 km east to west
Outlying Island with highest population:	Westray
Smallest permanently inhabited island:	Papa Stronsay
Longitude: (Kirkwall)	3° W
Latitude: (Kirkwall)	59°N
Population of Orkney ¹³	21,961 (2022 census)

¹³ Orkney Community Planning Partnership. Population growth and decline in Orkney (2025).
<https://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/communityplanning/documents/briefing-population-growth-and-decline-in-orkney-updated-6-january-2025.pdf>

Environmental Baseline, Issues and Objectives by Topic

1. Climatic Factors

SEA objectives
Contribute to national net zero targets to address the cause of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
Support the transformational change to a low carbon economy, consistent with national objectives and targets.
Address Orkney's vulnerability and resilience to the likely effects of climate change.

1.1 Background: The Enhanced Greenhouse Effect

Increasing atmospheric levels of certain gases are causing significant changes to global climates by reducing the rate of radiative heat loss and allowing temperatures around the world to rise. This is described as the enhanced greenhouse effect.

The United Nations Convention on Climate Change was established in 1992 as an international framework to agree strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

1.2 Current Status

[A State of the Environment Report: Climate](#) (2014) describes the changes in weather patterns experienced in Scotland over the last century and notes that observed recent climate trends over the period 1961-2011 show the mean annual temperature across Scotland has increased by 1.3 °C.

The Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, which amends the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, sets targets to reduce Scotland's emissions of all greenhouse gases to net-zero by 2045 at the latest, with interim targets for reductions of at least 56% by 2020, 75% by 2030, and 90% by 2040.

Six gases are considered to contribute towards the greenhouse effect, and of these, carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the most abundant in the earth's atmosphere. CO₂ estimates are monitored on an annual basis and data supporting CO₂ emissions within the scope of Local Authorities are reported for each local authority area in the United Kingdom. The most recent emissions data for Orkney is set out in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Local authority CO₂ estimates for Orkney (2005 – 2019) ¹⁴

Year	Industry	Commerce	Public sector	Domestic	Transport	LULUCF* net emissions	Total	Population (000s mid-year estimate)	Per capita emissions (t)
		Kt CO ₂							
2005	64.7	19.2	9.7	77.5	29.0	155.3	355.3	20.1	17.7
2006	63.1	21.9	8.6	82.0	30.0	153.0	358.6	20.3	17.6
2007	66.7	23.4	8.6	80.1	30.6	150.8	360.2	20.6	17.5
2008	55.5	20.0	7.5	80.8	30.0	148.8	342.6	20.7	16.5
2009	53.7	17.7	6.1	73.3	29.5	146.8	327.2	20.9	15.6
2010	57.1	22.1	6.9	78.9	29.4	145.4	339.8	21.2	16.0
2011	55.5	19.0	7.1	70.9	28.7	144.0	325.3	21.4	15.2
2012	54.2	20.7	6.2	72.7	28.0	142.7	324.6	21.5	15.1
2013	54.0	20.0	5.6	67.1	28.5	141.5	316.7	21.6	14.7
2014	57.9	16.9	5.6	59.4	29.6	140.4	309.8	21.6	14.4
2015	53.4	14.7	4.1	54.6	30.7	139.4	296.8	21.7	13.7
2016	53.6	11.1	3.2	49.2	32.1	138.3	287.6	21.9	13.2
2017	53.6	9.7	2.9	45.3	32.6	137.4	281.4	22.0	12.8
2018	57.3	9.6	2.8	44.2	31.8	136.5	282.2	22.2	12.7
2019	57.0	8.9	2.6	42.0	31.1	135.6	277.2	22.3	12.4

*LULUCF = Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry

Table 1.1 indicates that, although there have been minor increases in some years, most notably in 2010, per capita emissions figures for Orkney over this period show an overall decrease from 17.7 to 12.4 tonnes.

¹⁴ <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/723C.243d-2f1a-4d27-8B.61-cdb93e5B.10ff/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2019>

1.3 Environmental Issues: Likely Effects of Climate Change in Orkney

Recorded weather data confirms that temperatures have increased in the UK over recent decades, but not at the same rate in all regions. Information on climate trends for Scotland published by SNIFFER shows that between 1961 to 2004 annual average temperatures in the north of Scotland showed an upward trend.

Correspondingly, the annual heating degree days (an indicator of how much heat energy households use and represents the energy needed to keep a building at a constant temperature) have significantly reduced by 9% over the same period and may reduce even further in the future; the possible reduction by the 2080s is 50% to 300% greater than that experienced so far¹⁵.

Flooding risk due to sea level rise is likely to increase, which will put some existing vulnerable areas under greater stress. Coastal flooding can arise from a combination of factors including high tides, wind and wave exposure and storm surge. Such events are predicted to be further exacerbated by increases in sea level and storm conditions attributed to climate change. The upper range for the latest UK sea-level rise projections is higher than previous estimates, implying increased coastal-flood risk. The likelihood of compound effects from tidal flooding and extreme rainfall is increasing, which can greatly exacerbate flood impacts¹⁶.

The Orkney Flood Risk Management Plan identifies that the main source of flooding in Orkney is from the coast, which accounts for approximately 92% of the annual average damage¹⁷. The Flood Risk Management Plan considers the County's priorities and actions to avoid and reduce the risk of flooding. There are eight Potentially Vulnerable Areas across Orkney; the flood risk management plan provides detail on how flood risk is managed and minimised in these areas. The eight vulnerable areas shown include all localities at risk from flooding, some from river flooding rather than coastal flooding.

As detailed in the State of the Environment Assessment (SoEA)¹⁸, Orkney has significant potential for renewable energy development in wind, wave and tidal resources that can support climate change targets. The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should seek to support climate change mitigation and adaptation measures and support a transition to renewable energy sources.

¹⁵ <https://verture.org.uk/>

¹⁶ <http://www.mccip.org.uk/impacts-report-cards/full-report-cards/2020/>

¹⁷ <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/development-planning-land/local-flood-risk-management-plan/>

¹⁸ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA](#)

2. Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

SEA objectives
Conserve, and where appropriate enhance, protected sites and species.
Safeguard valuable habitat from loss or damage as a result of development, activities and use.
Protect and enhance coastal and marine biodiversity and the health of the natural environment.
Maintain healthy ecosystems and work with the natural processes which provide important services to communities, including maintaining, and where appropriate enhancing, natural capital and ecosystem services.

During 2020 OIC published its SoEA, a baseline assessment of the Orkney Islands Marine Region. The following paragraphs summarise Section 5 Biodiversity of the Assessment, which provides an overview of the marine biodiversity of Orkney.

2.1 Background: Designated Sites

Biodiversity encompasses the whole variety of life on Earth. It is important for our health and wellbeing, and for the ecosystem services that it provides. The Orkney Islands are particularly valued for their wildlife and several sites are designated for conservation.

- **European sites** were originally designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives. They continue to be protected under domestic law as European sites and represent the very best of Scotland's nature and are internationally important areas for threatened habitats and species. The network includes two types of protected area:
 - o **Special Areas for Conservation (SAC)** are classified under the Habitats Directive for the protection of rare, endangered, or vulnerable natural habitats and species of plants or animals (other than birds). These are the 189 habitats listed in Annex 1 and the 788 species listed in Annex 11 of the Habitats Directive. There are six SACs in Orkney.
 - o **Special Protection Areas** are classified under the Birds Directive and are areas which support rare, vulnerable, and regularly occurring migratory species which are listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive. SPAs are intended to safeguard the habitats of these species and to protect the birds from significant disturbance. There are 15 SPAs in Orkney, including two that are entirely marine.
- **Ramsar sites** are classified under the Convention on Wetlands of Significant Importance and are internationally important wetland sites protecting wildfowl habitat. Orkney has only one Ramsar site – the East Sanday coast.

- **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** and designated on account of their plants, animals, or habitats; their rocks or landforms; or a combination of such natural features. They form a network of the best examples of terrestrial natural features throughout Scotland and support a wider network across Great Britain and the European Union. SSSIs are protected under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. There are 36 SSSIs in Orkney but many of these are also designated as SPAs or SACs.
- **Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas (NCMPA)** are designated to protect a wide range of habitats, species, geology and undersea landforms in Scottish Waters. There are three NCMPAs in Orkney waters.
- **Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS)** have been identified by OIC in the Local Development Plan 2017. They are regarded as being worthy of protection for their ornithological, botanical or geological/geomorphological interest. Orkney has over 240 LNCS.
- **Local Nature Reserves** are places with special local natural interest, set up to protect nature and for people to enjoy and appreciate. Orkney has two LNRs - one at Mull Head in Deerness and another at Happy Valley in Stenness.

Table 2.1 which is presented as **Appendix B.1** to this baseline, provides a summary of Orkney's national and international sites, along with the reasons for their designation (qualifying features) and the current condition status of each qualifying feature.

The distribution and extent of these sites is illustrated in **Appendix D Orkney's Nationally and Internationally Designated Natural Heritage Sites**.

2.2 Locally identified sites

Outwith the statutorily designated sites, the Local Nature Conservation Sites are areas of land and water that are recognised as having high biodiversity value and therefore worthy of protection, albeit at a lower level than that afforded to national and international sites. They contain valuable natural habitats which support a wide range of Orkney's wildlife and include coastal and marine habitats such as intertidal mudflats, saline lagoons, coastal saltmarsh, coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle. Further information on Orkney's LNCSs may be accessed online at <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=273d8d6359ae451cbe16f3a867297276>

Protected Species

Orkney's marine and coastal environments host a number of species which are protected through specific legislation:

Eurasian otter and all cetacean species (whales, dolphins, and porpoises) are afforded a strict level of protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended in Scotland). They are listed in Schedule 2 of the Regulations, and commonly known as European Protected Species. Information on activities that constitute an offence against EPS may be accessed on the NatureScot website at <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and->

[species/protected-species/legal-framework/habitats-directive-and-habitats-regulations/european-protected](#)

Two species of seal are native to Orkney waters – the grey seal and the harbour seal. The main legislation that protects seals in Scottish waters is the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. This Act also provides for Scottish Ministers to designate Seal Conservation Areas. Orkney is one of five Seal Conservation Areas in Scotland.

The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) also prohibit certain methods of catching or killing seals.

Under the Protection of Seals (Designation of Haul-Out Sites) (Scotland) Order 2014 certain coastal areas are designated as seal haul-outs and grey seal pupping areas. Information on their locations may be accessed from Marine Directorate's NMP interactive map at <https://marinescotland.atkinsgeospatial.com/nmpi/>.

Priority Marine Features

Priority Marine Features (PMFs) are habitats and species that are considered to be marine nature conservation priorities in Scottish waters. Orkney's PMFs include benthic habitats such as blue mussel beds and mudflats and species with low or limited mobility including Fan mussel and Ocean quahog as well as fully mobile species such as sea trout and sand eel. Information on the presence of certain PMFs in Orkney waters may be accessed from Marine Directorate's NMP interactive map at <https://marinescotland.atkinsgeospatial.com/nmpi/>.

The full list of PMFs found in Orkney is included as **Appendix B.2: List of Priority Marine Features recorded within 12 nm of Orkney**

Many these habitats and species are vulnerable to the effects of human activities, including various types of development. Some of these interactions are described in the Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool (FeAST) is a web-based application which allows users to investigate the sensitivity of marine features and may be accessed at <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/priority-marine-features-scotlands-seas/feature-activity-sensitivity-tool-feast>

2.3 Environmental Issues

Continuing decline in biodiversity remains a key concern; including decline of seabird species, harbour seals. Climate change, abrasion, smothering, collision, entanglement and pollution are all pressures identified in the SoEA¹⁹. The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should seek to protect and improve the quality and overall status of biodiversity in and around Orkney, including, support for biodiversity enhancement.

¹⁹ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA](#)

3. Water

SEA Objectives

Promote the protection and improvement of the water environment, including burns, lochs, estuaries, wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater.

3.1 The water environment of Orkney

Orkney has a diverse freshwater and marine water environment. Its catchment areas provide water supplies for people, community services and industry in the islands and the marine environment supports both the shellfish fishing industry and aquaculture. Freshwater watercourses in Orkney generally include freshwater lochs and lochans, streams and drainage ditches, in addition considerable areas of the islands are described as Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GDTE) which are waterlogged with areas of standing water for much of the year these. GDTEs are wetlands which critically depend on groundwater flows and/or chemistries²⁰ and include dune slack, fen, wetland, peat bog, reedbed, saltmarsh, springs, flushes and seepages, swamp, wet grassland, wet heath, wet machair and wet woodland²¹. In the marine environment there are coastal waters and saline lagoons.

Foul water treatment

Scottish Water also has responsibility for waste-water and, in recent years has upgraded sewerage treatment facilities at a number of locations including: Head of Work, which serves the town of Kirkwall; The Bu, which serves the town of Stromness; St Margaret's Hope; Burray; Holm; Stenness; Dounby; Evie; Finstown, Sanday and Westray. However, in several rural settlements foul water drainage facilities are at, or close to, capacity. In others there is no strategic provision for foul water drainage and properties are reliant on private systems, e.g., septic tanks and soakaways. Where a number of houses are in close proximity to each other this can lead to a proliferation of septic tank systems and a significant risk of water pollution, especially during the wetter months when percolation rates within the soil are poor. This has been a particular problem in certain areas and SEPA has designated the following Planning Consultation Areas where proliferation of private waste water systems has led to a cumulative impact on the water environment:

- Pierowall, Westray.
- Whitehall, Stronsay.
- Birsay.
- Tingwall.
- Grimeston Road, Harray.
- Houton.

²⁰Water Framework Directive UK Technical Advisory Group <http://www.wfduk.org/resources/groundwater-dependent-terrestrial-ecosystem-threshold-values>

²¹ Scotland's Environment Web

- Hatston.
- Carness.
- Berstane.
- Burray Village.
- Herston.
- Longhope.

3.2 Water quality and overall status classification in Orkney

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has primary responsibility for the water environment and, under the Water Environment (Controlled Activities Regulations) (Scotland) 2005, operates as a regulator for abstraction from and discharges to surface and ground waters. A water quality classification system allows SEPA to determine the state of the environment, highlighting areas that need particular protection, and where improvements need to be made. On an annual basis each water body is reported as high, good, moderate, poor or bad.

The overall status classification of surface water bodies describes by how much their condition ("status") differs from near natural conditions. Water bodies in a near natural condition are at high status while those whose quality has been severely damaged are at bad status.

The water quality classification looks at both biological and chemical indicators of pollution. Water bodies with low levels of pollution are classified as high or good water quality, whereas those with high levels of pollution are classified as poor or bad.

The classification system was devised following EU and UK guidance. It is underpinned by a range of biological quality elements, supported by measurements of chemistry, hydrology (changes to water levels and water flows), morphology (changes to the beds, banks and shores of water bodies) and an assessment of invasive non-native species.

The following settlements are located close to freshwater watercourses that are included in SEPA's monitoring programme:

- Burnside (Burn of Netherbrough).
- The Palace (Burn of Boardhouse).
- Lyron (Burn of Sweenalay).
- Burray Village (Burn of Sutherland).
- Stenness Village (Loch of Stenness).

The water quality and overall status classification of monitored watercourses in Orkney, based on the findings of sampling undertaken during 2013 is summarised in Appendix B.2.

3.3 Environmental Issues

As a planning authority OIC has a duty to protect and improve Scotland's water environment (The Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003).

Water quality in Orkney is generally good but locally there are waters which are polluted by waste-water, effluents and discharges from agriculture, mineral working, and other industries. The EC Water Framework Directive seeks to achieve the continuous improvement of all water bodies through the implementation of River Basin Management Frameworks. Town and country planning has a significant role to play in ensuring an appropriate distribution of land uses and protecting the environment from pollution.

The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should seek to protect and improve the quality and overall status of the water environment in and around Orkney. Sustainable solutions to waste-water treatment should be promoted.

4. Coastal processes/Benthic sediments/Soils

SEA Objectives
Adapt to the effects of coastal erosion, flooding, and wider coastal change.
Manage development that may significantly affect coastal process, thereby reducing effects on coastal and marine habitats, species and geomorphological features
Reduce the threat of contamination and seek to protect the benthic environment from damage such as erosion or scouring.

4.1 Background

The geology is predominately flagstone and sandstone deposited in Lake Orcadie, a large freshwater lake belonging to the Devonian (Old Red Sandstone) period (416 – 359 million years ago)²². Metamorphic rocks are exposed near Stromness, Yesnaby and on Graemsay, mostly consisting of granitic gneisses.

Many low lying areas in Orkney are experiencing coastal erosion, and flooding risk due to sea level rise is also likely to increase, which will put some existing vulnerable areas under greater stress. Coastal flooding can arise from a combination of factors including high tides, wind and wave exposure and storm surge. Such events are predicted to be further exacerbated by increases in sea level and storm conditions attributed to climate change. The upper range for the latest UK sea-level rise projections is higher than previous estimates, implying increased coastal-flood risk. The likelihood of compound effects from tidal flooding and extreme rainfall is increasing, which can greatly exacerbate flood impacts²³.

Benthic sediments in Orkney, which are primarily sand, mud, and gravel, support rich marine ecosystems and productive fisheries. These sediments provide important ecosystem services such as nutrient cycling and carbon storage, as well as playing a vital role for biodiversity and the health of surrounding coastal waters.

4.2 Current status

The length of the Orkney Islands coastline at Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) is 1,024 km, which makes up 5% of the Scottish coastline. Of this length, 61% (623km) has been categorised as hard, 36% (373 km) as soft and 3% (28 km) as artificial.

The surrounding seabed is composed of a rich variety of marine and coastal habitats including submerged reefs, maerl beds, sandbanks, burrowed mud, salt marshes and dune systems. The seabed is dominated by coast sediment and high energy infralittoral rock around most of the islands, with large areas of sand and muddy

²²

<http://www.landforms.eu/orkney/geology.htm#:~:text=Geology%20of%20Orkney%20The%20rocks%20of%20Orkney%20are,Sandstone%29%20period%20%28416%20%E2%80%93%20359%20million%20years%20ago%29>

²³ <http://www.mccip.org.uk/impacts-report-cards/full-report-cards/2020/>

sand to the east and west of the islands, out towards and beyond the 12 nm limit (see Figure 1).

4.3 Environmental issues

All of the economic sectors assessed within this report are likely to cause some physical disturbance to the seabed. These pressures are due to abrasion; physical disturbance of seabed; disturbance in relation to physical change to another seabed type (e.g. concrete); habitat structure changes and substratum extraction. Developments including ports and harbours, aquaculture, cable laying and marine renewable energy are likely to exert the most significant pressures.

Erosion in areas of soft coast can require the installation of built defences, altering the profile and changing the substate type. In addition, pressures from the potential effects of climate change including sea level rise and soft coast erosion.

The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should seek to protect overall status of the **physical coastal and benthic sediment in and around Orkney.**

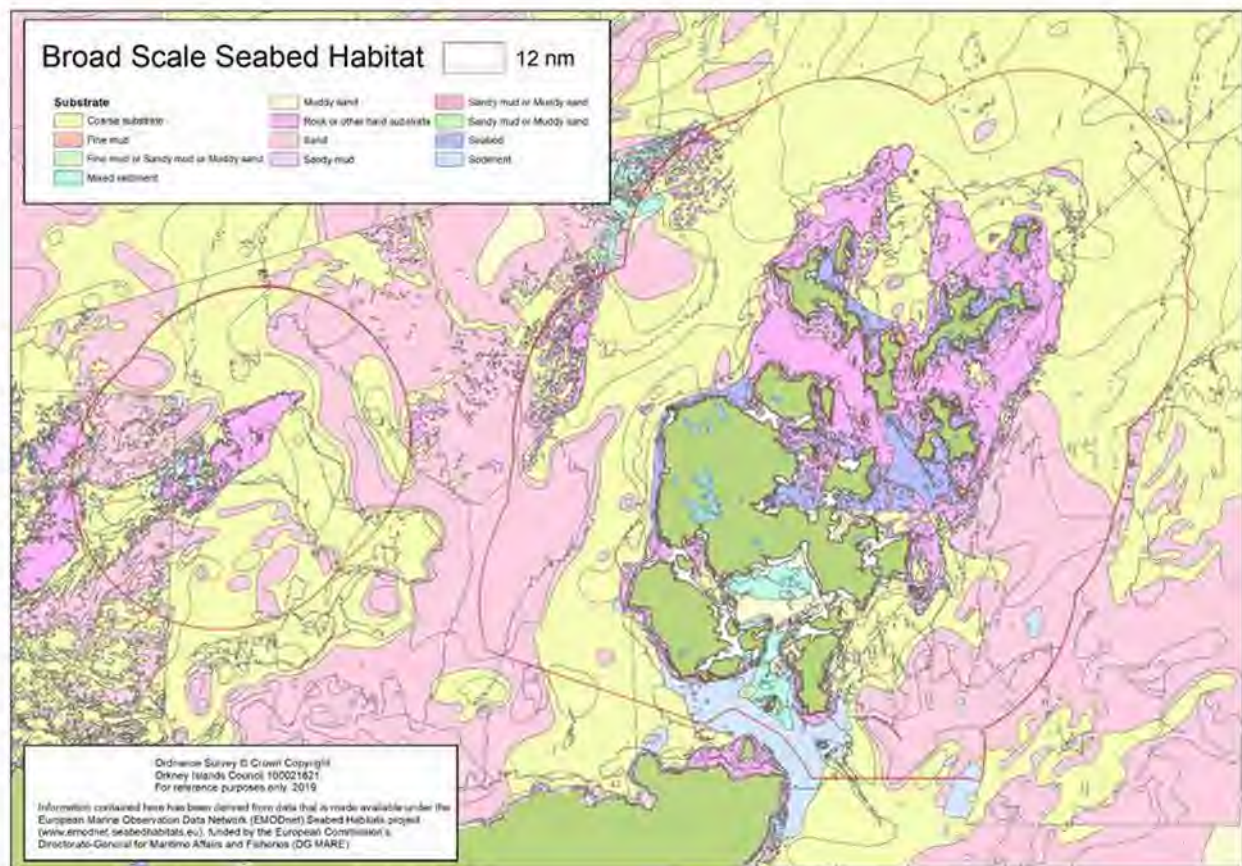


Figure 1 Seabed habitat for the Orkney Island's marine region

5. Geology

SEA Objective

Protect designated and undesignated sites which are recognised and valued for their geological or geomorphological importance.

5.1 Background: Summary of Orkney's geological history^{24,25}

Most of the rocks which make up Orkney as we know it today formed around 400 million years ago during the Devonian Period when Britain was positioned approximately 10° south of the equator and was part of a supercontinent made up of the land masses which are today North America and Northern Europe. At that time there were mountains to the north-west and the open Devonian Sea covered the area that is now southwest England. Between the mountains and the sea was a vast desert plain within which a large, shallow, freshwater lake occupied the topographic lowest levels. This shallow lake, known as Lake Orcadie, extended from Shetland, through Orkney, Caithness and the Moray coast and across to western Norway. It was fed by numerous rivers which flowed down from the western mountains eroding gravel sand and mud and transporting these materials into the lake where they settled out as layers on the lake bed.

The oldest rock exposed in Orkney is the Precambrian Basement Complex, examples of which outcrop around the town of Stromness and on the neighbouring island of Graemsay. These outcrops represent the tops of island hills which were surrounded by Lake Orcadie. In the warm, tropical climate evaporation rates were high and rainfall was seasonally variable, and this caused large fluctuations in the depth of the lake and the area that it covered. Mud flats on the lake margins periodically dried out before being inundated again. Evidence for this can be seen today in flagstones where mud cracks are visible which have been filled in by sand. Superimposed on this seasonal cycle were climatic patterns which varied on a much longer timescale, causing the lake to become steadily deeper and wider, at times meeting the edge of the western mountains before retreating to begin the cycle again. These cycles are easily seen in the well exposed coastal cliffs of the West Mainland where the cycle begins with a finely laminated dark grey to black muddy flagstone representing periods of greatest water depth in Lake Orcadie and ends with shallow water lake margin sediments consisting of sands, silts, and light grey muds.

At times Lake Orcadie appears to have been very productive and evidence shows that during intervening periods of drought large numbers of fish died, sinking out of the water column to the bed of the lake where they became preserved in the fine-grained muds. Remains of these fish can be seen today as fossil fragments in the flagstone strata known as the Sandwick and Rousay fish beds, which are most clearly visible at Cruaday Quarry in the parish of Sandwick. The discovery of many fossil fish during the extraction of stone for construction purposes led to designation

²⁴ Geology of Orkney. <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/>

²⁵ Orkney and Shetland a Landscape Fashioned by Geology www.snh.org.uk

of the quarry as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Some of the particularly fine specimens recovered from Cruaday are now displayed at the Fossil Centre in Burray along with fossils from other locations in the Orkney and Caithness area.

This cyclicity of lake deposition continued until Upper Devonian times when the waters of Lake Orcadie retreated so far that it became broken up into many small separate lakes in a predominantly desert landscape. This dry period is characterised by sandstones derived from deposits laid down by the large, braided rivers which continued to flow from the Western Mountains, as well as the sand dunes which migrated across the desert plains. Great thicknesses of sand and gravel were deposited and are preserved, for example, on Orkney's best known natural feature, the Old Man of Hoy, where they rest on a basal plinth of tough lavas that resist erosion by the sea.

Changes in stress within the Earth's crust during Carboniferous to Permian times led to considerable volcanic activity in the area, leaving lavas and vents filled with agglomerate and ash. Intrusive igneous dykes dating from the Younger Permian (250 million years ago) are numerous and can be seen traversing the intertidal areas of many rocky shores. A particularly clear example is found at the Point of Buckquoy in Birsay where the black basalt dyke containing vesicles (bubbles) contrasts strongly with the surrounding paler sedimentary rock.

The formation of depressions in the Earth's crust, where sediments accumulated, continued around Scotland throughout Mesozoic and up to Quaternary times. Economic quantities of oil and gas accumulated in some of these depressions or basins. By the late Permian period, stresses in the Earth's crust created the Viking Graben, a rift valley located in what was to become the North Sea. This event marked the partial break-up of the supercontinent. The rift valley filled with sediments eroded from adjacent areas, including the Orkney-Shetland region, and by early Jurassic times a link with the open sea was established.

Thick sequences of marine sediments accumulated in basins around Britain during Jurassic and Cretaceous times at this time. Tensional stresses were creating a new ocean, the Atlantic, as the supercontinent split apart. North America separated from Africa in the Jurassic (around 165 million years ago) and from Europe in the Late Cretaceous. Europe and North America gradually moved apart as volcanic eruptions added new material along the central spine of the widening ocean – the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.

The earliest stages of stretching and thinning of the Earth's crust near the margin of the emergent ocean allowed molten lava to break through the crust to form a line of volcanoes, for example those running from Skye to Arran. To the present day, we continue to move farther and farther away from America as volcanic eruptions along the Mid-Atlantic Ridge adds new ocean floor, thus forcing the continents apart.

The land mass containing Orkney continued to move northward and during the Quaternary (2.6 million years ago) its geology became heavily modified by glaciation which smoothed and rounded hills and ridges on land and excavated the major firths of Hoy Sound, Eynhallow Sound and Westray Firth. Local glaciers developed at intervals on the island of Hoy where they carved out striking corries and valleys. As the last ice sheet thinned and retreated, considerable thicknesses of glacial deposits were laid down in hollows. A coastal section at Den Wick in Deerness contains two superimposed depositions of glacial till. Likewise, cliff sections at Scara Taing in

Rousay are important for the exposure of three superimposed tills and the adjacent striated (scratched) bedrock surfaces which provide evidence of fluctuating patterns of ice flow.

Although ice has covered Orkney and Shetland many times during the last two million years and sculpted the landscape, the broad outline of the islands owes much to the action of the wind, rain and sea over the last 150 million years. The sea has cut 'geos', which are long narrow slots following faults and joints, into the cliffed coastline and also eroded 'gloups' (blow-holes), caves and natural arches. The Gloup in Deerness is probably the finest example of a blow hole to be seen in Orkney and in the island of Stronsay, a natural arch remains intact at the Vat of Kirbister. As erosion continues, the rock spanning arches protruding from the retreating cliff line often collapses, leaving vertical rock pillars as sea stacks; the most famous of these are the Old Man of Hoy and the Castle of Yesnaby, both formed of sandstone.

The power of the sea during westerly gales is vividly illustrated by the high-level storm beaches formed of large blocks of rock, which have been torn from the cliff by the waves and piled up in crescent-shaped ridges behind the cliff top. An excellent example can be seen at Sacquoy Head on Rousay, where boulders lie as much as 80 metres inland at the top of 18-metre-high sea cliffs.

A rise in sea level following the melting of the glaciers about 10,000 years ago was responsible for the drowned landscape of the inner coasts of Orkney. Flooding of the gently undulating Orkney landscape has formed broad open bays, generally backed by sand dunes. Layers of peat, some containing tree trunks and roots, occur beneath the sand and shingle of some modern beaches.

The combined forces of wave action and tidal currents are responsible for the constant reworking of seabed sediments which surround the coasts of Orkney, for example the process of long-shore drift causes sand and gravel to be transported laterally along the shoreline often forming distinctive geomorphological features including narrow spits of shingle or sand. These coastal features are known as 'ayres' in Orkney and are commonly found cutting across the seaward ends of shallow bays. In some cases, spits may partly, or completely, cut off a sheltered stretch of water from the sea to form a shallow lagoon or 'oyce', which eventually may silt up to become a stretch of fertile land. Spits can also form tombolos, joining islands to offshore isles. The island of Sanday is one of the best locations in Orkney where these and other coastal sand features can be seen.

5.2 Current Status: Sites identified for their geological/geomorphological importance

Orkney's geological history is most clearly visible and interpreted along its coastlines where the rock has been subject to sea level change, deformation, erosion and localised deposition; and also, in quarries where rock extraction has exposed a sequence of rock strata. A number of sites are designated, either nationally as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and/or Geological Conservation Review Sites; or locally as Local Nature Conservation Sites on account of their geological/geomorphological importance in an Orkney context. A full list of these sites is included in **Table 5.1**.

Table 5.1: Sites in Orkney, that are designated for their geological/geomorphological importance²⁶

SITE	Type	GEOLOGICAL/GEOMORPHOLOGICAL INTEREST
Birsay		
Point of Buckquoy	LNCS	Unique exposure demonstrates consequences of oscillation in the level of Lake Orcadie during the Devonian
Whitaloo Point	LNCS	A typical monoclinal fold in Upper Stromness Flags
Deerness		
Denwick	SSSI/GCR	Best example in Orkney of a multiple till section
Point of Ayre	GCR	Area of basaltic lava flow
Taracliff Bay – Newark Bay	GCR	Section showing transition from Rousay Flag series to Lower Eday Flag series
Mirkady Point	LNCS	Shingle spit
Eday		
Greenan Nev Coast	GCR	Exposure of Eday marls of interest in the study of Palaeo environments
Newbiggin to Neven Point	LNCS	Good section of the western limb of the Eday Syncline
South Fersness Bay	GCR	Good section of the western limb of the Eday Syncline
Evie & Rendall		
Links of Aikerness	LNCS	Outcrops of Aeolianite unique in Scotland

²⁶ <https://jncc.gov.uk/> ; also The Orkney Local Development Plan 2014 <https://jncc.gov.uk/> JNCC website; also The Orkney Local Development Plan <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/development-planning-land/orkney-local-development-plan/> 2014

SITE	Type	GEOLOGICAL/GEOMORPHOLOGICAL INTEREST
Hoy & Graemsay		
Hoy	SSSI/GCR	Geology, geomorphology, petrifying tufa springs, (Ward Hill, Enegars Corrie & Dwarfie Hamars) Exposures of the Hoy Volcanics and the Hoy Sandstone in their type area (Old Man of Hoy Coast) Silurian and Devonian volcanic rocks (Too of the Head)
Melsetter Coast section, Hoy	LNCS	Outcrops of the Hoy Lavas.
Muckle Head and Selwick	SSSI/GCR	Geological site due to locally important raised beach deposits.
North Coast of Graemsay	LNCS	Exposure of the lower section of the Stromness Flags and crystalline basement
Sanday		
Central Sanday	SSSI/GCR	Machair and other blown sand and shingle landforms unique in North Scotland.
Doun Helzie	LNCS	Beach Dune and Machair association.
Hegglie Ber	LNCS	Coarse pebbly and conglomeratic facies of Lower Eday Sandstone.
Scar*	LNCS	<i>Glacial erratic.</i>
Sandwick		
Bay of Skail	SSSI/GCR	Middle Devonian Fish Beds with fossil plant community.
Cruaday Quarry*	SSSI/GCR	<i>Site is of outstanding geological importance due to exposure and preservation of the Sandwick Fish Beds.</i>
Stromness Heaths and Coasts	SSSI/GCR	Coastal geomorphology (West Coast of Orkney).

SITE	Type	GEOLOGICAL/GEOMORPHOLOGICAL INTEREST
		Non-marine Devonian (Yesnaby and Gaulton Coast Section).
Shapinsay		
Vasa Loch	LNCS	Complex cusped foreland
Lairo Water and The Ouse	LNCS	Complex of shingle depositional landforms
South Ronaldsay		
Ayre of Cara	LNCS	Provides opportunity for study of rates of accretion and erosion due to construction of Churchill Barriers
Croo Stone Vent coast section	LNCS	Largest and most complex vent to be found in Orkney
Dam of Hoxa	LNCS	Composite depositional structure
South-east Coast	LNCS	Shows relationship of coastal morphology to geological structure
The Altar	LNCS	Demonstrates the influence of jointing on the resultant coastal landforms
Stromness		
South Stromness Coast	SSSI/GCR	Crystalline basement rock with overlying Stromness Flags. Lead mineralisation.
Stronsay		
Mill Bay, Stronsay	SSSI/ GCR	Geological: Classic shelly till with palaeo-geomorphological importance.

*Non-coastal sites

SSSI: Site of Special Scientific Interest

GCR: Geological Conservation Review site (nationally important Earth Science Site)

LNCS: Local Nature Conservation Site

5.3 Environmental issues

The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should provide effective protection to sites which are designated for their geological or geomorphological interest, and which illustrate Orkney's geological history.

6. Landscape

SEA Objectives

Protect and enhance the distinctiveness and qualities of landscape and seascape character, and appropriately mitigate impacts that cannot be avoided.

6.1 Background

Orkney has one National Scenic Area: the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area (see Map 4). The great ice-rounded eminences of the hills of North Hoy dominate the Orkney scene with a power that is scarcely in tune with their modest height (479 metres). Their bold shape, fine grouping, soaring cliffs and headlands, including the famous stack of the Old Man of Hoy, are almost as important to the Caithness scene as they are in that of Orkney.

6.2 Current status

North Hoy has a particularly strong visual inter-relationship with the south-west mainland of Orkney, the pastoral character of which around the shores of the Loch of Stenness makes a good foil for the bold hills of Hoy. The basin of this loch is enclosed by low rolling hills of lush grassland, some arable land, scattered farm steadings and stone dykes with a noticeable lack of trees, giving a very open landscape, the character of which is enlivened by the abundant remains of ancient occupation.

This landscape culminates in the west in cliffed headlands like a rampart against the sea, which breaks through at Hoy Sound in a tidal race of impressive swiftness. The stone-built settlement of Stromness rising steeply out of its harbour further enhances the character of the area.

The Special Qualities of the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area are:

- A palimpsest of geology, topography, archaeology and land use
- An archaeological landscape of World Heritage Status
- The spectacular coastal scenery
- Sandstone and flagstone as an essence of Orkney
- A long-settled and productive land and sea
- The contrast between the fertile farmland and the unimproved moorland

- A landscape of contrasting curves and lines
- Land and water in constantly changing combinations under the open sky
- The high hills of Hoy
- The townscape of Stromness, its setting and its link with the sea
- The traditional buildings and crofting patterns of Rackwick.

6.3 Environmental issues

Increased development can lead to the erosion of the setting of the seascapes and landscapes of the NSA. For example, as the infrastructure used for offshore wind farms increases in height, the distance of their visibility and therefore potential impacts increases. The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should provide effective protection to sites which are designated for their seascape and landscape interests.



Map 4 Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area

7. Cultural Heritage

SEA Objectives
Promote the care and protection of the designated and non-designated historic environment.
Enable positive change in the historic environment which is informed by a clear understanding of the importance of Orkney's heritage assets and ensures their future use.
Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and siting of development.

7.1 Background

Orkney is internationally renowned for the preservation and richness of 6,000 years of its archaeology upon which its successful tourism economy is based. This includes a Neolithic World Heritage site; spectacular Iron Age tower houses of the broch villages; rich Viking heritage of international significance and the unique First World War submerged archaeology of the German High Seas Fleet, that is at the heart of Stromness' diving industry. Orkney also has a rich maritime industrial past from the kelp industry to the herring boom and the Hudson's Bay Trading Company. Through history, the islands have played a significant role in trade, industry, politics and war.

7.2 Current status

A summary of the key elements is outlined below; further detail can be found in the SoEA²⁷

- Orkney has internationally significant coastal and marine historic environment assets.
- Since the Neolithic period some 5,000 to 6,000 years ago, when the land was first farmed, sea levels have risen approximately five metres.
- Sea-level change, precipitation change and storm intensity and frequency are the three key climate drivers impacting Orkney's coastal archaeology.
- Climate change causing rising sea-levels is the single greatest threat to Orkney's coastal historic environment assets.
- Orkney contains 3,000 documented archaeological sites of which 800 are coastal and threatened or presently eroding⁵⁵.

²⁷ [Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA](#)

- Coastal and marine historic environment assets can be significantly impacted by renewable energy, aquaculture and harbour developments.
- Uncontrolled recovery of artefacts and associated damage to historic assets has a significant detrimental effect on historic significance.

7.3 Environmental issues

Erosion and sea level rise due to climate change, along with deterioration and/or removal of artifacts are key considerations for cultural heritage. The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should provide effective protection to sites which are designated for their cultural heritage interest.

8. Population and Human Health

SEA Objectives
Improve community environments and quality of life.
Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities.

8.1 Background

The Orkney archipelago consists of 68+ islands over an area of 990km². Sixteen of the islands are populated according to census data, some uninhabited ones are still used for farming, whilst others are relatively small rocky outcrops. In addition, although the 2011 census does not show any population for Papa Stronsay, there are currently nine monks living on the island (per comm).

8.2 Current status

The Orkney population from the 2011 census is 21,349 and is estimated to be 21,961 for 2022, across 16 islands (see Table 8.1)²⁸. A small number of other islands e.g. Auskerry, Copinsay and Hunda have seasonal populations.

Table 8.1: Population of Orkney Islands (Source OIC extractions from 2022 and 2011 census)

Island	Population	Comment*
Burray	455	Burray lies between Mainland and South Ronaldsay, connected by the Churchill Barriers.
Eday	105	Situated centrally among the North Isles of Orkney, 14 miles north-east of Kirkwall, Eday, the isthmus isle, eight miles long and pinched at the waist, offers a unique blend of heather-clad hilly moorland with panoramic views over sea and islands, sheer cliffs, sweeping beaches and sand dunes and rich in archaeology. Most of the crofts and farms are located on the fertile coastal strip.
Flotta	79	Flotta has one of the most spectacular 360 degree panoramas in the UK: the sweep of the Hills of Hoy, the great expanse of Scapa Flow and the hills of Mainland Orkney beyond, to the east Burray and South Ronaldsay, completing the circle by looking out across the Pentland Firth to the Scottish mainland. Flotta was a strategic military base in both World Wars therefore contains much military history. Since the mid

²⁸ For further detail, see the accompanying Islands Communities Impact Assessment

Island	Population	Comment*
		1970s, Flotta has been the location for an oil terminal that makes a significant contribution to Orkney's economy.
Graemsay	28 (2011 census)	Graemsay is located in the Western approaches to Scapa Flow lying between Stromness on Orkney mainland and North Hoy, separated from the Mainland by Clestrain Sound. The island is 409 ha (1.58 sq mi) in area and is around two miles by a mile and half. Large parts of the island have been left largely undeveloped and are a haven for many wild plants. It is mainly crofted and has a predominantly ageing population.
Hoy	416	Hoy is the second largest island in Orkney, at 57 square miles. From the summit of Ward Hill, the highest point in the county at 1,570 feet, every island in Orkney can be seen with the exception of Rysa Little, which is the nearest. Hoy has significant military history. During World War II, thousands of navy personnel were based at Lyness and the now deserted naval base has been converted to a visitor centre with many exhibits from both world wars and the scuttled German fleet. This, along with the Old Man of Hoy stack and the spectacular hills and wildlife, are key tourist attractions. Lyness is a key port facility.
Papa Westray	101	Known locally as 'Papay' it is four miles long and a mile across at its widest point. With a history stretching back thousands of years, Papay's more recent past has seen plenty of positive projects bring a sense of vibrancy to the island. There's an annual arts festival, a fantastic community shop, one of Orkney's best hostels and a refurbished craft and heritage space, housed on the shore in the island's former kelp store.
Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre	268	Rousay is known as the 'Egypt of the north' thanks to its collection of more than 150 ancient sites. A mile-long stretch on the south west coastline showcases some incredible locations, including the Iron Age Midhowe Broch, the 5,000-year-old Midhowe Chambered Cairn, housed in an imposing hangar, and the excavations at Swandro. Three miles long by a mile and half wide, off the east coast of Rousay, Egilsay is a haven for birds, especially the rare Corncrake.

Island	Population	Comment*
		Although only two miles long and a mile wide, Wyre has a history stretching back thousands of years. The island's main attraction is the substantial Cubbie Roo's Castle, the remains of an imposing structure built for 12th century Norse chieftain, Kolbein Hruga.
Sanday and North Ronaldsay ²⁹	549	The largest of Orkney's north isles, Sanday has a land and seascape more akin to the Outer Hebrides, with beautiful beaches, sand dunes and machair, all set at the fringes of some of Orkney's most fertile farmland. North Ronaldsay is the most northerly of the Orkney Islands and is three miles long and two miles wide, the island is famous for its rare breed of seaweed-eating sheep, which are contained on the seaward side of the island by a drystone dyke that encompasses the shoreline.
Shapinsay	302	A green, fertile, low-lying island, full of wildlife and boasting a vibrant community 25 minutes away by ferry from Kirkwall. The village of Balfour, an early example of a planned village, was built in the late 1700s. It still retains much of its original character, with the single street overlooked by stone cottages that originally housed workers on the sprawling Balfour estate, home of the grand Balfour Castle.
South Ronaldsay	988	Orkney's fourth largest island and home to St Margaret's Hope, known locally as 'the Hope'; possibly the most picturesque village in the archipelago.
Stronsay	327	Covering an area of 12½ square miles, it is the seventh largest island, known as the 'island of bays', due to the three large bays separated by two isthmuses: St Catherine's Bay to the west, the Bay of Holland to the south and Mill Bay to the east. The main village is Whitehall, home to a heritage centre.
Westray	576	At 18.2 square miles, it is the sixth largest island. The main village is Pierowall, with a heritage centre, the 15th-century Lady Kirk church and pedestrian ferry service to nearby Papa Westray island. Westray has a number of archaeological sites dating from 3,500 BC, and remains of several Norse-Viking settlements. The spectacular sea cliffs around Noup Head are home to thousands of seabirds.

²⁹ The 2022 figure is based on the new zone of Island Groups 2022, which is compatible for Orkney, except that North Ronaldsay is now combined with Sanday and Egilsay and Wyre are now combined with Rousay.

Island	Population	Comment*
Mainland	17,805	Mainland Island covers an area of approximately 202 square miles; key areas are East and West Mainland respectively. It accounts for three-quarters of the population of Orkney and links the northern isles to the southern isles via air, ferry and/or Churchill Barriers. The main settlements are Kirkwall, Stromness, Dounby, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope. East Mainland contains fertile farmland, craggy coastlines and beautiful beaches, whilst West Mainland contains world-class archaeology and incredible coastlines.
Total	21,961	

8.3 Environmental issues

Depopulation is a problem in the smaller islands of Orkney and geographical isolation is a major contributory factor. Whilst these issues are more relevant to land use policy, the socio-economic benefits supported by the OIRMP will contribute to the protection of human health. In addition, better connectivity also has potential to improve access to health, social and recreational facilities, which will be supported by the Sector Policy 4 Pipelines, Electricity and Telecommunications Infrastructure.

9. Material assets

SEA Objectives
Promote sustainable and efficient use of natural resources.

9.1 Background

The seabed, intertidal zone, water environment and the species and habitats they contain are vital components of natural resources, that perform a variety of ecosystem services.

9.2 Current status

Marine litter has been an environmental problem in the oceans and seas for decades, which can impact a variety of material assets.

9.3 Environmental issues

Litter is widespread in the marine environment and is harmful to wildlife and ecosystems. It is estimated that about 60-80% of marine debris is plastic and plastic comprises a large percentage of beach litter³⁰. The policies and proposals of the OIRMP should provide effective protection for materials assets.

³⁰ <https://meam.openchannels.org/news/skimmer-marine-ecosystems-and-management/what-marine-plastic-pollution-costing-us-impacts>

10. Summary of Baseline

The information summarised below are additional sources to compliment those provide in the body of the report.

Table 10.1: Summary of data collected in compiling the environmental baseline

DATA	SOURCE
Area and population of Orkney	General Register Office for Scotland
CLIMATIC FACTORS	
CO2 emissions within the scope of influence of OIC	Ricardo-AEA May 2014 Local and Regional CO2 Emissions Estimates for 2005-2012 (Ricardo-AEA/R/3374)
Types of central heating used in Orkney	Scotland's Census 2011 http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/r2-downloadable-files
Average number of cars or vans in Orkney	http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/documents/censusresults/release2a/rel2asbfigure21.pdf
Passenger numbers for subsidised bus services in Orkney	Transport Service, OIC 2014
Operational grid-connected wind turbines in Orkney December 2012 (0.5MW and over)	OIC Development Management Service
Information on lease arrangements for wave and tidal energy development	www.thecrownestate.co.uk
Average rainfall in Orkney	SNIFFER, 'A handbook of climate trends across Scotland', 2006 www.sniffer.org.uk
Information on current climate trends	http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/documents/censusresults/release2a/rel2asbfigure21.pdf ; SNIFFER, 'A handbook of climate trends across Scotland', 2006 www.sniffer.org.uk
Information on sea level rise	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/sealevel.html
North of Scotland future climate change scenarios	UK Climate Impacts Programme www.ukcip.org.uk
Passenger numbers at Kirkwall Airport	Transportation Service, OIC 2007/08.
Information on Orkney's prevailing winds	May, V.J. and Hansom, J.D. (2003) <i>Coastal Geomorphology of Great Britain</i> , Geological Conservation Review Series, No. 28, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, 754 pp.
LOCAL AIR QUALITY	
Discharges to air from major industrial processes	Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SEPA), www.sepa.org.uk

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

DATA	SOURCE
Air quality in Orkney	Local Air Quality Management Progress Reports
BIODIVERSITY, FLORA & FAUNA	
Legislation relating to European Protected Species	NatureScot https://www.nature.scot/
List of statutory and non-statutory designated natural heritage sites	NatureScot https://www.nature.scot/ OIC Local Plan
Information on cetacean presence in Orkney	Booth, C. & J. Sillocks, Skarfies & Selkies, (2005)
Measures to protect species outwith designated areas	NatureScot https://www.nature.scot/
Information relating to RSPB reserves in Orkney	RSPB website: www.rspb.org.uk
Climate change and natural heritage	NatureScot http://www.snh.gov.uk/climate-change/impacts-in-scotland/effects/habitats/
WATER	
Water quality data (freshwater and coastal) and Groundwater quality data	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
Definition of Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems	Water Framework Directive UK Technical Advisory Group http://www.wfduk.org/resources/groundwater-dependent-terrestrial-ecosystem-threshold-values
GDTEs present in Orkney	Scotland's Environment Web
SOIL	
Information relating to Orkney soil types	Soil and land capability for agriculture maps (Orkney and Shetland) mapsales@macaulay.ac.uk
Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100, Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Land Use Consultants, Glasgow (1998)	
Plans to establish a soil monitoring system	Changing Our Ways, Scotland's Climate Change Programme, Scottish Executive 2006
Data on Agricultural Land Use in Orkney between 2005-2012	Scottish Agricultural Census 2005 – 2012
Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2003	OIC Department of Environmental Health
Derelict and Urban Vacant Land in Orkney	Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2013 https://www.ep-scotland.org.uk/news/scottish-vacant-and-derelict-land-survey-2013/
GEOLOGY	
Geology of Orkney	https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/
Orkney and Shetland a Landscape Fashioned by Geology	NatureScot https://www.nature.scot/

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

DATA	SOURCE
Orkney geological sites	JNCC website The Orkney Local Development Plan 2014
LANDSCAPE	
Information on Landscape Character Assessment	Scottish Natural Heritage Review No 100, Orkney Landscape Character Assessment
Hoy and West Mainland NSA	NatureScot https://www.nature.scot/
Landscape capacity for wind energy development	Landscape Capacity Assessment for Wind Energy in Orkney, Ironside Farrer (2014)
CULTURAL HERITAGE	
Definition of the historic environment	Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS).
Current status of cultural heritage	Orkney Islands Marine Region: SoEA
Lists of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings Information on Conservation Areas and Gardens and Designed Landscapes	National Record of the Historic Environment https://www.trove.scot/about-us/the-national-record-of-the-historic-environment Historic Environment Scotland Portal
POPULATION & HUMAN HEALTH	
Population trends in Orkney	Orkney Economic Review 2012-13 (source General Register Office for Scotland (GROS))
Population estimates for Orkney 2015-2035	General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) estimates https://www.genui.co.uk/contact/general-register-office-for-scotland-gros/
Population trends in the Orkney Islands over the period 1961 – 2011	Scotland's Census Results Online
Life expectancy at birth of residents of the Orkney Islands over the period 2000 – 2010	General Register Office for Scotland
Age and sex structure of the population of the Orkney Islands (2011)	General Register Office for Scotland
Summary of Orkney health statistics	https://www.ons.gov.uk/explore-local-statistics/areas/S1200023-orkney-islands/indicators
MATERIAL ASSETS	
Treatment of waste produced in Orkney	www.sepa.org.uk
Scottish waste recycling targets	SEPA, www.sepa.org.uk
Source of aggregates used in Orkney	OIC Roads Department

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

DATA	SOURCE
Litter impacts	https://meam.openchannels.org/news/skimmer-marine-ecosystems-and-management/what-marine-plastic-pollution-costing-us-impacts
National Planning Framework	National Planning Framework 4

Appendix B.1: Internationally and nationally designated sites in Orkney (at the time of writing)³¹

SSSIs, SPAs, SACs, and Ramsar Sites

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
Auskerry SSSI/SPA	Breeding Arctic tern. Breeding storm petrel.	Arctic tern unfavourable declining (2018). Storm petrel favourable declining (2019).	Breeding storm petrel, breeding Arctic tern.	Arctic tern unfavourable declining (2018). Storm petrel favourable declining (2018).
Bay of Skaili SSSI	Palaeozoic palaeobotany (fossil plants).	Favourable maintained (2012).	N/A	N/A
Calf of Eday SSSI/SPA	Breeding cormorant.	Cormorant favourable maintained (2024).	Breeding cormorant; breeding fulmar; breeding great black-backed gull; breeding kittiwake breeding guillemot; breeding seabird assemblage.	Cormorant breeding favourable maintained (2024). Fulmar breeding favourable maintained (2024). Great black backed gull unfavourable declining (2024). Guillemot breeding unfavourable no change (2024). Kittiwake breeding unfavourable no change (2024).

³¹ NatureScot www.nature.scot

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
				Seabird assemblage breeding unfavourable no change (2024).
Central Sanday SSSI	Coastal geomorphology of Scotland (coastal sedimentary landforms); saltmarsh; machair; sand dunes.	Machair unfavourable no change (2013). Sand dunes unfavourable no change (2013). Saltmarsh favourable maintained (2014). Coastal geomorphology of Scotland favourable maintained (2010).	N/A	N/A
Copinsay SSSI/SPA	Breeding seabird colony; breeding guillemot; breeding kittiwake.	Guillemot unfavourable no change (2016). Kittiwake unfavourable declining (2016) Seabird colony, breeding unfavourable no change (2016).	Breeding seabird assemblage; breeding fulmar; breeding great black-backed gull; breeding guillemot; breeding kittiwake.	Fulmar breeding favourable maintained (2024). Great black backed gull unfavourable declining (2024). Guillemot unfavourable declining (2024). Kittiwake unfavourable declining (2024). Seabird assemblage, breeding unfavourable no change (2016).
Cruaday quarry SSSI	Silurian - Devonian chordata (fossil fish).	Silurian-Devonian chordata favourable maintained (2009).	N/A	N/A
Denwick SSSI	Quaternary of Scotland (multiple glacial till section).	Quaternary of Scotland favourable maintained (2017).	N/A	N/A

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
Doomy and Whitemaw Hill SSSI	Breeding Arctic skua; breeding whimbrel.	Arctic skua breeding unfavourable declining (2016). Whimbrel breeding unfavourable no change (2017).	N/A	N/A
East Sanday coast SSSI/SPA/Ramsar site	Non-breeding ringed plover, non-breeding bar-tailed godwit, non-breeding purple sandpiper, non-breeding sanderling, non-breeding turnstone; passage turnstone; rocky shore; sandflats; Harbour seal; vascular plant assemblage.	Rocky shore favourable maintained (2011). Sandflats favourable maintained (2011). Harbour seal unfavourable declining (2024). Vascular plant assemblage favourable maintained (2009). Bar-tailed godwit non-breeding favourable maintained (2016). Purple sandpiper non-breeding favourable maintained (2016). Ringed plover non-breeding favourable maintained (2016). Sanderling non-breeding favourable maintained (2016). Turnstone non-breeding favourable maintained (2016). Turnstone passage favourable maintained (2017).	SPA - Non-breeding bar-tailed godwit; non-breeding turnstone; non-breeding purple sandpiper. Ramsar – Non-breeding purple sandpiper; non-breeding turnstone, non-breeding bar-tailed godwit.	SPA Bar-tailed godwit non-breeding favourable maintained (2016). Purple sandpiper non-breeding favourable maintained (2016). Turnstone non-breeding favourable maintained (2016). Ramsar Purple sandpiper non-breeding favourable maintained (2016). Turnstone non-breeding favourable recovered (2016).

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
Eynhallow SSSI	Harbour seal.	Harbour seal unfavourable declining (2024).	N/A	N/A
Faray and Holm of Faray SSSI/SAC	Grey seal.	Grey seal favourable maintained (2016).	Grey seal.	Grey seal unfavourable declining (2024).
Glims Moss and Durkadale SSSI	Raised bog; Hydro morphological mire range; valley fen.	Hydro morphological mire range favourable maintained (2015). Raised bog favourable maintained (2007). Valley fen favourable maintained (2005).	N/A	N/A
Holm of Papa Westray SSSI (also forms part of Papa Westray (North Hill and Holm) SPA)	Breeding black guillemot.	Black guillemot breeding unfavourable no change (2013).	Papa Westray SPA. Breeding Arctic skua; breeding Arctic tern.	Papa Westray SPA. Arctic skua breeding unfavourable declining (2016). Arctic tern breeding unfavourable no change (2017).
Hoy SSSI/SPA/SAC	Breeding seabird colony; breeding Arctic skua, breeding fulmar, breeding great skua, breeding guillemot. Breeding bird assemblage; breeding peregrine, breeding red-throated diver, breeding great black-backed gull; blanket bog.	Upland oak woodland favourable maintained (2010). Blanket bog favourable maintained (2015). Dystrophic loch favourable maintained (2016). Breeding bird assemblage favourable maintained (2013).	SPA - Breeding seabird assemblage; breeding Arctic skua; breeding great skua; breeding great black-backed gull; breeding guillemot; breeding kittiwake; breeding peregrine; breeding red-throated diver; breeding fulmar; breeding puffin. SAC – Blanket bog; dry heaths; wet heathland with cross-leaved heath; base-rich fens; hard-water springs depositing lime; plants in crevices in base-rich rocks; Alpine and subalpine	SPA Arctic skua breeding unfavourable declining (2020). Fulmar breeding unfavourable no change (2017). Great black-backed gull breeding unfavourable declining (2024). Great skua breeding unfavourable declining (2024).

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
		Non-marine Devonian favourable maintained (2005). Old Red Sandstone igneous favourable maintained (2005). Quaternary of Scotland favourable maintained (2005). Coastal geomorphology of Scotland favourable maintained (2005). Upland assemblage favourable recovered (2016). Arctic skua unfavourable declining (2020). Fulmar breeding unfavourable no change (2017). Great skua breeding unfavourable declining (2020). Great black backed gull unfavourable declining (2020). Guillemot breeding unfavourable no change (2017). Peregrine breeding favourable maintained (2013). Red-throated diver favourable maintained (2009).	heaths; acid peat-stained lakes and ponds; vegetated sea cliffs.	Guillemot breeding unfavourable no change (2017). Kittiwake breeding unfavourable declining (2017). Peregrine breeding favourable maintained (2013). Puffin breeding unfavourable declining (2005). Red-throated diver breeding favourable maintained (2009). Seabird assemblage breeding unfavourable declining (2020). SAC Acid peat-stained lakes and ponds favourable maintained (2016). Alpine and subalpine heaths favourable maintained (2015). Base rich fens favourable maintained (2014). Blanket bog favourable maintained (2015). Dry heaths favourable maintained (2014).

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
		Seabird colony breeding unfavourable declining (2020).		Hard-water springs depositing lime favourable maintained (2011). Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks favourable recovered (2016). Vegetated sea cliffs favourable maintained (2011). Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath favourable maintained (2005).
Keelylang and Swartaback Burn SSSI (also forms part of Orkney Mainland Moors SPA)	Breeding hen harrier; breeding bird assemblage; upland habitat assemblage (mosaic).	Breeding bird assemblage favourable maintained (2005). Hen harrier breeding favourable maintained (2013). Upland habitat assemblage favourable maintained (2017).	Orkney Mainland Moors SPA Breeding hen harrier, breeding short-eared owl and breeding red-throated diver; non-breeding hen harrier.	Orkney Mainland Moors SPA Hen harrier breeding favourable maintained (2013). Hen harrier non-breeding favourable maintained (2013). Red-throated diver breeding favourable maintained (2007). Short-eared owl breeding favourable maintained (2004).
Loch of Banks SSSI	Non-breeding hen harrier; breeding bird assemblage; basin fen.	Basin fen unfavourable no change (2022). Breeding bird assemblage favourable maintained (2020). Hen harrier non-breeding unfavourable no change (2014).	N/A	N/A

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
Loch of Isbister and The Loons SSSI Loch of Isbister SAC	Breeding pintail; breeding bird assemblage; basin fen.	Basin fen favourable maintained (2024). Breeding bird assemblage favourable maintained (2009). Pintail breeding favourable maintained (2012).	Loch of Isbister SAC Very wet mires often identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface; Otter; Naturally nutrient-rich lakes or lochs which are often dominated by pondweed.	Naturally nutrient-rich lochs often dominated by pondweed unfavourable declining (2015). Otter favourable maintained (2014). Very wet mires often identified by an unstable quaking surface favourable maintained (2023).
Lochs of Harray and Stenness SSSI Loch of Stenness SAC	Non-breeding goldeneye, non-breeding pochard, non-breeding scaup, non-breeding tufted duck; saline lagoon; freshwater nerite snail (<i>Theodoxus fluviatilis</i>); a caddis fly; eutrophic loch.	Eutrophic loch unfavourable no change (2014). Saline lagoon favourable maintained (2005). Freshwater nerite snail favourable maintained (2014). Goldeneye non-breeding unfavourable declining (2014). Pochard non-breeding unfavourable recovered (2014). Scaup non-breeding favourable maintained (2014). Tufted duck non-breeding unfavourable no change (2014). Caddis fly favourable maintained (2014).	Loch of Stenness SAC Lagoons.	Lagoons favourable maintained (2005).

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
Marwick Head SSSI/SPA	Breeding seabird colony; breeding guillemot; breeding kittiwake.	Guillemot breeding unfavourable declining (2017). Kittiwake breeding unfavourable declining (2017). Seabird colony breeding unfavourable declining (2017).	Breeding seabird assemblage; breeding guillemot; breeding kittiwake.	Guillemot breeding unfavourable no change (2024). Kittiwake breeding unfavourable recovering (2024). Seabird assemblage breeding unfavourable declining (2017).
Mill Bay SSSI	Quaternary of Scotland (exposed shelly till).	Quaternary of Scotland favourable maintained (2014).	N/A	N/A
Mill Loch SSSI	Breeding red-throated diver.	Red-throated diver breeding favourable maintained (2012).	N/A	N/A
Muckle Head and Selwick SSSI	Quaternary of Scotland.	Quaternary of Scotland favourable maintained (2005).	N/A	N/A
Muckle and Little Green Holm SSSI	Grey seal.	Grey seal favourable maintained (2016).	N/A	N/A
North Hill SSSI (also forms part of Papa Westray SPA)	Breeding Arctic skua; breeding Arctic tern; maritime cliff.	Maritime cliff favourable maintained (2013). Arctic skua breeding unfavourable declining (2016). Arctic tern breeding unfavourable no change (2017).	Papa Westray SPA Breeding Arctic skua; breeding Arctic tern.	Arctic skua breeding unfavourable declining (2016). Arctic tern breeding unfavourable no change (2017).
Northwall SSSI	Machair loch; machair.	Machair loch favourable maintained (2005). Machair favourable maintained (2013).	N/A	N/A

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
North Orkney	Breeding Red-throated diver. Non-breeding Great northern diver and Slavonian grebe. Migratory Velvet scoter.	N/A	Breeding red-throated diver. Non-breeding great northern diver. Non-breeding Slavonian grebe. Non-breeding velvet scoter.	As North Orkney SPA is a relatively recent designations (2021), the status of the qualifying features is currently unavailable.
Orphir and Stenness Hills SSSI (also forms part of Orkney Mainland Moors SPA)	Breeding hen harrier; breeding bird assemblage; Upland habitat assemblage (mosaic).	Breeding bird assemblage favourable maintained (2012). Upland habitat assemblage favourable maintained (2009). Hen harrier breeding favourable maintained (2013).	Orkney Mainland Moors SPA Breeding hen harrier, breeding short-eared owl and breeding red-throated diver; non-breeding hen harrier.	Orkney Mainland Moors SPA Hen harrier breeding favourable maintained (2013). Hen harrier non-breeding favourable maintained (2014). Red-throated diver breeding favourable maintained (2009). Short-eared owl breeding favourable maintained (2005).
Pentland Firth Islands SSSI/SPA	Breeding Arctic tern; Vascular plant assemblage.	Vascular plant assemblage favourable recovered (2019). Arctic tern breeding unfavourable no change (2018).	Breeding Arctic tern.	Arctic tern breeding unfavourable no change (2018).
Rousay SSSI/SPA	Breeding Arctic tern, breeding guillemot, breeding kittiwake; breeding seabird colony; breeding Arctic skua; breeding bird assemblage; blanket bog; subalpine wet heath; mesotrophic loch; maritime cliff.	Subalpine wet heat favourable recovered (2012). Blanket bog favourable maintained (2014). Mesotrophic loch unfavourable declining (2016).	Breeding seabird assemblage; breeding guillemot; breeding Arctic skua; breeding Arctic tern; breeding fulmar; breeding kittiwake.	Arctic skua breeding unfavourable declining (2024). Arctic tern breeding unfavourable declining (2024). Fulmar breeding favourable maintained (2024).

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
		Maritime cliff unfavourable recovering (2010). Vascular plant assemblage favourable maintained (2010). Breeding bird assemblage favourable maintained (2005). Arctic skua breeding unfavourable no change (2016). Arctic tern breeding unfavourable no change (2016). Guillemot breeding unfavourable declining (2016). Kittiwake breeding unfavourable declining (2016) Seabird colony breeding unfavourable declining (2016).		Guillemot breeding unfavourable no change (2024). Kittiwake breeding unfavourable declining (2016). Seabird assemblage unfavourable declining (2016).
Sanday SAC	N/A	N/A	Reefs; subtidal sandbanks; intertidal mudflats and sandflats; Harbour seal.	Harbour seal unfavourable declining (2024). Intertidal mudflats and sandflats favourable maintained (2011). Reefs favourable maintained (2011). Subtidal sandbanks favourable maintained (2011).
Scapa Flow	Breeding red-throated diver.	N/A	Breeding red-throated diver.	As Scapa Flow SPA is a relatively recent designations (2021), the status

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
	Non-breeding Black-throated diver, Common eider, European shag, Great northern diver, Long-tailed duck, Red-breasted merganser, Slavonian grebe.		Non-breeding black-throated diver. Non-breeding common eider. Non-breeding european shag. Non-breeding great northern diver. Non-breeding long-tailed duck. Non-breeding red-breasted merganser. Non-breeding Slavonian grebe.	of the qualifying features is currently unavailable.
Stromness heaths and Coast SSSI/SAC	Subalpine dry heath; coastal geomorphology; non-marine Devonian stratigraphy; maritime cliff.	Subalpine dry heath favourable maintained (2010). Maritime cliff favourable maintained (2012). Non-marine Devonian partially destroyed (2017). Coastal geomorphology of Scotland favourable maintained (2013).	Dry heaths; base-rich fens; vegetated sea cliffs.	Base rich fens favourable maintained (2014). Dry heaths favourable maintained (2010). Vegetated sea cliffs favourable maintained (2013).
Sule Skerry SSSI Part of Sule Skerry and Sule Stack SPA	Breeding seabird colony; breeding puffin; breeding shag; breeding storm petrel.	Puffin breeding favourable declining (2019). Shag breeding unfavourable declining (2019). Storm petrel breeding favourable declining (2019).	Sule Skerry and Sule Stack SPA Breeding gannet. Breeding storm petrel. Breeding seabird assemblage.	Sule Skerry and Sule Stack SPA Gannet breeding favourable maintained (2024). Guillemot breeding favourable maintained (2019).

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
		Seabird colony breeding favourable maintained (2019).	Breeding guillemot. Breeding Leach's petrel. Breeding puffin.	Leach's petrel breeding unfavourable no change (2024). Puffin breeding favourable maintained (2024).
Sule Stack SSSI Part of Sule Skerry and Sule Stack SPA	Breeding gannet.	Gannet breeding favourable maintained (2016).	Breeding shag.	Seabird assemblage breeding favourable maintained (2019). Shag breeding unfavourable declining (2024). Storm petrel breeding unfavourable declining (2024).
Switha SSSI/SPA	Non-breeding Greenland barnacle goose.	Greenland barnacle goose non-breeding favourable maintained (2013).	Non-breeding Greenland barnacle goose.	Greenland barnacle goose non-breeding favourable maintained (2013).
Ward Hill Cliffs SSSI	Maritime cliff.	Maritime cliff favourable maintained (2012).	N/A	N/A
Waulkmill SSSI	Saltmarsh; golden-rod case-bearer moth; maritime cliff.	Saltmarsh favourable maintained (2014). Golden-rod case-bearer moth favourable maintained (2015) Maritime cliff favourable maintained (2012).	N/A	N/A
West Mainland Moorlands SSSI (also forms part of Orkney Mainland Moors SPA)	Breeding hen harrier, breeding short-eared owl and breeding red-throated diver; breeding bird assemblage;	Blanket bog unfavourable recovering (2015). Breeding bird assemblage favourable maintained (2017).	Orkney Mainland Moors SPA Breeding hen harrier, breeding short-eared owl and breeding red-throated diver; non-breeding hen harrier.	Orkney Mainland Moors SPA Hen harrier breeding favourable maintained (2013).

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Site	SSSI qualifying features	SSSI Site Condition	SPA/SAC/Ramsar qualifying interests	SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site Condition
	upland assemblage (mosaic); blanket bog.	Upland assemblage unfavourable recovering (2015). Hen harrier breeding favourable maintained (2013). Red-throated diver breeding favourable maintained (2011). Short-eared owl breeding not assessed.		Hen harrier non-breeding favourable maintained (2014). Red-throated diver breeding favourable maintained (2009). Short-eared owl breeding favourable maintained (2005).
West Westray SSSI/SPA	Breeding guillemot; breeding seabird colony; breeding Arctic skua; breeding Arctic tern; breeding kittiwake; breeding razorbill; maritime cliff.	Maritime cliff favourable maintained (2013). Arctic skua breeding unfavourable declining (2017). Arctic tern breeding unfavourable no change (2017). Guillemot breeding unfavourable declining (2017). Kittiwake breeding unfavourable declining (2017). Razorbill breeding favourable recovered (2017). Seabird colony breeding unfavourable declining (2017).	Breeding guillemot. Breeding seabird assemblage. Breeding Arctic skua. Breeding Arctic tern. Breeding fulmar. Breeding kittiwake. Breeding razorbill.	Arctic skua breeding unfavourable declining (2024). Arctic tern breeding unfavourable declining (2024). Fulmar breeding favourable maintained (2024). Guillemot breeding unfavourable no change (2024). Kittiwake breeding unfavourable declining (2024). Razorbill breeding unfavourable declining (2024). Seabird assemblage breeding unfavourable declining (2017).

Nature Conservation MPAs

Site	Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (NCMPA) qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	NCMPA Site Condition
Wyre and Rousay Sound	Kelp and seaweed communities on sublittoral sediment. Maerl beds. Marine Geomorphology of the Scottish Shelf Seabed – forms part of the Orkney carbonate production area.	Conserve in favourable condition or bring into, and maintain, in favourable condition.	Required measures were implemented in 2016 and the features are considered to be achieving their objectives.
Papa Westray	Black guillemot. Marine Geomorphology of the Scottish Shelf Seabed – forms part of the Orkney carbonate production area.	Conserve in favourable condition or bring into, and maintain, in favourable condition.	Black guillemot declining since site designation. The implementation of fisheries management measures should improve feature status. Geodiversity features achieving their objectives.
North-west Orkney	Sandeels. Sand banks, sand wave fields and sediment wave fields representative of the Fair Isle Strait Marine Process Bedforms Key Geodiversity Area.	Conserve in favourable condition or bring into, and maintain, in favourable condition.	The protected features are considered to be in favourable condition.

Appendix B.2: List of Priority Marine Features recorded within 12 nm of Orkney (at the time of writing)

Blue mussel beds

1. *Mytilus edulis* on littoral sediments (at outflow of Burn of Lingro, Scapa Bay).

Flame shell beds

Horse mussel beds

1. *Modiolus modiolus* beds with hydroids and red seaweeds on tide-swept circalittoral mixed substrata.
2. *Modiolus modiolus* beds on open coast circalittoral mixed sediment.
3. *Modiolus modiolus* beds with fine hydroids and large solitary ascidians on very sheltered circalittoral mixed substrata.
4. *Modiolus modiolus* beds with *Chlamys varia*, sponges, hydroids and bryozoans on slightly tide-swept very sheltered circalittoral mixed substrata.

Intertidal mudflats

Kelp and seaweed communities on sublittoral sediment

Kelp beds

1. *Laminaria hyperborea* forest with a faunal cushion (sponges and polyclinids) and foliose red seaweeds on very exposed upper infralittoral rock.
2. *Laminaria hyperborea* with dense foliose red seaweeds on exposed infralittoral rock.
3. *Laminaria hyperborea* on tide-swept, infralittoral rock.
4. *Laminaria hyperborea* on tide-swept infralittoral mixed substrata.
5. *Laminaria hyperborea* and foliose red seaweeds on moderately exposed infralittoral rock.

Low or variable salinity habitats

1. Kelp in variable or reduced salinity.
2. Submerged fucoids, green or red seaweeds (Low salinity infralittoral rock).
3. Bird's nest stonewort – *Tolypella nidifica*.
4. Baltic stonewort – *Chara baltica*.
5. Small brackish water snail – *Hydrobia acuta neglecta*.

Maerl beds

1. Maerl beds.
2. Maerl or coarse shell gravel with burrowing sea cucumbers.

Native oysters

1. *Ostrea edulis*.

Seagrass beds

1. *Zostera marina/angustifolia* beds on lower shore or infralittoral clean or muddy sand.
2. *Ruppia maritima* in reduced salinity infralittoral muddy sand.

Tide-swept algal communities

1. Fucoids in tide-swept conditions.
2. *Halidrys siliquosa* and mixed kelps on tide-swept infralittoral rock with coarse sediment.
3. Kelp and seaweed communities in tide-swept sheltered conditions.
4. *Laminaria hyperborea* on tide-swept infralittoral mixed substrata.

Tide-swept coarse sands with burrowing bivalves

Low or limited mobility species

1. Northern feather star – *Leptometra celtica*.
2. Fan mussel - *Atrina fragilis*.
3. Ocean quahog – *Arctica islandica*.

Mobile species

1. European spiny lobster – *Palinurus elephas*.
2. European eel – *Anguilla Anguilla*.
3. Atlantic salmon - *Salmo salar*.
4. Sea lamprey – *Petromyzon marinus*.
5. Sea trout - *Salmo trutta*.
6. Sparling – *Osmerus eperlanus*.
7. Angler fish – *Lophius piscatorius*.
8. Atlantic halibut – *Hippoglossus hippoglossus*.
9. Atlantic herring – *Clupea harengus*.
10. Atlantic mackerel – *Scomber scombrus*.
11. Cod – *Gadus morhua*.
12. Greenland halibut – *Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*.
13. Horse mackerel – *Trachurus trachurus*.
14. Ling – *Molva molva*.
15. Norway pout – *Trisopterus esmarkii*.
16. Round-nose grenadier – *Coryphaenoides rupestris*.
17. Saithe – *Pollachius virens*.
18. Sandeels – *Ammodytes marinus* and *Ammodytes tobianus*.
19. Sand goby – *Pomatoschistus minutus*.
20. Whiting – *Merlangius merlangus*.
21. Basking shark – *Cetorhinus maximus*.

22. Common skate – *Dipturus batis* complex.
23. Porbeagle shark – *Lamna nasus*.
24. Spiny dogfish – *Squalus acanthias*.
25. Atlantic white-sided dolphin – *Lagenorhynchus acutus*.
26. Bottlenose dolphin – *Tursiops truncatus*.
27. Fin whale – *Balaenoptera physalus*.
28. Harbour porpoise – *Phocoena phocoena*.
29. Killer whale – *Orcinus orca*.
30. Long-finned pilot whale – *Globicephala melas*.
31. Minke whale – *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*.
32. Northern bottlenose whale – *Hyperoodon ampullatus*.
33. Risso's dolphin – *Grampus griseus*.
34. Short-beaked common dolphin – *Delphinus delphis*.
35. Sowerby's beaked whale – *Mesoplodon bidens*.
36. Sperm whale – *Physeter macrocephalus*.
37. White-beaked dolphin – *Lagenorhynchus albirostris*.
38. Harbour seal – *Phoca vitulina*.
39. Grey seal – *Halichoerus grypus*.
40. Otter – *Lutra lutra*.

Appendix B.3: Water quality and overall status classification (at the time of writing)

Water body	Water quality	Change	Overall status	Change
LOCHS				
Loch of Swanney	Good	No change	Good	No change
Loch of Hundland	Good	No change	Good	No change
Loch of Boardhouse	Good	No change	Good	No change
Loch of Harray	Moderate	No change	Moderate	No change
Loch of Skail	Good	No change	Good	No change
Loch of Tankerness	Good	No change	Good	No change
Loch of Kirbister	Good	No change	Good	No change
Heldale Water	Good	No change	Good	No change
BURNS				
Burn of Hourston	Moderate	Degraded	Moderate	Improved
Voy Burn	Moderate	Improved	Moderate	Improved
Tormiston Burn	Good	No change	Poor	No change
Netherbrough Burn	High	No change	Poor	Degraded
Burn of Corrigall	Good	Degraded	Poor	Degraded
Suso Burn	High	No change	Good	No change
Burn of Sweenalay	High	No change	Moderate	No change
Mill Burn d/s of Loch of Kirbister	High	No change	Moderate	Degraded
Mill Burn u/s of Loch of Kirbister	High	No change	Good	No change
Burn of Boardhouse	Good	No change	Good	No change
Burn of Kirbuster	High	No change	Good	No change
Burn of Hillside	High	No change	Good	No change

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Water body	Water quality	Change	Overall status	Change
Swannay Burn d/s Swanney Farm	High	No change	Good	No change
Swannay Burn u/s Swannay Farm	High	No change	Good	No change
Burn of Etheriegeo	High	No change	Good	No change
Rackwick Burn	Good	Degraded	Good	No change
Mill Burn	Good	Degraded	Good	No change
Loch of Stenness to Harray connecting water	High	No change	High	No change
COASTAL WATERS				
Old Head to Tor Ness	Good	No change	Good	No change
Dunnet Head to Duncansby Head	Good	No change	Good	No change
Mull Head to Old Head	Good	No change	Good	No change
Kirk Hope	High	No change	High	No change
Skaith, Mainland	Good	No change	Good	No change
Burgh Head to Mull Head	High	Improved	High	No change
Long Ayre Lagoon	High	No change	High	No change
Tor Ness to Breck Ness	Good	No change	Good	No change
The Ouse, Finstown	High	Improved	High	Improved
Point of Backaquoy Lagoon	High	Improved	High	Improved
Kirkwall	High	Improved	High	Improved
Oyce of Isbister	High	Improved	High	Improved
The Ouse, Ling Holm, Shapinsay	High	Improved	High	Improved
Breck Ness to Noup Head	High	Improved	High	Improved

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Water body	Water quality	Change	Overall status	Change
Oyce of Huip, Stronsay	High	Improved	High	Improved
Sule Skerry and Sule Stack	High	Improved	High	Improved
Start Point to Burgh Head	High	Improved	High	Improved
Westray Firth	High	Improved	High	Improved
Noup Head to Start Point	High	Improved	High	Improved
Quivals Loch, Sanday	High	No change	High	No change
Bay of Brough Lagoons, Sanday	High	No change	High	No change
Bay of Brough Lagoons, Sanday	High	No change	High	No change
Point of Nevin Lagoon, Sanday	High	No change	High	Improved
Little Sea Lagoon, Sanday	High	No change	High	Improved
Bay of Ham Lagoon	High	No change	High	Improved
Vasa Loch, Shapinsay	High	No change	High	Improved
Kirkwall Lagoon (Peedie Sea)	High	No change	Good	No change
Loch of Ayre, Mainland	High	Improved	High	Improved
Loch of Stenness, Mainland	High	Improved	High	Improved
Scapa Flow	Good	No change	Good	No change

Appendix B.4: Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area



*Extract from: Scottish Natural Heritage (2010). The special qualities of the National Scenic Areas
SNH Commissioned Report No.374.*

HOY AND WEST MAINLAND NATIONAL SCENIC AREA
Orkney Isles

Description from *Scotland's Scenic Heritage* 1978

The great ice-rounded eminences of the hills of North Hoy dominate the Orkney scene with a power that is scarcely in tune with their modest height (479 metres). Their bold shape, fine grouping, soaring cliffs and headlands, including the famous stack of the Old Man of Hoy, are almost as important to the Caithness scene as they are in that of Orkney.

North Hoy has a particularly strong visual inter-relationship with the south-west mainland of Orkney, the pastoral character of which around the shores of the Loch of Stenness makes a good foil for the bold hills of Hoy. The basin of this loch is enclosed by low rolling hills of lush grassland, some arable land, scattered farm steadings and stone dykes with a noticeable lack of trees, giving a very open landscape, the character of which is enlivened by the abundant remains of ancient occupation.

This landscape culminates in the west in cliffed headlands like a rampart against the sea, which breaks through at Hoy Sound in a tidal race of impressive swiftness. The stone-built settlement of Stromness rising steeply out of its harbour further enhances the character of the area.

The Special Qualities of the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area

- A palimpsest of geology, topography, archaeology and land use
- An archaeological landscape of World Heritage Status
- The spectacular coastal scenery
- Sandstone and flagstone as an essence of Orkney
- A long-settled and productive land and sea
- The contrast between the fertile farmland and the unimproved moorland
- A landscape of contrasting curves and lines
- Land and water in constantly changing combinations under the open sky
- The high hills of Hoy
- The townscape of Stromness, its setting and its link with the sea
- The traditional buildings and crofting patterns of Rackwick

Special Quality	Further information
• <i>A palimpsest of geology, topography, archaeology and land use</i>	
This is a landscape composed of different layers that can be readily seen and understood: A base layer of Geology, with its horizontal strata of Devonian sandstones and flagstones, exemplified by the Old Man of Hoy and the cliffs of the western coastline Overlain by undulating Topography, where a rocky coast rises through gentle lowlands to higher rounded summits. Overlain by Archaeology and Land Use, where a succession of different inhabitants have left their own distinctive patterns and monuments in the Orcadian landscape.	Orkney is a landscape of distinctive geology, topography, archaeology and land use which can be seen as layers within the landscape – a palimpsest. The NSA exemplifies this. The geology is horizontally bedded and relatively uniform. The topography consists of coasts both shallow and steep, extensive lowlands in the basins of the Lochs of Harray and Stenness, and the extensive uplands of Hoy. The surface layer contains archaeological sites, modern farmland and unimproved moorland.
• <i>An archaeological landscape of world heritage status</i>	
By their location, shape and vertical presence, the Neolithic monuments of the Ring of Brodgar, the Stones of Stenness and the grass-covered tomb of Maes Howe, are distinctive landmarks of international renown.	‘The Orkney imagination is haunted by time.’ George Mackay Brown The Neolithic monuments of central Orkney comprise the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site, and have become recognisable landmarks of West Mainland. Within the NSA they include:

They lie within a landscape of low-lying farmland, which has been farmed for millennia. Wilder moors and hills rise to the east, and the Hills of Hoy form the backdrop to the south. Unusually for Orkney, there are few clear views of the open sea. The area feels enclosed, in the middle of a vast lowland amphitheatre of glistening loch and fertile pasture. The NSA is also rich in remains from other eras, from Norse and medieval to the Second World War. However, visible monuments represent only the clearest element of much more extensive and complex evidence of settlement and use of the landscape as revealed by archaeological excavations.	• The Stones of Stenness, the Ring of Brodgar and other standing stones composed of large flags of Devonian sandstone. • Ness Howe and Maes Moor (Orkney) cairns, and other cairns and tumuli, which form distinctive, often grass covered low mounds in the landscape. The solid carved boulder block of the Dwarfie Stane on Hoy lies within the NSA (although not in the World Heritage Site).
• The spectacular coastal scenery	
With their towering red cliffs, the Atlantic coastline creates a spectacular scene, enhanced by the presence of the Old Man of Hoy, the highest sea stack in the British Isles. These vertical structures of red sandstone, home to numerous seabirds are both a landmark and an iconic image of the Orkney Islands, especially for those arriving by sea from across the Pentland Firth. In comparison, the sheltered waters and gentle topography of the western approaches to Scapa Flow contrast with the Atlantic-battered western seaboard.	The west coast of Mainland and Hoy contain high vertical cliffs, with Seann's Head on Hoy, rising to 450m (the third highest sea cliff in Britain). They are composed of the Devonian sandstone, with its distinctive bedding planes. The erosive force of the Atlantic storms and waves has exploited weaknesses in the strata to create cavities, skerries, gullies, gabs, bays, wave cut platforms and boulder-strewn beaches. The Old Man of Hoy towers 137m from its resistant, igneous rock foundation at sea level: it was not climbed until 1986. The cliffs provide home to numerous sea birds. The west coast of Hoy is part of the Hoy SSSI, SAC & SPA, and RSPB reserve, containing around 110,000 birds. These include nationally important populations of fulmar, great black-backed gull and guillemot.
• Sandstone and flagstone as an essence of Orkney	
The presence of sandstones and flagstones, whether occurring as natural exposures or comprising human artefacts, is a characteristic of the NSA, indeed of Orkney as a whole. There are the towering cliffs and stacks of Hoy with their rusty reds and ochres, and also the lower rocky coasts with their	Hoy and West Mainland are composed predominantly of Devonian Old Red Sandstone, which includes Hoy Sandstone and Stenness Flag. The sandstone fractures along bedding planes, creating blocky stones and flag stones, which creates an excellent building material, including for standing stones. It is also prone to weathering, leading to changes in the colour and hue of the rock,

wave-cut platforms and beaches of flagstones. There are the drystane dykes with their characteristic flattened stones, the traditional flagstone roofs as exemplified at Rackwick, and the golden or honey coloured stone of farm buildings and of old Stromness. There are ancient sandstone tombs, the solid carved boulder of the Dwarfie Stane, and the upstanding standing stones of the ancient circles.	
• A long-settled and productive land and sea	
The land has the appearance of a long and well-settled agricultural landscape, with solid farm buildings, fertile, green fields and numerous cattle. Likewise the ever-presence of the sea is a reminder that fishing and whaling have also been key to the prosperity of the islands.	The history of agriculture in Orkney goes back to Neolithic times. The mild climate, level ground and fertile soils have always made Orkney surprisingly fertile compared to Shetland, the Western Isles or mainland Scotland immediately to the south. This has been the key to the prosperity of the islands. Currently there are over 100,000 cattle in Orkney. It is a working landscape, and the current farms have had a long evolutionary history, including crofting townships and 19th century improvement farms. The steadings often preserve examples of kail barns and other 19th century structures typical of crofting, such as the linear farmsteads. Examples of old townships include Clouston and Grimeston. The sea has always provided a source of food, as far back as the fish and shellfish remains found in the Neolithic middens. Additionally, Stromness was a centre of whaling and fishing industries, which brought prosperity to the islands.
• The contrast between the fertile farmland and the unimproved moorland	
The fertile low ground with its farms and fields contrasts markedly with the open, uninhabited higher ground of moorland and hill. This is emphasised by the differing colours of the two areas – the bright greens of the farmland and the browns of the uplands.	Much of the low ground of the NSA, around the Loch basin of Stenness and on the gentle, coastal slopes, is comprised of rich, fertile agricultural land. The fields consist of improved grassland. On the higher ground of Wand Hill (Stenness), and on the rugged, glaciated hills of Roy there is open, unimproved, often heather-dominated, moorland and blanket peat. These areas have long been used for peat extraction, with old cuttings and extraction routes visible in many areas.

• <i>A landscape of contrasting curves and lines</i>	
The combination of curves and lines is a defining feature of this landscape. The pattern of the landform is smooth, with gentle curves, but the land itself often ends spectacularly in vertical cliffs and a horizontal horizon of sea. Rocks on the seashore and in the buildings and dykes tend to be flat and linear, and the field boundaries take straight lines across the curving landscape. There are no trees to soften the regular outlines of the farm buildings that stand proud on the undulating pasture, and the ancient monuments can be a combination of the linear and the circular: upstanding stones within a circular surround.	The low-lying land rises gently from the sea, to rounded farmland and moorlands; above are the more dramatic, steeper, but smoothly-curved hills of Hoy. There are curves also in many of the ancient monuments: the distinctive curved forms of Maes Howe and other cairns in the landscape, and the circular forms of the ditches in the hedge monuments of Scudgar and Stenness. These curves contrast with the linear, angular forms, often derived from the underlying sandstone: the geological bedding planes, the joints and fractures in the rocky coastline, the vertical and angular cliffs and stacks, the blocky nature of the stones, the dykes with their flat stones. Additionally, the fields and buildings tend to be rectilinear.
• <i>Land and water in constantly changing combinations under the open sky</i>	
Under the wide horizons, endless combinations of water, land, sea and sky can be experienced, varying both with location and the weather. Movement is brought to the landscape by the almost ceaseless wind, whether the scudding of clouds, the shafts of sunlight moving across the fields and moors, the patterns on the water, or long grass blowing in the wind.	Sea or loch is never far distant: the lochs of Karray and Stenness, surrounded by smooth lowlands and hills: small lochs and wicks such as Hamnavoe: the larger bay of Ireland, leading to sounds and deeps, and to the whale-shaped Gramsey: the enclosed Scapa Flow (bordering the NEA): the exposed Pentland Firth: and the open Atlantic Ocean.
<i>Location-specific qualities</i>	
• <i>The high hills of Hoy</i>	
The high, rounded hills of Hoy form a spectacular backdrop to much of West Mainland. With their corries, deep U-shaped valleys and patterned ground, these rugged, moorland hills reflect their glacial history. Within a sheltered gully in these hills lies the small Berriedale birchwood, the most northerly native wood in Britain.	Glaciated landforms on Hoy include distinctive U-shaped valleys, moraines, including a terminal moraine at Parkwick, and corries, the most northerly in Britain. Post-glacial features include patterned ground on the summit of Wand Hill (Hoy) and raised beaches. In contrast to Hoy, Mainland is a drowned coast without raised beaches. Berriedale Wood is composed of downy birch, with rowan, willow, aspen and hazel. There is an understorey of heather, roses, honeysuckle, ferns and blueberry.

• <i>The townscape of Stromness, its setting and its link with the sea</i>	
The stone-built settlement of Stromness, rising steeply out of its harbour, further enhances the character of the area. The townscape is distinctive, comprised of sandstone houses around the bay and on the hill behind, its traditional settlement pattern little altered. Particularly notable are its narrow, stone-flagged main street, with vennels leading down to the numerous private wharves, and narrow streets and paths leading up the hill behind. The town has always been dependent on the sea, and maintains strong maritime links. There is constant movement of boats in the harbour and the surrounding seas, from fishing and diving boats, to the arrival and departure of the ferry from Caithness.	Stromness and Hamnavoe go back to Viking times, if not before, with the natural harbour and relative calm waters compared to the surrounding seaways of the Atlantic ocean and the North Sea. Immediately north of mainland Britain, Orkney and its seaways have always been a strategic point for sea navigation. In times of war it has been an alternative route to the potentially dangerous English Channel. The town has had a rich, maritime history, including being of key importance to the herring fishery. It has been an important strategic location in times of war, for example during the Napoleonic and First & Second World Wars. It has had strong links to the sector, particularly through whaling and as base for the Hudson Bay Company.
• <i>The traditional buildings and crofting patterns of Rackwick</i>	
Set at the end of a glacial valley, between towering sandstone cliffs and a rocky beach open to the Atlantic Ocean, the distinctive and attractive village of Rackwick contains stone buildings and crofts in a traditional layout and in a spectacular setting.	'Rackwick, the only example of a ... crofting township on estate land where most of the houses are still in place.' Bailey (2007) The distinctiveness of Rackwick is brought about by the prevalence of vernacular buildings. Modern buildings, where present, have broadly retained the vernacular style. There are also examples of old longhouses. Sandstone is the building material and some roofs consist of flagstones or turf.

Selected Bibliography

- Bailey, P. 2007. *Orkney*. Newton Abbott: David & Charles.
- Berry, R.J. 1985. *Natural History of Orkney*. London: William Collins.
- Historic Scotland 2008. *Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site. Management Plan 2008–13*.
- Ritchie, A. 1995. *Prehistoric Orkney (Historic Scotland)*. London: Batsford.
- Ritchie 1988. *Scotland BC. Historic Buildings & Monuments*. Edinburgh: HMSO.
- Land Use Consultants 1998. *Orkney Landscape Character Assessment. Scottish Natural Heritage Review, No. 100*.

www.firth.orkney.sch.uk/trees/berriedale.htm (accessed October 2008)

www.orkneyjar.com (accessed October 2008)

Appendix B.5: Scheduled Monuments in the Orkney Islands

- SM90211 Hackness, Battery and Martello Tower.
- SM8663 Whaness Burn, enclosure 1680m NNE of Dwarfie Stane, Hoy.
- SM4346 Pickaquoy, burnt mound and settlement.
- SM90144 Eynhallow Church and settlement.
- SM1321 Mill Hill, chambered cairn, Millbounds.
- SM90276 Skara Brae, settlement, mounds and other remains.
- SM3864 Skirmie Clett, enclosures 740m SE of Onziebust, Wyre.
- SM3399 Whistlebare, platform settlement 250m N of, Burness.
- SM4299 Stone of Setter, standing stone and enclosure, Eday.
- SM90034 Brough of Birsay, settlements, church and related remains.
- SM90042 Ring of Brodgar, stone circle, henge and nearby remains.
- SM2198 Holm of Papa, chambered cairn at N end.
- SM1267 Long Stone, standing stone, Frotoft, Rousay.
- SM1335 Quoyer, mound 480m NNW of
- SM2292 Braes of Rinyo, settlement 180m NE of Bigland, Rousay.
- SM1469 North Howe, broch, Westside, Rousay.
- SM2884 Marwick, Norse settlement 500m WNW of West Howe.
- SM3302 Stanger Head Battery, Stanger Head.
- SM3245 Houton, chapel 60m E of Sunnybraes.
- SM3249 Car Ness Battery, Car Ness.
- SM3253 Buchanan Battery, Stanger Head.
- SM2181 Langskaill, Viking houses.
- SM90079 Cobbie Row's Castle.
- SM4065 Knowes of Maebeck, burnt mound.
- SM3534 Westness, Viking houses, noost and graveyard.
- SM3535 Sandhill, chambered cairn 300m W of, Eday.
- SM4654 Brough of Deerness, chapel and settlement.
- SM1242 Benni Cuml, mound, Housebay, Stronsay.
- SM3626 Westness Church.
- SM2726 Crockness, Martello Tower, Longhope.
- SM3549 Onziebust, chambered cairn 440m SSE of, Egilsay.
- SM1337 Ness, mound 140m NW of, Grimeston.
- SM1338 Groundwater, mound 200m NNW of, Loch of Kirbister.
- SM1340 Skelbust, chambered cairn 460m NE of
- SM1341 Boardhouse, mound 225m SSE of, Bimbister.
- SM1315 Knowes of Trinnawin, mounds 830m and 560m SE of Upper Bigging.
- SM1342 Sandola, mound 20m SE of
- SM1343 Knowe of Lyron, mound 120m WNW of Lyron Cottage.
- SM1317 Knowes of Yonbell, two mounds 225m and 350m NNE of Vestrafield.
- SM1318 Nisthouse, burial mound 270m ENE of
- SM1323 Mor Stein or Standing Stone of Shapinsay.

SM1325	Castle Bloody, chambered cairn.
SM1330	Tres Ness, chambered cairn at S end of
SM1344	Voy, burnt mound.
SM1347	Cumbla Newgarth, mounds, 200m NNE of Quean.
SM1331	Mount Misery, chambered cairn, Start Point.
SM1269	Geord of Nears, cairn 90m SW of Cairn House, Rousay.
SM1348	Linga Fiolds, mounds 220m NW of Upper Lyking Cottage.
SM1349	Midhouse, burial mounds 450m S of
SM1244	Black Knowe, burial mound, 245m NNW of Westside.
SM1245	Black Knowe, mound 470m N of Lower Cottascarth.
SM1350	Mittens, two mounds 110m NE of, Swannay.
SM1351	Groundwater, burial mounds 500m ENE of
SM1270	Greene Knowe, burnt mound, 230m SW of Braeside.
SM1272	Handest, settlement, Dounby.
SM1352	Rosemount and Easthouse, mounds 150m SW of and 350m WSW of Easthouse.
SM1353	Sivers Geo,mounds, Els Ness.
SM1273	Hawell, burnt mound 105m SSW of
SM1275	Helliar Holm, chambered cairn.
SM1357	Bigbreck Cottage, burial mounds N of
SM1358	Newhouse, cairn 35m SE of
SM1359	North Cairn, chambered cairn, Rose Ness.
SM1276	Hillocks of Garth, burial mounds 70m SW of
SM1278	Holm of Huip, cairn.
SM1279	Howaback, mound, Hourston.
SM1360	North Wald, mounds and burnt mounds 350m NNE of
SM1361	Oram's Fancy, two cairns 250m NW of Sandybank.
SM1280	Howana Gruna, cairn 270m SE of Whitehouse.
SM1281	Howe Harper, cairn 300m NW of Binscarth, Finstown.
SM1282	Howen Brough, broch.
SM1246	Brockan, burnt mound 300m S of
SM1247	Burgar, chambered cairn NNW of
SM1363	Lower Quendal, burnt mound NE of Sinians of Cutclaws, Rousay.
SM1285	Kirbuster Hill, barrow cemetery 410m ENE of Heatherlea.
SM1286	Loch of Knitchin, cairn 230m N of, Brinvar.
SM1287	Greentoft, burnt mound 350m SSW of, Eday.
SM1236	Augmond Howe cairn and cairn-derived bank, 800m SSE of Els Ness.
SM1237	Ballarat House, burnt mound.
SM1388	Trenabie Farm, standing stones, mound and bank 300m W of
SM1390	Staney Hill, standing stone 400m NNE of Feolquoy.
SM1391	Grice Ness, cairn 160m W of
SM1288	Knowe of Angerow, mound.
SM1289	Knowe of Brenda, burnt mound 260m WNW of Downatown.
SM1392	Kingshouse, mounds 390m NE of and 470m NNE of
SM1393	Stones of Via, enclosure and stone setting, Loch of Clumly.

- SM1394 Stoney Holm, crannog, Loch of Swanney.
- SM1290 Point of Buckquoy, four mounds.
- SM1395 Sweyn's Castle, burnt mound ESE of Skelbist, Gairsay.
- SM1396 Syra Dale, two cairns 380m NNE of Setter.
- SM1397 Hillhead, three burial mounds 430m ENE of
- SM1364 Knap Knowes, mounds 900m E of Sinians of Cutclaws, Quendal, Rousay.
- SM1366 Quoybirse, standing stone SE of
- SM1291 Knowe of Craie, chambered cairn 380m NNW of Curquoy, Rousay.
- SM1292 Knowe of Crustan, mound, Crustan.
- SM1293 Knowe of Dale, burnt mound, Quendal, Rousay.
- SM1241 Bay of London, mound 290m SE of Youth Hostel, Eday.
- SM1243 Bookan, chambered cairn 300m SSE of Buckan Cottage.
- SM1367 Quoyinalonga Ness, burnt mound 430m SSE of, Quendal, Rousay
- SM1368 Raviehall, three mounds E of
- SM1304 Knowe of Nesthouse, settlement.
- SM1294 Knowe of Dale, burnt mound, Marwick
- SM1297 Knowe of Garraquoy, burnt mound 265m WNW of Muce.
- SM1306 Knowe of Ramsay, chambered cairn 300m E of Hullion, Rousay.
- SM1309 Knowe of Smirrus, mound 350m NW of Gelderhouse.
- SM1310 Knowe of Swandro, mound 400m SSE of Skail, Westside.
- SM1298 Knowe of Gorn, burnt mound 195m S of Innister, Rousay.
- SM1299 Knowes of Howana, mound 200m SW of Flanders and remains of three others.
- SM1399 Linga Holm, mound.
- SM1312 Knowes of Cuean, mounds 225m N of Sunnybrae.
- SM1401 Too of Nugle, burial mound 500m WSW of Innister, Rousay.
- SM1402 Quoyhorrie, three mounds 200m ESE of
- SM1313 Knowes of Euro, mounds 340m SW of Appietown, Gorseness.
- SM1314 Knowes of Lingro, burial mounds 110m WNW of Waverley.
- SM2399 South Unigarth, souterrain.
- SM90341 Barnhouse Stone, standing stone.
- SM2124 St Tredwell's Chapel, chapel and settlement mound, Papa Westray.
- SM1371 Robie's Knowe, burnt mound 405m NNE of Howe Cottage.
- SM1372 Loch of Sabiston, island structures.
- SM1374 Linga Holm, two cairns.
- SM1376 Sandyhall, mounds S of
- SM1377 Loch of Scockness, broch, Rousay.
- SM1378 Seven Knowes, mounds.
- SM1380 South Seatter, mound 220m NNE of, Yesnaby.
- SM1381 Southside, standing stone 130m SW of
- SM1383 Clouduhall (or Cloddyhall) standing stone and cairn.
- SM1386 Sorquoy, standing stone, Papley.
- SM1431 Knowe of Burrian, broch at Netherbrough.
- SM1435 Dingy's Howe, broch, Upper Sanday.
- SM1436 Doocot Knowe, broch, Papa Stronsay.

- SM1438 East Broch of Burray.
- SM1369 Reeky Knowes, burial mounds, Aiker Ness.
- SM1370 Ring of Bookan, chambered cairn 180m SW of Bookan.
- SM1486 South Aittit, church 185m NE of
- SM1455 Knowe of Gullow, broch, Netherbrough.
- SM1458 Knowe of Skogar, broch.
- SM1257 Dale, burnt mound 380m NW of, Eday
- SM1259 Durka Dale, burnt mound 230m NNW of S of Loch Hundland.
- SM1260 Earls Knoll, long cairn and windmill SSW of East House.
- SM1488 Nether Benzieclett, farmstead, Skeabrae.
- SM1459 Knowe Stenso, broch N of Dyke.
- SM1460 Loch of Harray, broch on W shore of
- SM1461 Broch of Lingro, broch.
- SM1489 Bridge of Scuan, bridge, 350m NNE of Scuan.
- SM1472 Stackrue, broch and chapel 350m W of Lyking, Wasbister.
- SM1462 Loch of Ayre, broch at N end of, St Mary's.
- SM1463 Loch of Kirbister, enclosures on Holm of Groundwater.
- SM1474 Verron Broch.
- SM1476 Viera Lodge, broch, Frotoft.
- SM1439 Eves Howe, broch 640m N of Braebuster.
- SM1465 Midhouse, souterrain 380m ESE of
- SM1477 Vinquin, broch, 145m SSW of Upper Arsdale.
- SM1263 Eynhallow, standing stone and mound.
- SM1264 Fan Knowe, burnt mound 210m W of Hyval Cottage.
- SM1441 Fold of Setter, enclosure, Eday.
- SM1442 Ness of Boray, broch.
- SM1443 Green Hill, broch WSW of Huip.
- SM1445 Hillock of Breakna, broch 300m SE of Swanbister House.
- SM1466 Munkerhoo, settlement and farm mound, Papa Westray.
- SM1425 South Howe, broch, Westside, Rousay.
- SM1266 Vetquoy, mounds N of Lochside.
- SM1268 Knowe of Gairsty, barrows, Vestra Fiold.
- SM1446 Hillock of Baywest, broch 300m W of Loch of Rothiesholm, Bay of Holland.
- SM1449 Howmae Brae, settlement 200m WSW of Kirbist, North Ronaldsay.
- SM1450 Ingashowe, broch 300m NE of Finstown.
- SM1420 Hall of Rendall, settlement 275m NE of and St Thomas's Kirk.
- SM1421 Hillock of Burroughston, broch.
- SM1451 Knowe of Burrian, broch 190m SSW of Burrian, Rousay.
- SM1467 Ness of Woodwick, broch, 970m E of Lower Bisgarth.
- SM1426 Broch of Burgar, broch.
- SM1427 Burrian, broch and settlement S end of Stromness, North Ronaldsay.
- SM1428 Burrian Broch, broch, Corrigall.
- SM1429 Burrian, broch, NE shore of Loch of Harray.
- SM1430 Burrian, broch W shore of Loch of Harray.
- SM1470 Vestra Fiold, enclosure, quarry and cairn 430m W of Hillcrest.

- SM1404 Setter, two mounds.
- SM1405 Queena, two mounds SSW of Abune-the-Hill.
- SM1407 Unyatuak, mound 180m W of Bonnyhill, Monquhanny.
- SM1423 Loch of Clumly, broch.
- SM1408 Varne Dale, mounds 470m ESE of Gorn.
- SM1409 Vestra Fiold, four mounds, 380m SW of Vestrafiold.
- SM1249 Calf of Eday, chambered cairns on W side of
- SM1250 Huntersquoy, chambered cairn 480m SW of Carrick Farm, Eday.
- SM1410 Vinguoy Hill, chambered cairn, Eday.
- SM1411 Ward of Housebay, chambered cairn SSW of Housebay.
- SM1412 Wass Wick, mound.
- SM1252 The Manse, chambered cairn and church 330m WNW of, Eday.
- SM1253 Burness, broch and chapel 200m S of
- SM1413 West Puldrite, two mounds 280m NNW of
- SM1414 Wheebin standing stone.
- SM1254 Cubbie Roo's Burden, chambered cairn, Rousay.
- SM1255 Ivybank, mound 215m SSW of, Rousay.
- SM1480 Backaskaill Bay, Cross Parish Church.
- SM1482 Linton, chapel and graveyard 140m ENE of, Shapinsay.
- SM1453 Knowe of Dishero, broch 200m SSW of The Old Manse, Gorseness.
- SM1454 Knowe of Grugar or Ryo, broch SE of Burgar.
- SM1416 Yatenes Stone, standing stone 180m NNE of Faraclett, Rousay.
- SM1418 Borwick, Brough of, broch.
- SM1256 Cummi Howe, broch.
- SM1484 St Boniface's Church, church and hog-backed stone, Papa Westray.
- SM1447 The Hillock, broch 500m NNW of Ness of Ork.
- SM1274 Head of Work, long cairn.
- SM10977 Chapel of Brims, Hoy.
- SM7855 Wasbister, Stenness - Sandwich parish boundary, earthwork.
- SM10982 The Skeo, broch, Brims, Hoy.
- SM1403 Runa, mound, Twatt.
- SM5286 East Bigging, burnt mound 390m S of
- SM5080 Tofts Ness, cairns, enclosures and field systems, Sanday
- SM1356 Burn of Mussetter, standing stone on E side of
- SM5871 Diamond Cottage, defended promontory N of
- SM1251 Carrick Farm, chambered cairn and cairn 500m SSW of
- SM5773 The Wirk, tower and hall, Westness, Rousay.
- SM90243 Quoyness, chambered cairn, Els Ness, Sanday.
- SM1328 Hillock of Howe, broch.
- SM1300 Knowe of Laird, long cairn, E of Hullion, Frotoft.
- SM1362 Park Holm, artificial island and causeway, Loch of Swannay.
- SM5631 Lamb Head, broch, Stronsay.
- SM1400 Summerfield, three mounds 470m WNW of Greeny.
- SM1316 Knowes of Trotty, mounds S of Netherhouse, Huntscarth.
- SM6153 Lower Cornquoy, barrow 225m SSE of, Holm.

- SM6214 Brough of Bigging, promontory fort, Yesnaby.
- SM9308 Scapa Flow, wrecks of 4 cruisers of German High Seas Fleet..
- SM2136 Isbister, chambered cairn 450m ESE of
- SM90232 Knowe of Onston or Unstan, chambered cairn.
- SM90076 Click Mill, 500m ESE of Eastabist, Dounby.
- SM1355 Muckle Hill of Linkataing, chambered cairn, homestead and field system.
- SM90219 Midhowe, chambered cairn and remains nearby.
- SM90035 Blackhammer, chambered cairn, Rousay.
- SM1437 Upper Cairn, souterrain, Braebuster.
- SM90337 Links of Noltland, settlements.
- SM90033 Earl's Palace, Birsay.
- SM90198 Knowe of Yarso, chambered cairn.
- SM1422 Green Hill of Hestiegeo, broch.
- SM5992 Lochend, chambered cairn 450m NW of, Stronsay.
- SM90315 Wideford Hill, chambered cairn.
- SM5944 Stackel Brae, castle, Maltbarn, Eday.
- SM90157 Aiker Ness, Broch of Gurness, broch and settlement.
- SM90195 Knap of Howar, houses.
- SM90218 Midhowe Broch, broch and settlement, Rousay.
- SM1475 Verron, broch, platform and cultivation rigs, N of Bay of Skail.
- SM6424 Ramni Geo, chambered cairn SW of, Holm of Papa Westray.
- SM1261 Eday Church Hall, chambered cairn 260m WNW of
- SM1432 Carrick House, chambered cairn NW of, Eday.
- SM1301 Knowe of Lingro, chambered cairn, Lingro, Washbister, Rousay.
- SM1456 Knowe of Hunclett, broch ESE of Hunclett, Frotoft, Rousay.
- SM1375 Sandhill, burnt mound 200m SE of
- SM1424 Wasso, broch, Tres Ness, Sanday.
- SM6405 Lavacroon, settlement W of Bu of Orphir.
- SM1379 Skae Frue, mound 300m SW of Buckan.
- SM4725 Bu of Orphir, burnt mound and mill dam 250m NW of Bu Farm.
- SM90163 Holm of Papa Westray South, chambered cairn.
- SM1311 Knowe of Yesko, barrows and enclosure 250m NNE of Mirbister.
- SM6246 Lamb Holm, settlement 450m WSW of Italian Chapel.
- SM1444 Oxtro or Oxta, broch, Boardhouse
- SM1483 Peter's Kirk, church, burial ground and broch N of Outer Urrigar.
- SM1365 Quanerness, chambered cairn and prehistoric house 50m NW of
- SM6162 Scar, Viking burials and settlement NE of, Sanday.
- SM90209 Maes Howe, chambered cairn.
- SM1307 Knowe of Rowiegar, chambered cairn and nearby remains.
- SM90154 Grain Earth House and Grainbank, two souterrains, Hatston.
- SM10104 Knowe of Hamar, burnt mound, 300 m ESE of Innister.
- SM6596 Dennis Head, Old Beacon, North Ronaldsay.
- SM1302 Knowe of Makerhouse, burnt mound 100m ESE of Makerhouse.
- SM8208 Tuquoy, settlement W of Cross-Kirk, Westray.
- SM90317 St Mary's Chapel, Wyre.

SM1406 Newbigging, three mounds 300m WSW of
SM90245 Rennibister, souterrain.
SM90122 Dwarfie Stane, rock-cut tomb, Hoy.
SM9298 Scapa Flow, wrecks of 3 battleships of German High Seas Fleet.
SM8662 Whaness Burn, enclosed settlement 1420m NNE of Dwarfie Stane, Hoy.
SM8664 Whaness Burn, enclosure 1620m NNE of Dwarfie Stane, Hoy.
SM90137 St Magnus Church, Egilsay.
SM90193 Bishop's Palace, Kirkwall.
SM90092 Cuween Hill, chambered cairn.
SM90194 Earl's Palace, Kirkwall.
SM90312 Cross-Kirk (Westside Church), church and burial ground, Tuquoy, Westray.
SM7857 Wasbister, mounds SSE of The Brecks.
SM7700 Wasbister, burial mounds and settlement 650m SE of Buckan Cottage.
SM7647 Lochview, standing stones and cairn SE of
SM90285 Stenness, stone circle and henge.
SM90297 Taversoe Tuick, chambered cairn and nearby remains.
SM9674 Overbigging, enclosure 160m W of
SM1283 The Howie, mound 300m SE of Newbanks, Deerness.
SM10196 Bigland, round chambered tomb, 400m N of
SM1329 Howa Tower, chambered cairn NNW of Netherhouse, Bay of Kirbist.
SM10340 Green Gairsty, dyke, 740 m E of Langskail.
SM1262 Esgar, two burnt mounds WSW of, Dounby.
SM10189 Faraclett Head, stone setting, 670m NW of Faraclett.
SM1277 Hillock of Garth, cairn 900m S of Garth.
SM10134 Faraclett Head, chambered tombs, E and W.
SM10169 Faraclett Head, mound, 856m WNW of Faraclett.
SM90231 Noltland Castle.
SM9288 Papa Stronsay, burnt mound 500m E of Mill.
SM9289 Papa Stronsay, kelp kiln 120m N of Mill.
SM8241 Ness Battery, coast defence battery, Stromness.
SM8645 Muckle Gairsty, linear earthworks between Viggay Banks and Gairsna Geo.
SM1384 Holland, standing stone 370m WSW of, North Ronaldsay.
SM1419 Brae of Stennabreck, settlement WNW of Stennabreck, North Ronaldsay.
SM1487 Breckness House and site of chapel.
SM1248 Hall of Ireland, cairns 320m NW of
SM1457 Knowe of Queen o' Howe, broch, Westray.
SM1452 Knowe of Burristae, broch W of Langskail, Bay of Kirbist.
SM8650 Versa Breck, buildings 130m W of lighthouse, North Ronaldsay.
SM8647 Southness, farm mound E of, North Ronaldsay.
SM8631 Brides Loch, burnt mound 340m WNW of Bride's Kirk.
SM9417 Fitty Hill, chambered cairn 500m SE of summit.
SM8651 Strom Ness, settlement 400m S of Howar, North Ronaldsay.
SM1333 Easthouse, burnt mound 100m SSW of
SM8632 Knowe o' Samilands, burnt mound, North Ronaldsay.
SM1468 Nettleter, broch 250m SW of

SM10946 Golta, World War II Z Battery and Light AA Battery, Flotta.
SM10944 Roan Head, World War II Balloon Barrage site, 290m SW of, Golta.
SM10974 Greenhill Broch, South Walls, Orkney.
SM90352 Watch Stone, stone settings, Barnhouse settlement, and related remains.
SM2949 Damsay, St Mary's Chapel.
SM10233 Little Barnhouse, mound, 160m NE of
SM1296 Knowe of Flaws, mound 270m SSW of Flaws.
SM2438 Bay of Meil, chapel 250m W of Holland.
SM1308 Knowe of Scorn, burnt mound.
SM1284 Hundland, settlement mound 270m SW of
SM13497 Scad Head, coast artillery battery, camp and railway, Hoy.
SM13504 Quoygrew, settlement, Westray.
SM13505 Knowe of Skea, prehistoric settlement and burials, Berst Ness, Westray.
SM13524 Castle of Burwick, promontory fort.
SM13383 Auskerry, burnt mound 260m SW of Loch of Dinnapow.
SM13374 Banks, chambered cairn 25m SW of, South Ronaldsay.
SM13384 Auskerry, long cist 95m W of Whale Geo.
SM13385 Auskerry, mound 275m SSW of The Old House.
SM13416 Pierowall Church (Lady Kirk), Westray.
SM13387 Auskerry, standing stone 160m NW of Chapel Geo.
SM13389 Auskerry, settlement 165m SSW of Loch of Dinnapow.
SM13390 Auskerry, three standing stones.
SM13388 Auskerry, settlement 315m ESE of Loch of Dinnapow.
SM13419 Burn of Selta, farmsteads, field system and associated remains
SM13521 Auskerry, chapel and settlement 590m NE of Auskerry Lighthouse.
SM13448 Billia Fiold, enclosures, platforms and banks.
SM13482 Burrody's Hill, enclosed settlement.
SM13556 Rerwick Head, coastal battery (WW2) and camp.
SM13465 Houton Head, battery 325m W of Sunnybraes.
SM13449 Upper Sower, coastal battery N of, Clestrain.
SM13530 Slack, square barrow cemetery 360m S and 550m SE of, Braebuster, Hoy.
SM13421 Point of Avelshay, coastal battery, Rousay.
SM13525 Skerry Battery, coast battery (WW2) 460m NNE of Bu.
SM13499 Burray Ness, anti-aircraft battery (WW1), Burray.
SM13379 St Nicholas' Church, settlement and mill, Orphir.
SM13459 Rack Wick bay, kelp working site, Westray.
SM13536 Tafts of Quendale, farmstead, Rousay.
SM13473 Buckan, enclosure 150m N of
SM13461 Big Howe, broch 260m WNW of Stenness Church.
SM13500 Holm Battery, coast artillery battery 195m SW of East Breckan.
SM13478 Ness Battery, gun emplacements 300m SSE of, Stromness.
SM13451 Hundland Hill, enclosure 500m NE of Nisthouse.
SM1448 The Hillock Broch, Finstown.
SM13569 Graemsay Battery, coast battery and camp.
SM1385 Leafa, standing stones 535m SSW of Broadshore House.

- SM1389 Stanerandy, mound and two standing stones 100m SSE of Little Favel.
- SM1473 Tingwall, broch and mound 90m W of Tingwall House.
- SM10945 Roan Head, coastal battery and camp (WW1).
- SM2934 Marwick, chapel, burial ground and enclosure 595m NNW of West Howe.
- SM3268 Hoxa Battery and Balfour Battery, coastal battery complexes, Hoxa Head.
- SM1295 Knowe of Eversti, burnt mound.
- SM1415 Midland, burial mound 450m NNE of
- SM1464 North Bigging, broch 80m SSW of Mithiest.
- SM1434 Castle Howe, Norse Castle and prehistoric settlement.
- SM1373 Saevar Howe, mound 370m SSW of Linkshouse.
- SM13600 Sand Geo, fishing station 240m WSW of West Howe.
- SM1303 Knowe of Midgarth, settlement and cairn.
- SM13433 Tafts, burnt mound 195m WSW of, Quendal, Rousay.
- SM13441 Staney Hill, enclosure 95m S of Henges.
- SM13560 Quoy, anti-aircraft battery (WW2) and radar 220m WSW of
- SM13564 Wasswick Battery, coastal battery complex 400m E of Queenamuckle.
- SM13558 Stromabank Hotel, anti-aircraft battery, radar site and camp 150m NW of
- SM13555 Innan Neb, coast batteries, barrage balloon site and camp.
- SM1440 Chambered cairn, 280m NW of Quoy, Faray.

Appendix B.6: Orkney Scheduled Monuments in the Care of Historic Scotland

Name	Location	Grid reference
Earl's Palace	Birsay	HY248277
Brough of Birsay, settlements, church and related remains	Birsay	HY239285
St Magnus Church	Egilsay	HY 466304
Aikerness, Broch of Gurness, broch and settlement	Evie	HY381268
Eynhallow Church and settlement	Eynhallow	HY359288
Cuween Hill, chambered cairn	Firth	HY364127
Rennibister, souterrain	Firth	HY397126
Wideford Hill, chambered cairn	Firth	HY409121
Click Mill, 500m ESE of Eastabist	Harray	HY325288
Dwarfie Stane, rock-cut tomb	Hoy	HY 244005
Hackness, Battery and Martello Tower	Hoy	ND 338912
Grain Earth House and Grainbank, two souterrains	Kirkwall	HY442116
Bishop's Palace	Kirkwall	HY449108
Earl's Palace	Kirkwall	HY449107
St Nicholas' Church	Orphir	HY335044
Earl's Bu, Norse settlement and mill	Orphir	HY335045
Holm of Papa Westray South, chambered cairn	Papa Westray	HY 505523
Knap of Howar, houses	Papa Westray	HY484519
Blackhammer, chambered cairn	Rousay	HY 414276
Knowe of Yarso, chambered cairn	Rousay	HY 404279

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Name	Location	Grid reference
Midhowe Broch, broch and settlement	Rousay	HY 371308
Midhowe, chambered cairn and remains nearby	Rousay	HY 372306
Taversoe Tuick, chambered cairn and nearby remains	Rousay	HY 426276
Quoyness, chambered cairn, Els Ness	Sanday	HY 677378
Skara Brae, settlement, mounds and other remains	Sandwick	HY229188
Ring of Brodgar, stone circle, henge and nearby remains	Stenness	HY294132
Maes Howe, chambered cairn	Stenness	HY318127
Knowe of Onston or Unstan, chambered cairn	Stenness	HY282117
Stenness, stone circle and henge	Stenness	HY306125
Barnhouse Stone, standing stone	Stenness	HY312121
Watch Stone, stone settings, Barnhouse settlement, and related remains	Stenness	HY305126
Tormiston Mill	Stenness	HY319125
Noltland Castle	Westray	HY 429488
Pierowall Church (Lady Kirk)	Westray	HY 439488
Cross-Kirk (Westside Church), church & burial ground, Tuquoy	Westray	HY 455432
Links of Noltland, settlements	Westray	HY 428492
Cobbie Row's Castle	Wyre	HY 442264
St Mary's Chapel	Wyre	HY 443264

Appendix C.1: Assessment of the Vision for the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

LEGEND:

++	+	0	?	-	--
Significantly positive effects	Positive effects	Minor or neutral effects	Effects uncertain	Adverse effects	Significantly adverse effects

SEA receptors	Assessment findings	Comment
Climatic factors	+	The OIRMP's vision is that the Orkney Islands marine region is clean, healthy, safe and productive; Orkney's marine and coastal environment is rich in biodiversity and managed sustainably to support thriving and resilient local communities.
Biodiversity, flora & fauna	+	The OIRMP seeks to protect Orkney's rich natural and cultural heritage assets which underpin its economy and contribute to the quality of life in the islands
Water	+	
Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	+	
Geology	+	
Landscape	+	
Cultural heritage	+	
Population & Human health	+	Amenity, well-being and quality of life of local communities is a key policy strand of the OIRMP.
Material assets	+	The OIRMP directs development and/or activities to areas of least constraint.

SEA receptors	Assessment findings	Comment
Assessment summary		The Vision aims to strengthen and support Orkney's marine and coastal communities by enabling those developments and/or activities which will safeguard the natural and cultural environment and have positive and sustainable socio-economic impacts. It commits to encouraging development which will make use of and support existing services and facilities and promotes development and/or activities that will facilitate resilient local communities and safeguard quality of life.

Appendix C.2: Assessment of the Policies of the OIRMP for their Compatibility with the SEA Objectives

Key:	++	Fully compatible with the SEA Objectives which are <u>relevant to the policy</u>
	+	Broadly compatible with SEA Objectives which are <u>relevant to the policy</u>
	-	Incompatible with the SEA Objectives <u>relevant to the policy</u>
	0	No link
	?	Compatibility with SEA Objectives is uncertain

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment									How recommendations were incorporated
GP1 Sustainable Development, Activities and Use	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	
	Policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Climate change by supporting the transformational change to a low carbon economy and increasing the use of sustainable techniques in development. - Safeguard valuable habitat from loss and fragmentation through development. - Protect against developments which have potential to cause or exacerbate coastal erosion and flooding. - Reduce the threat of contamination and seek to protect soils from damage such as erosion or compaction. - Protect designated and undesignated sites which are recognised and valued for their geological or geomorphological importance. - Seascape and landscape by facilitating positive change while maintaining and enhancing distinctive landscape character.									

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment									How recommendations were incorporated
	- Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and siting of development. - Population and human health by contributing to the protection of human health. - Material assets by promoting the efficient use of resources and the minimisation of wastes and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. No further recommendations.									
GP2 Safety	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	++	
	Policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities. - Promote sustainable and efficient use of natural resources. No further recommendations.									
GP3. Climate Change	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	++	++	+	0	0	0	+	+	++	
	Policy is compatible with SEA objectives for:									

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment								How recommendations were incorporated	
	- Climate change by contributing to national targets to address the cause of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. - supporting the transformational change to a low carbon economy and increasing the use of sustainable techniques in development. - Supporting nature-based solutions are considered. - Climate change mitigation will indirectly assist in preserving historic assets e.g. by limiting future sea level rise impacts on coastal assets. - Population and human health by contributing to the protection of human health and improving community environments. - Material assets by promoting the efficient use of resources and the minimisation of wastes and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. - Significant weight in decision making is given to the climate crisis, including measures for mitigation and adaptation. No further recommendations.									
GP4 Supporting Sustainable Social and Economic Benefits.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	
	Policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - supporting the transformational change to a low carbon economy and increasing the use of sustainable techniques in development. - Population and human health by introducing policy provisions to maximise sustainable employment benefits and create skilled employment in local communities, and supporting local businesses and supply chains.									

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment								How recommendations were incorporated		
	No further recommendations.										
GP5 Safeguarding natural capital and ecosystem services.	Climate factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human Health	Material Assets	N/A	
	++	++	+	+	0	0	0	+			+
	Policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: • Maintaining healthy ecosystems and working with the natural processes which provide important services to communities, including maintaining, and where appropriate enhancing, natural capital and ecosystem services. • Promote the protection and improvement of the water environment, including burns, lochs, estuaries, wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater. • Protect against developments which have potential to cause or exacerbate coastal erosion and flooding. • Reduce the threat of contamination and seek to protect benthic sediments from damage such as erosion or compaction. • Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities. • Promote sustainable and efficient use of natural resources. • Ensuring any significant disturbance or degradation of coastal and/or marine natural capital and/or ecosystem services has been avoided, minimised and/or appropriately mitigated.										
	No further recommendations.										

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment								How recommendations were incorporated
GP6 Water Environment.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets
	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	+	+
	Policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Maintain healthy ecosystems and work with the natural processes which provide important services to communities. - Promote the protection and improvement of the water environment, including burns, lochs, estuaries, wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater. - Reduce the threat of contamination and seek to protect benthic sediments from damage such as erosion or scouring. - Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities. - Promote sustainable and efficient use of natural resources. No further recommendations.								N/A
GP7 Coastal development and coastal change.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets
	+	0	+	++	++	+	?	+	+
	Policy is compatible with SEA objectives for:								N/A

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment								How recommendations were incorporated	
	- Climate change by addressing vulnerability to the likely effects of climate change. - Water by promoting protection and improvement of the water environment. - Benthic sediments by addressing issues which lead to increased risk of erosion. - Geology by protecting designated and undesignated sites that are recognised and valued for their geological or geomorphological importance. - Coastal processes by supporting adaptation to the effects of coastal erosion, flooding, and wider coastal change. No further recommendations									
GP8 Historic Environment.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	0	0	0	0	0	+	++	+	0	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Cultural heritage by promoting the care and protection of the designated and non-designated historic environment; enabling positive change whilst ensuring the future use of Orkney’s heritage assets; safeguarding cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and siting of development; and protecting the integrity and Outstanding Universal Value of the heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site. - Seascape and landscape by protecting features which contribute to the character of Orkney’s distinctive seascapes and landscapes. - Population and human health by supporting opportunities for enjoying and learning about Orkney’s cultural environment. - For non-designated historic environmental assets where impacts cannot be avoided, the OIRMP introduces provisions for these impacts to be minimised and appropriately mitigated.									

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment								How recommendations were incorporated
	No further recommendations.								
GP9 Nature.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	N/A
	++	++	+	0	0	0	+	+	
	Policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Biodiversity by affording appropriate protection to natural heritage sites and protected species; enabling the protection of ecosystems which provide important services to communities; safeguarding valuable habitat from loss and damage; affording appropriate protection for marine and coastal species and promoting the protection of biodiversity as well as the appropriate enhancement or restoration of habitats. - Water by promoting protection and improvement of the water environment. - Geology by protecting designated and undesignated sites which are valued for their geological or geomorphological importance. - Landscape by facilitating positive change while maintaining and enhancing distinctive seascape and/or landscape character. - Climate change by protecting natural features which contribute towards community resilience to the effects of climate change. - Cultural heritage by recognising and protecting the contribution of coastal built features within landscapes. - Population and human health by supporting opportunities for enjoying and learning about Orkney's natural environment.								
	No further recommendations.								

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment									How recommendations were incorporated
GP10 Seascape and Landscape.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	+	0	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: • Landscape by facilitating positive change while maintaining and enhancing distinctive seascape and landscape character. No further recommendations.									
GP11 Surface and Underwater Noise and Vibration.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: • Conserve protected sites and species.									

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment								How recommendations were incorporated	
	Protect and enhance human health by introducing policy provisions to include sufficient measures to avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse noise and/or vibration impacts on the local communities. No further recommendations.									
GP12 Marine Litter and Waste.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Maintain healthy ecosystems and work with the natural processes which provide important services to communities. - Promote the protection and improvement of the water environment, including burns, lochs, estuaries, wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater. No further recommendations.									
GP13 Invasive Non-Native Species and Non-Native Species.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment								How recommendations were incorporated	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: • Conserve protected sites and species. • Maintain healthy ecosystems and work with the natural processes which provide important services to communities. • Promote the protection and improvement of the water environment, including burns, lochs, estuaries, wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater. • Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities. No further recommendations									
GP14 Amenity, Well-being and Quality of Life of Coastal Communities.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	++	0	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: • Population and human health by supporting opportunities for enjoying and learning about Orkney’s natural environment, and introducing provisions to avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse effects on amenity as well as for proposals for development to have demonstrated that they have engaged local community stakeholders, alongside maximising opportunities to deliver amenity, wellbeing and quality of life benefits for local communities. No further recommendations									

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment										How recommendations were incorporated
SP1 Commercial Fishing.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets		N/A
	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0
	- Management of commercial fishing will be for the Marine Directorate to determine. The OIRMP policy aims to safeguard areas for fishing but cannot prevent removal of biodiversity nor impact on benthic sediments that result directly from fishing activities. - Indirect positive effect for biodiversity from Plan policies introducing provisions for developments and/or activities to avoid, minimise and mitigate impacts on nursery spawning and feeding areas. SEA comments: Potential for largely positive effects associated with the policy through the promotion of the consideration of interactions with the fisheries sector by potential developers and other marine users in the OIRMP area. In setting out requirements for developers and marine users, and outlining support for the safeguarding of existing fishing practices where possible, preserving the potential for opportunities for future sustainable activities, and supporting the safeguarding of environmental factors upon which the sector relies (e.g. fish stocks, spawning and nursery areas), the policy has the potential for contributing overall positive effects for the sector. However, there is potential for conflicts and trade-offs between the fishing sector and other sectors (e.g. particularly in terms of displacement due factors such as the location and timing/design of development, amongst others), and hence the potential for both positive and neutral effects for Material Assets, and Population and Human Health.										

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment									How recommendations were incorporated
SP2 Aquaculture.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: Improve community environments and quality of life. SEA comments: The mitigation applied during the determination of an aquaculture application, through existing consenting processes (e.g. potentially including planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, obtaining seabed leases from TCE and landowners, Controlled Activity Regulations (CAR) Licenses from SEPA, Marine Licensing from Marine Directorate) etc will address the potential for any significant environmental effects. The policy will provide support to these processes by providing awareness and clarity for future developers and stakeholders on these requirements, and could result in benefits for Material Assets and Communities, Population and Human Health topic areas (i.e. potential for improved efficiency in the consenting process, enhanced consultation between developers and stakeholders, early identification of interactions and potential Other potential impacts associated with aquaculture developments, that may be incompatible with several of the SEA Objectives, will be avoided through policy implementation e.g. that proposals for finfish and shellfish farming development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on: a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity. b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including Priority Marine Features.									

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment													How recommendations were incorporated	
	c. seal haul-out sites. d. wild salmonid fish populations due to sea lice and/or escapes (applies to finfish farming only). e. water quality, biological carrying capacity and the benthic environment. f. historic environment assets. g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, port and harbour infrastructure/operations, active existing aquaculture sites, marine cable routes and pipelines, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities. h. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light, access, vibration, odour and litter impacts. These will be implemented in decision making including the identification of mitigation measures during the application process.														
SP3 Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity		Water		Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils		Geology		Landscape		Cultural heritage	Populatio n & Human Assets	N/A	
	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	++		0
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for:														
• Improve community environments and quality of life. • Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities.															

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment	How recommendations were incorporated
	SEA comments: Potential for overall positive environmental and socio-economic effects associated with the Policy. However, there is the potential for these effects to be mixed; potential socio-economic benefits through promoting the safeguarding and sustainable growth of existing port and harbour facilities, the potential safeguarding of jobs and recreational/leisure activities that rely on these facilities, and setting out support for the communities that rely economically on them. In general, protecting access to ports and harbours in the OIRMP area is considered likely to be beneficial for many marine users, particularly if the use of these facilities is shared (e.g. marine transport sector, recreational users, fishing sector, renewables sector, vessels servicing oil and gas). The potential for associated positive effects for biodiversity, water quality, coastal processes, benthic sediments and soil, geology and landscape are mixed due to the potential for likely major development of harbours and for a reduction in collision and pollution risk associated with promoting navigational safety and the safeguarding of port and harbour access. Other potential impacts associated with port and harbour developments, that may otherwise be incompatible with several of the SEA Objectives, will be avoided and/or appropriately mitigated through the OIRMP policy implementation e.g. Proposals for port and harbour development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on: a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity. b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including Priority Marine Features. c. seal haul-out sites. d. water quality and the benthic environment. e. historic environment assets.	

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment										How recommendations were incorporated	
	f. coastal processes including those caused by erosion, flooding and wider coastal change. g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, port and harbour infrastructure/operations, marine cable routes and pipelines, active aquaculture sites, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities. h. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light, access, vibration, odour and litter impacts. These will be implemented in decision making including the identification of mitigation measures during the application process.											
SP4 Pipelines, Electricity and Telecommunications Infrastructure.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils		Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage		Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	++	+	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Support the transformational change to a low carbon economy, consistent with national objectives and targets. - Protect designated and undesignated sites which are recognised and valued for their geological or geomorphological importance - Improve community environments and quality of life. - Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities. - Promote sustainable and efficient use of natural resources. SEA comments											

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment	How recommendations were incorporated
	In some instances the effects of this policy could be mixed on the SEA objectives. Promoting suitable routing of cable and pipeline infrastructure could lead to the avoidance of sensitive or designated areas, and could for example, aid in the protection of sensitive or important seabed habitats and benthic species from disturbance of effects of operation such as EMF but would impact the seabed areas used. The potential for similar benefits for avoiding impacts to historic assets (e.g. submerged wreck sites, etc.) throughout the OIRMP area were identified. There is the potential for benefits for other marine users through avoiding conflicts and potential displacement of other marine users (e.g. fishing activities such as scallop dredging, vessel anchoring areas, etc). Other potential impacts associated with Pipelines, Electricity and Telecommunications Infrastructure developments, that may otherwise be incompatible with several of the SEA Objectives, will be avoided and/or appropriately mitigated through the OIRMP policy implementation e.g.: Proposals for new or replacement pipeline or cable development and/or activities should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on: a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity. b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including Priority Marine Features. c. seal haul-out sites. d. water quality and the benthic environment. e. historic environment assets. f. coastal processes, including those caused by erosion, flooding and wider coastal change. g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations, active aquaculture sites, tourism, recreation, sport and leisure activities. h. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, access, vibration, odour and litter impacts. These will be implemented in decision making including the identification of mitigation measures during the application process.	

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment															How recommendations were incorporated	
SP5 Offshore Wind, Wave, and Tidal Renewable Energy Generation.	Climatic factors		Biodiversity		Water		Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils		Geology		Landscape		Cultural heritage		Population & Human health		Material Assets
	++	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	++	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Climatic factors by supporting the transformational change to a low carbon economy; it addresses proposals to develop electricity generation from renewable energy techniques as well as heat networks, energy from waste and district heating. - Material assets by promoting the efficient use of resources and the minimisation of wastes through their recovery through energy recovery. SEA comments: It is also broadly compatible with objectives relating to the other SEA receptors as it seeks to ensure that energy-related developments would have no unacceptable impacts on environmental and community considerations. However, the proposals within the OIRMP Option areas for offshore wind development may impact European sites, but until the agreed location and extent of a final suite of offshore windfarms' is confirmed, it will not be possible to determine the compatibility of this policy with the SEA objectives. The policy includes criteria to ensure a thorough assessment of environmental effects. Other potential impacts associated with Offshore Wind, Wave, and Tidal Renewable Energy Generation developments, that may otherwise be incompatible with several of the SEA Objectives, will be avoided and/or appropriately mitigated through the OIRMP policy implementation e.g: Proposals for offshore wind energy development and/or activities should avoid, minimise or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on: a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity.																

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment									How recommendations were incorporated
	b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including Priority Marine Features. c. seal haul-out sites. d. water quality and the benthic environment. e. historic environment assets. f. coastal processes including those caused by erosion, flooding and wider coastal change. g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations, marine cable routes and pipelines, active aquaculture sites, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities. h. aviation and defence interests. i. telecommunications, radar and broadcasting installations. j. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light, access, vibration, shadow flicker and litter impacts.									
SP6 Zero Carbon Fuels, Oil and Gas Transition.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	
	++	+	+	+	0	0	0	++	+	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Contribute to national targets to address the cause of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. - Maintain healthy ecosystems and work with the natural processes which provide important services to communities. - Promote the protection and improvement of the water environment, including burns, lochs, estuaries, wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater.									N/A

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment								How recommendations were incorporated	
	- Support the transformational change to a low carbon economy, consistent with national objectives and targets. - Reduce the threat of contamination and seek to protect soils from damage such as erosion or compaction. - Improve community environments and quality of life. - Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities. - Promote sustainable and efficient use of natural resources. SEA comments: In general terms, support for the sustainable growth of the renewables sector has the potential for both positive and negative effects on marine, coastal and terrestrial environments due to offshore and associated land-based and landfall renewables infrastructure. The transition away from oil and gas products to zero carbon fuels should have an overall positive effect on climate mitigation and the associated environmental effects.									
SP7 Tourism, Recreation, Sport and Leisure.	Climatic factors	Biodiversity	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soils	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & Human health	Material Assets	N/A
	0	++	+	++	0	++	++	++	+	
	The policy is compatible with SEA objectives for: - Conserve protected sites and species. - Safeguard valuable habitat from loss and fragmentation through development. - Promote the protection and improvement of the water environment, including burns, lochs, estuaries, wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater.									

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

OIRMP Policy	Initial Assessment	How recommendations were incorporated
	• Reduce the threat of contamination and seek to protect soils from damage such as erosion or compaction. • Recognise the environmental benefits provided by soils and protect their quality and quantity. • Maintaining and enhancing distinctive landscape character. • Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and siting of development. • Improve community environments and quality of life. • Protect and enhance human health and promote access to health, social and recreational facilities. • Promote sustainable and efficient use of natural resources. SEA comments: The OIRMP will support the sustainable development of marine recreation, sport, leisure and tourism, whilst ensuring SEA objectives are supported, providing overall positive socio-economic and environmental benefits. Other potential impacts associated with Tourism, Recreation, Sport and Leisure developments, that may otherwise be incompatible with several of the SEA Objectives, will be avoided and/or appropriately mitigated through the OIRMP policy implementation e.g: Proposals for tourism, recreation, leisure and sport development and/or activities should avoid, minimise or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts on: a. landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity. b. nature conservation designations, protected species, and the wider biodiversity, including Priority Marine Features. c. seal haul-out sites. d. water quality and the benthic environment. e. historic environment assets. f. coastal processes including those caused by erosion, flooding and wider coastal change. g. other coastal and marine users including, but not limited to, commercial fishing, shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations, marine cable routes and pipelines, active aquaculture sites, tourism, recreation, and sport and leisure activities. h. amenity, including consideration of road traffic, noise, light, access, vibration and litter impacts.	

Appendix C.3: Summary of assessment of the likely environmental effects of implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan Policies

Key:	++	Major benefit
	+	Minor - moderate benefit
	--	Major adverse effects
	-	Minor - moderate adverse effects
	0	Neutral effects
	?	Effects uncertain

SEA receptor										
Policy	Climatic factors	Biodiversity flora & fauna	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soil	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & human health	Material assets	Cumulative effect / Notes
GP1 Sustainable Development, Activities and Use	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	Broadly neutral with moderate benefit in terms of climatic factors and material assets. Policy promotes the delivery of sustainable environmental, social and economic benefits, and the application of the precautionary principle.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor										
Policy	Climatic factors	Biodiversity flora & fauna	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soil	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & human health	Material assets	Cumulative effect / Notes
GP2 Safety	0	+	+	+	?	?	?	+	?	Broadly positive with moderate benefit because safety is a significant consideration therefore the policy will support safe practices thereby reducing potential impacts on biodiversity, water, benthic sediments and population and human health.
GP3 Climate Change	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	Moderate benefit is likely in terms of climatic factors, biodiversity, flora and fauna, water, landscape and population / human health. Enhanced flood risk management, biodiversity, and improve access to coastal open space, delivered via nature based solutions.
GP4 Supporting Sustainable Social and Economic Benefits	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	Broadly neutral with moderate benefit in terms of climatic factors, and population / human health. Encourages developments and/or activities to deliver sustainable economic benefits and synergistic benefits with the existing activities of other marine and coastal users.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor										
Policy	Climatic factors	Biodiversity flora & fauna	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soil	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & human health	Material assets	Cumulative effect / Notes
GP5 Safeguarding Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services	+	++	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	Overall positive benefit for most SEA receptors as the ecosystem services and natural capital that underpin the health of ecosystems are supported.
GP6 Water Environment	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	?	?	Overall positive benefit for biodiversity, water and benthic sediments.
GP 7 Coastal Development and Coastal Change	+	++	+	++	++	+	+	+	++	Significant positive benefit for the protection of biodiversity, coastal processes, geology and materials as development and/or activities will have to be in accordance with multiple protection plans and frameworks and negative impacts on coastal processes and coastal protection should be minimised. All other SEA receptors are also given positive policy support.
GP8 Historic Environment.	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	Moderate benefit is likely in terms of cultural heritage, its setting in the landscape and population/human health. The policy makes provision for enhancement of cultural heritage assets and ensures the continued availability of opportunities for enjoying and learning about Orkney's cultural environment.
GP9 Nature	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	Moderate benefit is likely in terms of biodiversity, flora and fauna, water and population/human

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor										
Policy	Climatic factors	Biodiversity flora & fauna	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soil	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & human health	Material assets	Cumulative effect / Notes
										health. Makes provision for new development to provide benefits for biodiversity and improve the water environment. Ensures the continued availability of opportunities for enjoying and learning about Orkney's natural environment
GP10 Seascape and Landscape	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	+	0	Overall moderate benefit for the setting of cultural heritage and public enjoyment of the landscape, and major benefit in terms of protection seascape/ landscape.
GP11 Surface and Underwater Noise and Vibration	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	Overall neutral benefit but will support reduced impacts on biodiversity and human health.
GP12 Marine Litter and Waste	0	+	+	?	0	+	0	+	0	Litter and waste reduction will have a positive effect on biodiversity, water, landscape and human health.
GP13 Invasive Non-Native Species and Non-Native Species	0	++	+	?	0	0	0	?	?	Positive benefits for biodiversity and water quality but impacts on benthic sediments, human health and materials assets unclear.

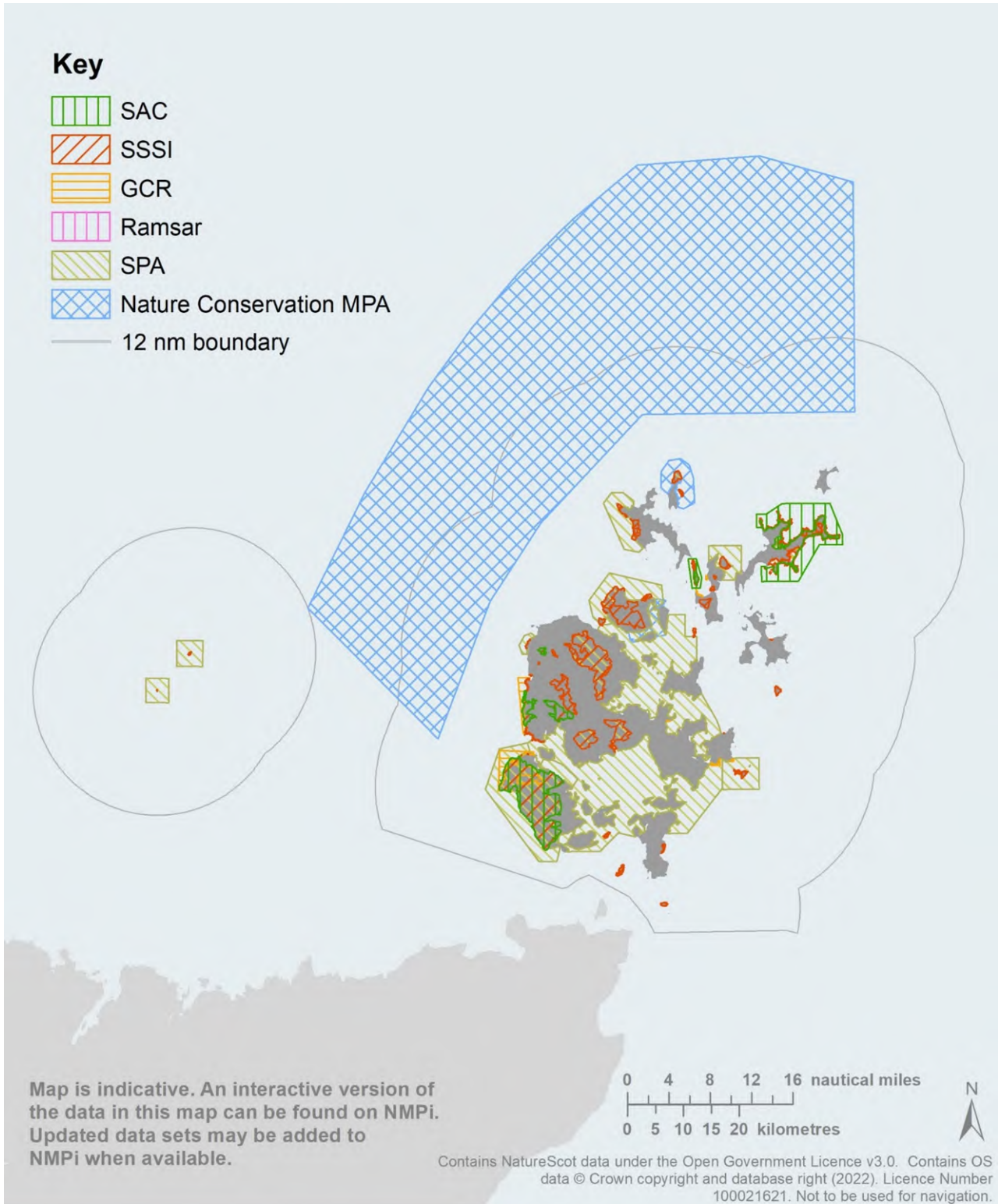
Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor										
Policy	Climatic factors	Biodiversity flora & fauna	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soil	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & human health	Material assets	Cumulative effect / Notes
GP14 Amenity, Wellbeing and Quality of Life of Coastal Communities	0	+	0	0	0	+	?	++	0	Moderate benefit as amenity impacts considered in all development and activity proposals.
SP1 Commercial Fishing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	Mixed effects associated with the policy through the promotion of the consideration of interactions with the fisheries sector by potential developers and other marine users in the OIRMP area but overall the biodiversity is removed.
SP2 Aquaculture	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	Overall moderate negative impact; development within this sector will continue to be managed through existing consenting processes.
SP3 Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	Overall neutral impacts but essential for supporting population and human health.
SP4 Pipelines, Electricity and Telecommunications Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	Disturbance to benthic sediments and geology will remain, but impacts will be minimised as far as reasonably practicable.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

SEA receptor										
Policy	Climatic factors	Biodiversity flora & fauna	Water	Coastal processes / Benthic sediments / Soil	Geology	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Population & human health	Material assets	Cumulative effect / Notes
SP5 Offshore Wind, Wave, and Tidal Renewable Energy Generation	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	Positive effects on helping reduce climate change impacts, and thus benefit human health.
SP6 Zero Carbon Fuels, Oil and Gas Transition	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	Oil and gas transition projects are largely outside the influence of the OIRMP, but the move to zero carbon fuels is supported.
SP7 Tourism, Recreation, Sport and Leisure	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	Increased awareness of potential interactions with recreational users, and setting out expectations for developers and other marine users, has the potential for a range of positive effects (e.g. potential for displacement of activities, impacts on navigational safety and human health, impacts on the natural environment).

Appendix D: Map of Nature Designated Sites in Orkney



Appendix E: SEA activities

Table AE: Detailed list of SEA activities to date.

SEA Action/Activity.	When carried out.	Notes (e.g., comment on data availability, particular issues or any advice from the Consultation Authorities that has now been taken into account).
Screening to determine whether the PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects.	2021	Screening report to SEA Gateway 17/3/2021 for distribution to Consultation Authorities (CA). Screening responses issued to OIC, as Responsible Authority, 13/4/2021. Section 8(1) Screen Determination advert publicised in The Orcadian newspaper, dated 10/1/2022. Details are on the OIC website, along with the Statement of Reasons.
Scoping the consultation periods and the level of detail to be included in the Environmental Report.	2022	Scoping report to SEA Gateway 21/1/2022. Includes Appx 1: Other PPS (see below). CA responses received via SEA Gateway 25/2/2022.
Outline and objectives of the PPS.	2021	The OIRMP will support sustainable marine development in the Orkney Islands Marine Region. The objectives are given in the RMP.
Relationship with other PPS and environmental objectives.	2021 / 2022	Done at scoping stage and updated.
Environmental baseline established.	2020	SoEA published 2020.
Environmental problems identified.	2020	See SoEA.
Assessment of future of area without the PPS.	2021	See SEA report.
Alternatives considered.	2021	See SEA report.
Environmental assessment methods established.	2021	See scoping report.

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

Selection of PPS alternatives to be included in the environmental assessment.	2021-2022	Data gathering on PPS that have a bearing on the marine plan commenced 22/3/2021. Early draft of scoping report, including PPS considerations, prepared 18/6/2021. Final list of PPS considered prepared 16/12/2021.
Identification of environmental problems that may persist after implementation and measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects.	N/A	
Monitoring methods proposed.	Tbc post adoption	Monitoring and review to follow publication of plan, resources permitting.
Consultation timescales. • Timescale for Consultation Authorities. • Timescale for public.	See SPP ³²	12 week consultation
Notification/publicity action.	See SPP ³³	SEA Environmental Report public consultation notice published in The Orcadian newspaper on 25/07/24.

³² [Marine Planning \(orkney.gov.uk\)](http://MarinePlanning.orkney.gov.uk)

³³ *ibid*

Appendix F: Copy of indicative timetable for preparation of the OIRMP from the Statement of Public Participation³⁴

2021												
Document	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	
SPP	Stage 1					Stage 1	Stage 1	Update as required				
Draft Plan						Stage 2						
SEA/HRA etc						Stage 2						
2022												
Document	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	
SPP						Update as required						
Draft Plan						Stage 3						
SEA/HRA etc						Stage 3						
2023												
Document	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	
SPP						Update as required						
Draft Plan						Stage 3						
SEA/HRA etc						Stage 3						
2024												
Document	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	
SPP						Update as required						
Draft Plan						Stage 3					Stage 5	
SEA/HRA etc						Stage 3					Stage 5	
2025												
Document	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	
SPP						Update as required						
Draft Plan	Stage 5				Stage 5				Stage 6			
SEA/HRA etc	Stage 5				Stage 5				Stage 6			
2026												
Document	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	
SPP						Update as required						
Draft Plan	Stage 7 + Independent investigation, if required											
SEA/HRA etc												

Secretariat/Chair	DIC (1)	Development and Infrastructure Committee
Independent investigation (required, this will take approximately another year)	DIC (2)	General Meeting of the Council

Preparation
Endorsement / Approval
Consultation
Published

This indicative timetable for the preparation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan is from the Statement of Public Participation (2024). It may be updated in accordance with any Marine Directorate requirements on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

³⁴ [Marine Planning \(orkney.gov.uk\)](https://www.orkney.gov.uk/marine-planning)

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report

This publication is available at www.orkney.gov.uk

Published by Orkney Islands Council 2025.

