Item: 2

Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee: 31 March 2026.

Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance.

Report by Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

1. Overview

1.1. This report presents the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance (the Spatial Guidance) for members' approval.

1.2. The Spatial Guidance, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, has been prepared to support implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan (OIRMP): Sector Policy 2b: Finfish and shellfish farming.

1.3. The purpose of the Spatial Guidance is to:

- identify areas of greater and lesser potential sensitivity and/or constraint for finfish farming development in the Orkney Islands marine region.
- provide greater clarity for stakeholders on the significance, and potential sensitivity of identified environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure features, or receptors, to finfish farming development.
- inform stakeholder understanding and participation in the planning and decision-making process for finfish farming development.

1.4. The Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance – Consultation Draft was deposited for consultation between 1 August and 25 October 2024, alongside the OIRMP – Consultation Draft. The details of this consultation and the subsequent modifications to the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance - Consultation Draft are provided in the Consultation and Modifications Report, attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

1.5. Marine fish farming, out to 12 nautical miles, requires planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. Orkney Islands Council is the planning authority for fish farming development in Orkney.

2. Recommendation

2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:

i. Adopt the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, as non-statutory planning guidance.

3. Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance

3.1. The Spatial Guidance, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, is a decision support tool to inform decision making by public authorities and developers on finfish farm development proposals in the Orkney Islands marine region.

3.2. The Spatial Guidance does not identify locations that are suitable or unsuitable for finfish farm development, but rather is a decision support tool to help identify areas of greater and lesser sensitivity and/or constraint to finfish farming development.

3.3. There are environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure receptors in the Orkney Islands marine region and adjacent coastal areas that can be affected by finfish farming development and/or activities. The Spatial Guidance identifies the location, significance and potential sensitivity of these receptors to finfish farm development and/or activities. These receptors include, for example, designated nature conservation sites and subsea electricity cables.

3.4. The Spatial Guidance has been prepared with input from the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government, NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Orkney Harbour Authority, Historic Environment Scotland, Salmon Scotland and their local member companies, and Orkney Trout Fishing Association.

4. Consultation and Guidance Modifications

4.1. The Spatial Guidance was deposited for consultation between 1 August and 25 October 2024, alongside the OIRMP.

4.2. Ten in-person community consultation events were delivered which ran through the day and into the evening in multiple locations around Orkney, including Stronsay, Rousay, St Margaret's Hope, Shapinsay, Hoy, Stromness, Kirkwall, Finstown, Sanday and Westray.

4.3. The details of the consultation are provided in the Consultation and Modifications Report, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, which details information on the respondents and the issues raised in response to the consultation. It contains a summary and details of modifications made to the Spatial Guidance following the consultation.

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Implications of Report

1. **Financial**: There are no direct financial implications identified.
2. **Legal:** Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance has been prepared to support Sector Policy 2b: Finfish and Shellfish Farming in the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan. Adopting the Spatial Guidance as non-statutory planning guidance will make the Spatial Guidance a significant material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
   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. The Council is the planning authority for fish farming development in Orkney.
3. **Corporate Governance:** Should the guidance be adopted by the Council, it would support the Council's decision-making functions on finfish farming developments.
4. **Human Resources:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
5. **Equalities:** An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken for the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan. A standalone EqIA for the Spatial Guidance is not required as the Spatial Guidance is a supporting document to the Plan, therefore any impacts have already been assessed.
6. **Island Communities Impact:** An Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA) has been undertaken for the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, which was endorsed by this Committee on 8 November 2022. A standalone ICIA for the spatial guidance is not required as the Spatial Guidance is a supporting document to the Plan, therefore any impacts have already been assessed.
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 in respect of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, which includes assessment of policy 2b that the Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance seeks to support through the provision of contextual information. It is not considered that SEA is required for the Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance as it meets the requirements for exemption under Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.
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

The EqIA and ICIA referred to above can be found under related downloads at: https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/orkney-islands-regional-marine-plan/ .

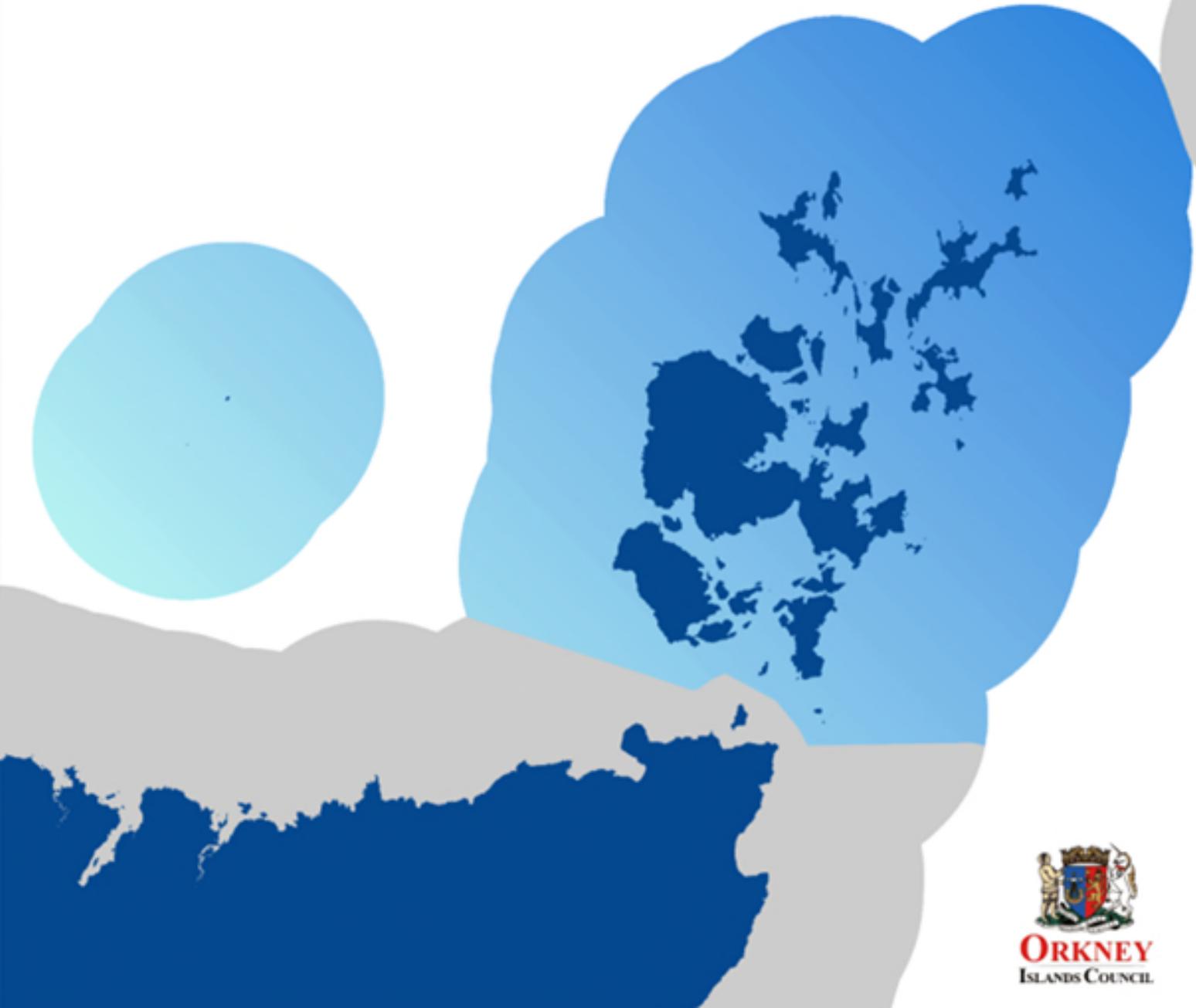
Appendices

Appendix 1: Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance.

Appendix 2: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance: Consultation and Modifications Report.

Appendix 1

Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance



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Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance

Contents

Acronyms

Term	Acronym
AIS	Automatic Identification System
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
CCC	Clyde Cruising Club
EU	European Union
FeAST	Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool
GeMS	Geodatabase of Marine Features Adjacent to Scotland
HMPA	Historic Marine Protected Area
INIS	invasive non-indigenous species
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NC MPA	Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area
NIMF	Nationally Important Marine Feature
NSA	National Scenic Area
PMF	Priority Marine Feature
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
STS	Ship-to-ship

1. Purpose of this guidance

1.1 The Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance is a decision support tool that should inform decision making by public authorities and developers on finfish farm development proposals in the Orkney Islands marine region.

1.2 The purpose of this Spatial Guidance is to:

- support the implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan Sector Policy 2b: Finfish and shellfish farming;
- identify areas of greater and lesser potential sensitivity and/or constraint for finfish farming development in the Orkney Islands marine region;
- provide greater clarity for stakeholders on the significance, and potential sensitivity of identified environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure features, or receptors, to finfish farming development; and
- inform stakeholder understanding and participation in the planning and decision-making process for finfish farming development.

2. Policy context

2.1 Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance is non-statutory planning guidance that supports the implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan Sector Policy 2b: Finfish and shellfish farming (see below). Sector Policy 2b vi. states that proposals for finfish farming development should have regard to this spatial guidance.

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.

3. How to use this guidance

3.1 This guidance should be used to guide decision making on finfish farming development in the Orkney Islands marine region. It does not identify locations that are suitable or unsuitable for finfish farm development. The Spatial Guidance is a decision support tool to help identify areas of greater and lesser sensitivity and/or constraint to finfish farming development.

3.2 There are environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure features, or receptors, in the Orkney Islands marine region and adjacent coastal areas, that can be affected by finfish farming development and/or activities. This Spatial Guidance identifies the location, significance and potential sensitivity of these receptors to finfish farm development.

3.3 The Spatial Guidance receptors have been selected in accordance with the criteria in the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, Sector Policy 2b ii. Table 1 identifies the relevant receptors along with their spatial extent and the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan policies that are relevant to each receptor. These receptors include, for example, designated nature conservation sites and electricity cables.

3.4 Receptors have varying levels of significance. For example, internationally rare or vulnerable habitats or species have greater significance than habitats or species that are more common and/or of lesser conservation importance. Receptors can also have higher or lower levels of sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities. For example, the various Priority Marine Features have different levels of sensitivity to organic enrichment associated with finfish farming development and/or activities. Where relevant, a receptor's significance value is assigned on the basis of its position within the hierarchy of international, national and regional/local importance.

3.5 Table 2 provides information on the significance, and potential sensitivity of the identified environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure receptors to finfish farm development. The receptors have been assigned values according to their significance and their potential sensitivity, as identified in Table 2. The location, and significance and sensitivity values, of

the receptors are identified in the guidance maps in Section 7: Spatial Guidance.

3.6 Further information on the identified nature conservation receptors, and their potential sensitivity to finfish farm development and/or activities, is provided in Appendices 1 to 4.

3.7 The significance of any potential impact or effect associated with a specific finfish farming development or activity proposal is influenced by factors including, but not limited to, location, scale, siting and design, and any appropriate development specific mitigation measures. These development specific impacts or effects, and associated mitigation measures, are assessed as part of the relevant statutory consenting processes. For the purposes of this guidance, the assessments have been undertaken prior to the consideration of any development or site-specific mitigation.

4. Online interactive maps

4.1 A web-based interactive spatial tool can be accessed at Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance (arcgis.com)[1]. This service allows users to identify nearby receptors from a given point by clicking on a desired location. The search distance from the clicked location can be set by the user (e.g., all receptors within 1km), with the option to view further information on the receptors present within the search area.

5. Receptor updates

5.1 It is important that the location, significance and sensitivity of the receptors is identified using the most up to date data. The receptor locations identified in Appendix 5, Table A6, may be periodically reviewed and updated using the identified data sources. Relevant receptors may also be periodically updated to reflect updates to the Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool (FeAST). These updates may be made to this Spatial Guidance without the need for further public consultation on an updated spatial guidance document.

[1]Orkney Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3ec2b843d89346e3ac0e2f476b4568bd

6. Identified Receptors

6.1 Table 1 identifies the receptors that are of relevance to Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan *Sector Policy 2b ii.*, along with their identified spatial extent and the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan general policies of relevance to each receptor.

Table 1. Identified receptors summary

Receptor	**Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan:** **Relevant criteria from Sector Policy 2b ii. Finfish and shellfish farming**	**Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan:** **Other relevant general polices and sector policies**	**Spatial extent of receptor in spatial guidance**
Nature conservation receptors			
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	b) Nature conservation designations	General Policy 9: Nature	Site boundary. (The foraging range of SPA qualify bird features are identified in Appendix 1, Table A2).
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	b) Nature conservation designations	General Policy 9: Nature	Site boundary.
Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas (NC MPA)	b) Nature conservation designations	General Policy 9: Nature	Site boundary.
Priority Marine Features (PMF): Maerl beds, seagrass beds, flame shell beds, horse mussel beds and fan shell aggregations.	b) Priority Marine Features	General Policy 9: Nature	Point data (minimum raster grid of ~300m^2).

Receptor	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Relevant criteria from Sector Policy 2b ii. Finfish and shellfish farming	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Other relevant general polices and sector policies	Spatial extent of receptor in spatial guidance
There are PMF locations within Orkney's waters that have not yet been recorded and are therefore not identified in the spatial data used within this guidance. PMFs records will be periodically updated within this guidance as detailed in Appendix 5 to incorporate any updated records.			
Principal Sea Trout Spawning Burns	b) Priority Marine Features d) Wild salmonid fish populations	General Policy 9: Nature	Point data (minimum raster grid of ~300m^2).
Seal haul-out sites	c) Seal haul-out sites	General Policy 9: Nature	Haul-out site boundary including 500 metre disturbance buffer from the shore and rocks where seals haul-out.
Landscape and seascape receptors			
National Scenic Area (NSA)	a) Landscape and/or seascape character and visual amenity	General Policy 10: Seascape and landscape	Site boundary.

Receptor	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Relevant criteria from Sector Policy 2b ii. Finfish and shellfish farming	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Other relevant general polices and sector policies	Spatial extent of receptor in spatial guidance
Historic environment receptors			
World Heritage Site and Inner Sensitivity Zone	f) Historic environment assets	General Policy 8: Historic environment	Site boundary and Inner Sensitive Zone boundary. The wider setting of the World Heritage Site component sites has not been spatially identified in the guidance maps.
Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area (HMPA)	f) Historic environment assets	General Policy 8: Historic environment	Site boundary.
Scheduled Monuments	f) Historic environment assets	General Policy 8: Historic environment	Site boundary. The setting of scheduled monuments has not been spatially identified in the guidance maps.
Listed buildings	f) Historic environment assets	General Policy 8: Historic environment	Point data (minimum raster grid of ~300m^2) The setting of listed buildings has not been spatially

Receptor	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Relevant criteria from Sector Policy 2b ii. Finfish and shellfish farming	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Other relevant general polices and sector policies	Spatial extent of receptor in spatial guidance
			identified in the guidance maps.
Controlled Sites or Protected Places	f) Historic environment assets	General Policy 8: Historic environment	Point data (minimum raster grid of ~300m^2).
Conservation Areas	f) Historic environment assets	General Policy 8: Historic environment	Site boundary. The setting of conservation areas has not been spatially identified in the guidance maps.
Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes	f) Historic environment assets	General Policy 8: Historic environment	Site boundary. The setting of historic gardens and designated landscapes has not been spatially identified in the guidance maps.
Socio-economic / infrastructure receptors			
National Development - Scapa Deep Water Quay / sensitive area	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	1500m radius sensitive area from centre point of proposed quay edge.
National Development - Orkney Logistics Base, Hatston / sensitive area	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	1500m radius sensitive area from centre point of proposed quay edge.

Receptor	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Relevant criteria from Sector Policy 2b ii. Finfish and shellfish farming	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Other relevant general polices and sector policies	Spatial extent of receptor in spatial guidance
Scapa Flow North and East Safeguarded Area	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	Area boundary (1500 metres from Mean High Water Springs).
Indicative ferry routes	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	Indicative ferry routes with 250 metre (minimum) buffer either side. Impacts or effects on safety of navigation can occur out with these identified indicative areas.
Shipping Density Areas	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	The average weekly shipping density at a 2km grid resolution.
Widewall Bay Harbour of Refuge	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	Area boundary.
Indicative Shipping Routes (Scapa Flow Harbour Area)	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	Indicative shipping routes with 250 metre (minimum) buffer either side.
Indicative pier and harbour infrastructure sensitive area	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	1500m radius sensitive area from end of pier. These areas are indicative. The exact extent of the operational area around pier

Receptor	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Relevant criteria from Sector Policy 2b ii. Finfish and shellfish farming	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Other relevant general polices and sector policies	Spatial extent of receptor in spatial guidance
			and harbour infrastructure varies depending on the specific maritime operations e.g. pier use, vessel size and type. Impacts on safety of navigation and harbour operations can occur out with the identified indicative areas.
Designated anchor berths and designated ship-to-ship (STS) anchor berths (Scapa Flow) As identified on UK Hydrographic Office Charts.	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries	1500m radius sensitive area from anchor berth point. These areas are indicative. The exact extent of the operational area around anchor berths varies depending on the specific maritime operations. Impacts or effects on anchor birth operations can occur out with the identified indicative areas.
Flotta Terminal Safeguarded Area	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries Sector Policy 6: Zero carbon fuels, oil and gas transition	Area boundary.

Receptor	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Relevant criteria from Sector Policy 2b ii. Finfish and shellfish farming	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Other relevant general polices and sector policies	Spatial extent of receptor in spatial guidance
Anchorages listed in the Clyde Cruising Club (CCC) sailing directions and anchorages publication	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries Sector Policy 7: Tourism, recreation, leisure and sport	Point data (minimum raster grid of ~300m^2).
Visiting Yacht Moorings	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries Sector Policy 7: Tourism, recreation, leisure and sport	Point data (minimum raster grid of ~300m^2).
Other anchorages	g) Shipping and navigation, ports and harbour infrastructure/operations	Sector Policy 3: Shipping, ports, harbours and ferries Sector Policy 7: Tourism, recreation, leisure and sport	Point data (minimum raster grid of ~300m^2).
Submarine electricity cables	g) Marine cable routes	Sector Policy 4: Pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure	Cable with 250 metre buffer either side.
Submarine telecommunication cables	g) Marine cable routes	Sector Policy 4: Pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure	Cable with 250 metre buffer either side.
Out of Service (OoS) subsea cables	g) Marine cable routes	Sector Policy 4: Pipeline, electricity and	Cable with 250 metre buffer either side.

Receptor	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Relevant criteria from Sector Policy 2b ii. Finfish and shellfish farming	Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Other relevant general polices and sector policies	Spatial extent of receptor in spatial guidance
		telecommunications infrastructure	
Hydrocarbon pipelines	g) Pipelines	Sector Policy 4: Pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure	Pipeline with 500 metre buffer either side.
Subsea water pipelines	g) Pipelines	Sector Policy 4: Pipeline, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure	Pipeline with 250 metre buffer either side.
Wave and tidal energy sites - Crown Estate Scotland lease and agreement for lease areas	g) Other coastal and marine users	Sector Policy 5: Offshore wind, wave and tidal renewable energy generation	Lease or Agreement for Lease areas.
The Sectoral Plan for Offshore Wind Energy – Plan Options (2020)	g) Other coastal and marine users	Sector Policy 5: Offshore wind, wave and tidal renewable energy generation	Plan Option areas.
Active aquaculture sites	g) Active aquaculture sites	N/A	Point data (minimum raster grid of ~300m2).

6.2 The assessment of relevant finfish farm consent applications will take into account, through the relevant process, any impacts or effects on receptors located outwith the Orkney Islands marine region. For example, any likely significant effects on Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation.

6.3 Non-designated historic environment assets are not identified in this Spatial Guidance. For information on non-designated historic environment assets in the Orkney Islands marine region refer to Trove.scot[2].

[2] https://www.trove.scot/

7. Significance and sensitivity of receptors

7.1 Table 2 provides information on the significance, and potential sensitivity of the identified environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure receptors to finfish farm development and/or activities.

Table 2: Significance and sensitivity of receptors

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
Nature conservation receptors				
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	3	Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are selected to protect one or more rare, threatened or vulnerable bird species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive, or certain regularly occurring migratory species. SPAs are of international conservation significance.	2-3	An individual site sensitivity value has been assigned to relevant SPAs within Orkney and the Orkney Islands marine region. The sensitivity value for each SPA has been assigned on the basis of the sensitivity of the site's qualifying bird features to pressures from finfish farming development and/or activities. Refer to Appendix 1. The Orkney SPAs with qualifying features that have no identified pressure/interaction with finfish farming development and/or activities have been screened out and are therefore not included in the significance and sensitivity maps in

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
				this spatial guidance. Refer to Appendix 1. SPAs outwith Orkney and the Orkney Islands marine region have potential connectivity with proposed finfish farming development and/or activities in Orkney. These SPAs are not identified in this Spatial Guidance.
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	3	SACs are of international conservation significance. SACs in Scotland are designated by Scottish Ministers under the European Union (EU) Habitats Directive. They are areas which have been identified as best representing the range and variety within the EU of habitats and (non-bird) species listed on Annex I and II to the Directive. SACs in terrestrial areas and marine areas out to 12 nautical miles are afforded protection through the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as	3	An individual site sensitivity value has been assigned to relevant SACs within Orkney and the Orkney Islands marine region. The sensitivity value for each SAC has been assigned on the basis of the sensitivity of the site's qualifying features to pressures from finfish farming development and/or activities. Refer to Appendix 2. The Orkney SACs with qualifying features that have no identified pressure/interaction with finish farming development and/or

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
		amended). SACs are of international conservation significance.		activities have been screened out and are therefore not included in the significance and sensitivity maps in this Spatial Guidance. Refer to Appendix 2. SACs outwith Orkney and the Orkney Islands marine region have potential connectivity with proposed finfish farming development and/or activities in Orkney. These SACs are not identified in this Spatial Guidance.
Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas (NC MPA)	2	Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas (NC MPAs) protect a wide range of habitats, species, geology and undersea landforms in Scottish waters. NC MPAs are statutory designations under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and are of national significance.	3	An individual site sensitivity value has been assigned to each NC MPA within the Orkney Islands marine region. The sensitivity value for each NC MPA has been assigned on the basis of the sensitivity of the site's protected features to pressures from finfish farming development and/or activities. Refer to Appendix 3. NC MPAs outwith Orkney and the Orkney Islands marine region have

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
				potential connectivity with proposed finfish farming development and/or activities in Orkney. These NC MPAs are not identified in this Spatial Guidance.
PMF: Maerl beds, seagrass beds, flame shell beds, horse mussel beds and fan shell aggregations.	2-3	PMFs are species and habitats which have been identified as being of conservation importance in Scotland. PMFs are a subset of species and habitats identified on national, UK or international lists. Therefore, all PMFs are of at least national conservation significance in Scotland, but may be of UK level or international significance. Each PMF recorded in the Orkney Islands marine region has been attributed a significance value on the basis of national or international conservation status. Refer to Appendix 4 for the conservation status and significance value attributed to relevant PMFs.	3	The sensitivity of PMFs to pressures from finfish farming development and/or activities has been assigned using the Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool (FeAST)[3] and advice provided by NatureScot. Refer to Appendix 4 for the pressures/interactions from finfish farming development and/or activities for PMFs.

[3] https://feature-activity-sensitivity-tool.scot/

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
Principal Sea Trout Spawning Burns	2	Sea trout is listed as a Priority Species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the Scottish Biodiversity List. The marine phase of the sea trout's life cycle is also included on the list of PMFs. The species is of national significance.	3	The sensitivity of sea trout has been informed by research and analysis[4] published by Scottish Government on the interaction of salmon farming with wild sea trout populations and potential impacts from sea lice.
Seal haul-out sites	2	Seal haul-out sites are designated under section 117 of 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. Seal haul-out sites were designated through the Seals (Designation of Haul-Out Sites) (Scotland) Order 2014. These sites are of national significance.	3	The sensitivity of grey and harbour seals has been assigned on the basis of their sensitivity to pressures from finfish farming development and/or activities. Information on seal sensitivity can be found within Sanday and Faray SAC qualifying features (Appendix 2).
Landscape and seascape receptors				
NSA	2	The Hoy and West Mainland NSA is nationally important for its scenic	3	Finfish farming development and/or activities can have significant effects

[4] https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-of-information-relating-to-impacts-of-salmon-lice-from-fish-farms-on-wild-scottish-sea-trout-and-salmon/

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
		quality. NSAs are designated under Part 10 of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 giving NSAs a statutory basis. NSAs are of national significance.		on the special qualities of the Hoy and West Mainland NSA. Particular special qualities of the NSA are highly sensitive to finfish farm development and/or activities. These special qualities include the archaeological landscape of World Heritage Status, the spectacular coastal scenery, a long-settled and productive land and sea, a landscape of contrasting curves and lines, land and water in constantly changing combinations under the open sky, and the townscape of Stromness, its setting and its link with the sea.
Historic environment receptors				
World Heritage Site and Inner Sensitivity Zone	3	The Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site comprises six individual component sites: the settlement of Skara Brae, Maeshowe, the Stones of Stenness, the Watch Stone, the Barnhouse Stone and the Ring of Brodgar and its associated ritual and funerary monuments.	3	The World Heritage Site component sites are highly sensitive to direct physical impacts from development and/or activities. The Inner Sensitivity Zone identifies an area of high sensitivity to development and/or activities that could affect the wider landscape

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
		The World Heritage Site was formally inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1999 as a group of sites deemed to be an outstanding testimony to the cultural achievements of the Neolithic peoples of Northern Europe, fulfilling four of the six criteria of Outstanding Universal Value for cultural sites. The World Heritage Site Inner Sensitivity Zone has been designated to manage the impact of development on the wider landscape setting, and to prevent development that would have an adverse impact on the Outstanding Universal Value. The World Heritage Site and Inner Sensitive Zone are of international significance.		setting of the World Heritage Site component sites.
Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area (HMPA)	2	HMPAs are designated under Section 67 of the Marine Scotland Act 2010 to protect marine historic assets of national importance within Scottish territorial waters.	3	The marine historic features of the HMPA are highly sensitivity to direct impacts from development and/or activities including abrasion and collision (e.g. from anchors and

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
				moorings) and changes to physical processes and/or sedimentation.
Scheduled Monuments	2	Designated under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, scheduled monuments are archaeological sites, buildings or structures of national historic importance. These monuments include the wrecks of the German High Sea Fleet in Scapa Flow, numerous broches, burnt mounds, World War 1 and World War 2 coastal defences, castles and Neolithic, Iron Age to medieval settlements.	3	The German High Sea Fleet scheduled monuments are highly sensitive to direct impacts from development and/or activities including abrasion and collision (e.g. from anchors and moorings) and changes to physical processes and/or sedimentation. Coastal scheduled monuments are highly sensitive to impacts from development and/or activities on their setting.
Listed buildings	1-2	There are many coastal and marine related listed buildings in Orkney including lighthouses, harbour infrastructure, such as the Lyness Golden Wharf and Kirkwall Harbour, North Ronaldsay Sheep Dyke and clusters of numerous listed buildings within coastal settlements.	3	Listed buildings are highly sensitive to direct physical impacts from development and/or activities. Listed buildings are highly sensitive to impacts from development and/or activities on their setting.

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
		Listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, listed buildings are buildings of special architectural or historic interest and are listed by Historic Environment Scotland. The term 'building' has a broad definition and includes structures such as piers, walls and bridges. Listed buildings are assigned to one of three categories depending on their importance. Category A are buildings of national or international importance, either architectural or historic, or fine little-altered examples of some particular period or style. Category B are buildings of regional or more than local importance, or major examples of some particular period, style or building type which may have been altered. Category C are buildings of local importance, lesser examples of any period, style or building type, as originally constructed or moderately		

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
		altered; and simple traditional buildings which group well with others in Categories A and B. Category A and B listed buildings are assigned a significance value of 2 and C listed buildings a significance value of 1 within this Spatial Guidance. The setting of a listed building can be an important factor that contributes to its significance.		
Controlled Sites or Protected Places	3	HMS Hampshire, HMS Royal Oak, HMS Pheasant, and HMS Vanguard are designated controlled sites under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986. These are often referred to as war graves. Permission is required from the Ministry of Defence to access these sites.	3	Controlled Sites or Protected Places are highly sensitive to direct impacts from development and/or activities including abrasion and collision (e.g. from anchors and moorings) and changes to physical processes and/or sedimentation.
Conservation Areas	2	The coastal settlements of Kirkwall, Stromness, St Margaret's Hope and Balfour Village are designated	3	Conservation Areas are highly sensitive to direct physical impacts from development and/or activities that effect their special architectural

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
		Conservation Areas. Eynhallow and Brodgar are also Conservation Areas. Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Conservation Areas are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.		or historic interest, or the area's character or appearance. Conservation Areas are highly sensitive to impacts from development and/or activities on their setting.
Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes	2	Balfour Castle, Skaill House and Melsetter House are designated Gardens and Designed Landscapes. All landscapes included in the Inventory of Designed Landscapes are considered to be of national importance. Sites in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes are selected under the terms of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.	3	Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes are highly sensitive to direct physical impacts from development and/or activities. Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes are highly sensitive to impacts from development and/or activities on their setting.

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
Socio-economic / infrastructure receptors				
National Development - Scapa Deep Water Quay	2	Scapa Deep Water Quay is identified as a national development in National Planning Framework 4.	3	Scapa Deep Water Quay and the associated marine area (1500m radius) is highly sensitive to finfish farming development and/or activities that could affect safety of navigation and harbour operations.
National Development - Orkney Logistics Base, Hatston	2	Orkney Logistics Base, Hatston, is identified as a national development in National Planning Framework 4.	3	Orkney Logistics Base, Hatston, and the associated marine area (1500m radius) is highly sensitive to finfish farming development and/or activities that could affect safety of navigation and harbour operations.
Scapa Flow North and East Safeguarded Area	2	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. Scapa Flow is a nationally significant harbour asset identified in National Planning Framework 4.	2	The north and east coast of Scapa Flow is potentially sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect safety of navigation and harbour operations.

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
Indicative ferry routes	3	Ferry routes are highly significant due their community, transportation and economic importance.	3	Ferry routes are highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect safety of navigation and their efficient operation/use.
Shipping density areas	3	Areas with a medium/high shipping density are highly significant for the safe navigation of vessels. This can be for both local and international operations.	1-3	The sensitivity of a given area ranges from low to high depending on the frequency of use (shipping density). This is calculated from the average weekly density of vessels passing through each raster grid cell, taken from Automatic Identification System (AIS) data[5] Shipping density associated with vessels that do not carry AIS are not represented in this Spatial Guidance.
Widewall Bay Harbour of Refuge	3	The Widewall Bay Harbour of Refuge is highly significant for the safety of oil tankers in distress when navigating the southern approach to Scapa Flow.	3	The Widewall Bay Harbour of Refuge is highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect the utilisation of this refuge site for maritime safety purposes.

[5] https://www.abpmer.co.uk/blog/the-value-of-ais-data-in-decision-making)

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
Indicative Shipping Routes (Scapa Flow Harbour Area)	3	These important shipping routes within Scapa Flow have been identified in consultation with the Orkney Harbour Authority. These shipping routes are of high significance for the safe and efficient operation of the Scapa Flow Harbour Area.	3	The indicative shipping routes (Scapa Flow Harbour Area) are highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect safety of navigation and harbour operations.
Indicative pier and harbour infrastructure sensitive areas	3	Pier and harbour infrastructure assets include the 29 piers operated by the Orkney Harbour Authority, St Margaret's Hope Pier and the Geo Amenity Slipway, Deerness. These pier and harbour infrastructure assets are of high economic, transport and/or community importance.	3	Pier and harbour infrastructure, and the associated sensitive areas (1500m radius), is highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect safety of navigation and harbour operations.
Designated anchor berths and designated STS anchor berths (Scapa Flow) As identified on UK Hydrographic Office Charts.	3	Scapa Flow is identified in National Planning Framework 4 as a nationally significant harbour asset. Scapa Flow is one of the principal locations in Europe for ship-to-ship (STS) operations for the transfer of crude and fuel oils.	3	Designated Anchor Berths (Scapa Flow) and the associated marine area (1500m radius), are highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect anchoring, safety of navigation and harbour operations.

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
		There are 15 designated anchor berths in Scapa Flow including 4 STS berths. Designated anchor berths include the associated 1500 metre radius sensitive areas for safe vessel manoeuvring. Designated Anchor Berths (Scapa Flow) are of high significance due to their navigational safety, pollution control and economic functions.		
Flotta Terminal Safeguarded Area	3	The Flotta Safeguarded Area is the maritime operational area located to the north of Flotta Terminal. The Flotta Terminal Safeguarded Area is of high significance due to its navigational safety, pollution control and economic functions.	3	The Flotta Safeguarded Area is highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect safety of navigation and harbour operations.
Anchorages listed in the CCC sailing directions and anchorages publication	2	CCC anchorages are important assets supporting safe navigation, the marine economy and recreational activities.	3	CCC anchorages are highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect mooring/anchoring and safety of navigation.

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
Visiting Yacht Moorings (VYMs)	2	VYMs are important assets supporting safe navigation, the marine economy and recreational activities.	3	VYMs are highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect mooring/anchoring and safety of navigation.
Other established anchorages	2	Other established anchorages are important assets supporting safe navigation, the marine economy and recreational activities.	3	Other established anchorages are highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect mooring/anchoring and safety of navigation.
Submarine electricity cables	3	Electricity cables provide critical infrastructure of high significance connecting Orkney to mainland Scotland, and for distribution of electricity to Orkney communities.	3	Electricity cables are highly sensitive to direct physical impacts from development and/or activities (e.g. anchors).
Submarine telecommunication cables	3	Telecommunication cables provide critical infrastructure of high significance for communications for Orkney communities, Scotland and outwards to international locations via an extensive network.	3	Telecommunication cables are highly sensitive to direct physical impacts from finfish farming development and/or activities (e.g. anchors).
Out of Service (OoS) subsea cables	1	Out of Service (OoS) subsea cables are occasionally left on the seabed, either to guide new cable installations	1	Out of Service (OoS) subsea cables are of low sensitivity to direct

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
		or due to being abandoned from dissolved companies. They do not perform a utilities or communications function.		physical impacts development and/or activities. They are an obstruction and/or entanglement risk for finfish farm development and/or activities.
Hydrocarbon pipelines	3	Crude oil is imported to the Flotta Oil Terminal via a 30-inch subsea pipeline from several offshore installations in the Flotta Catchment Area. This subsea pipeline is protected by a 500m safety zone established by an Offshore Installations (Safety Zones) Order under Section 22 of the Petroleum Act 1987. This pipeline is of high significance due to its safety, pollution control and economic functions.	3	Hydrocarbon pipelines are highly sensitive to direct physical impacts from development and/or activities e.g. anchors.
Subsea water pipelines	3	Subsea water pipelines provide critical potable and wastewater infrastructure for Orkney communities of high significance.	3	Water pipelines are highly sensitive to direct physical impacts from development and/or activities e.g. anchors.

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
Wave and tidal energy sites - Crown Estate Scotland lease and agreement for lease areas	3	Wave and tidal lease sites within the Orkney Islands marine region are operated by the European Marine Energy Centre. These sites are of high significance for international research and development in renewable energy innovation and contribute significant economic benefits.	3	Wave and tidal energy testing sites are highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect their construction, operation or decommissioning.
The Sectoral Plan for Offshore Wind Energy – Plan Options (2020)	3	The Sectoral Plan for Offshore Wind Energy sets out the strategic vision and objectives for future commercial-scale offshore wind development in Scotland. It has identified two Plan Option areas, 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 Scottish marine area. The agreements for lease within these Plan Options areas have been issued via the Scotwind leasing round.	3	Plan Option areas are highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect their construction, operation or decommissioning.

Receptor	Significance Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor significance	Sensitivity Value (1=low; 2=medium; 3=high)	Receptor sensitivity to finfish farming development and/or activities
		National Marine Plan 2015 identifies that the Plan Options areas are the preferred strategic locations for the sustainable development of offshore wind and that this preference should be taken into account by marine planners and decision makers if alternative development or use of these areas is being considered. The Plan Option areas are of high strategic importance in terms of just transition, climate crises and socio-economic benefit priorities within National Planning Framework 4.		
Active aquaculture sites	3	Existing active aquaculture sites make a significant contribution to the economy and require significant investment from site operators. The purpose of identifying existing active aquaculture sites in this Spatial Guidance is to help safeguard these assets from potential adverse effects from new fish farm development.	3	Active aquaculture sites are highly sensitive to development and/or activities that could affect their safe and efficient operation.

8. Spatial guidance

8.1 This Spatial Guidance provides information on the location, significance, and potential sensitivity of the identified environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure receptors to finfish farm development (see Table 1 and Table 2).

8.2 The Spatial Guidance is provided in a suite of maps:

Nature conservation

- Map 1: Nature conservation site receptors
- Map 2: Priority Marine Feature receptors
- Map 3: Nature receptors significance and sensitivity

Landscape and seascape

- Map 4: Landscape and seascape receptors
- Map 5: Landscape and seascape receptors significance and sensitivity

Historic environment

- Map 6: Historic environment asset receptors
- Map 7: Historic environment receptors significance and sensitivity

Socio-economic / infrastructure

- Map 8: Harbour infrastructure and operations receptors
- Map 9: Energy, utilities and aquaculture infrastructure receptors
- Map 10: Shipping density and ferry routes

- Map 11: All socio-economic/infrastructure and operations receptor significance and sensitivity

All receptors

- Map 12: All receptors significance and sensitivity (i.e. data from Maps 3, 5, 7 and 11)

8.3 Maps 3, 5, 7,11 and 12 identify areas of the Orkney Islands marine region with higher and lower levels of receptor significance and sensitivity to finfish farming development. Information on the significance, and sensitivity of the identified receptors to finfish farm development and/or activities is presented in Table 2. The receptors have been assigned values according to their significance and their potential sensitivity, as identified in Table 2. The Spatial Guidance Maps 3, 5, 7, 11 and 12 present the cumulative significance and sensitivity values for the identified receptors (i.e. the sum of overlaying receptor values).

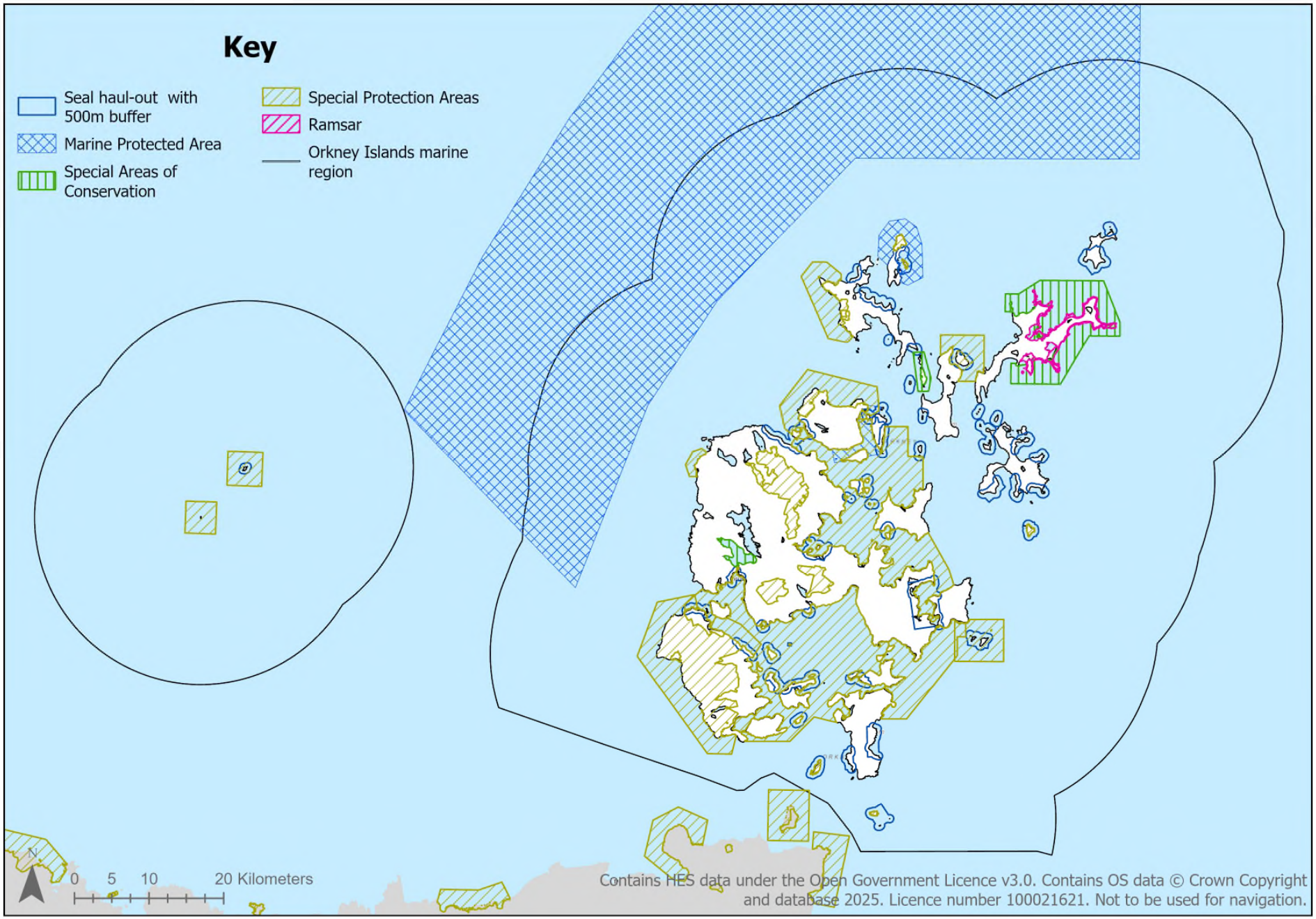
8.4 Interactive maps can be accessed at Orkney Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance (arcgis.com)[6] to allow users to look at locations in greater detail.

8.5 Information on the identified nature receptors, and their potential sensitivity to finfish farm development and/or activities, is provided in Appendices 1 to 4.

[6] Orkney Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3ec2b843d89346e3ac0e2f476b4568bd

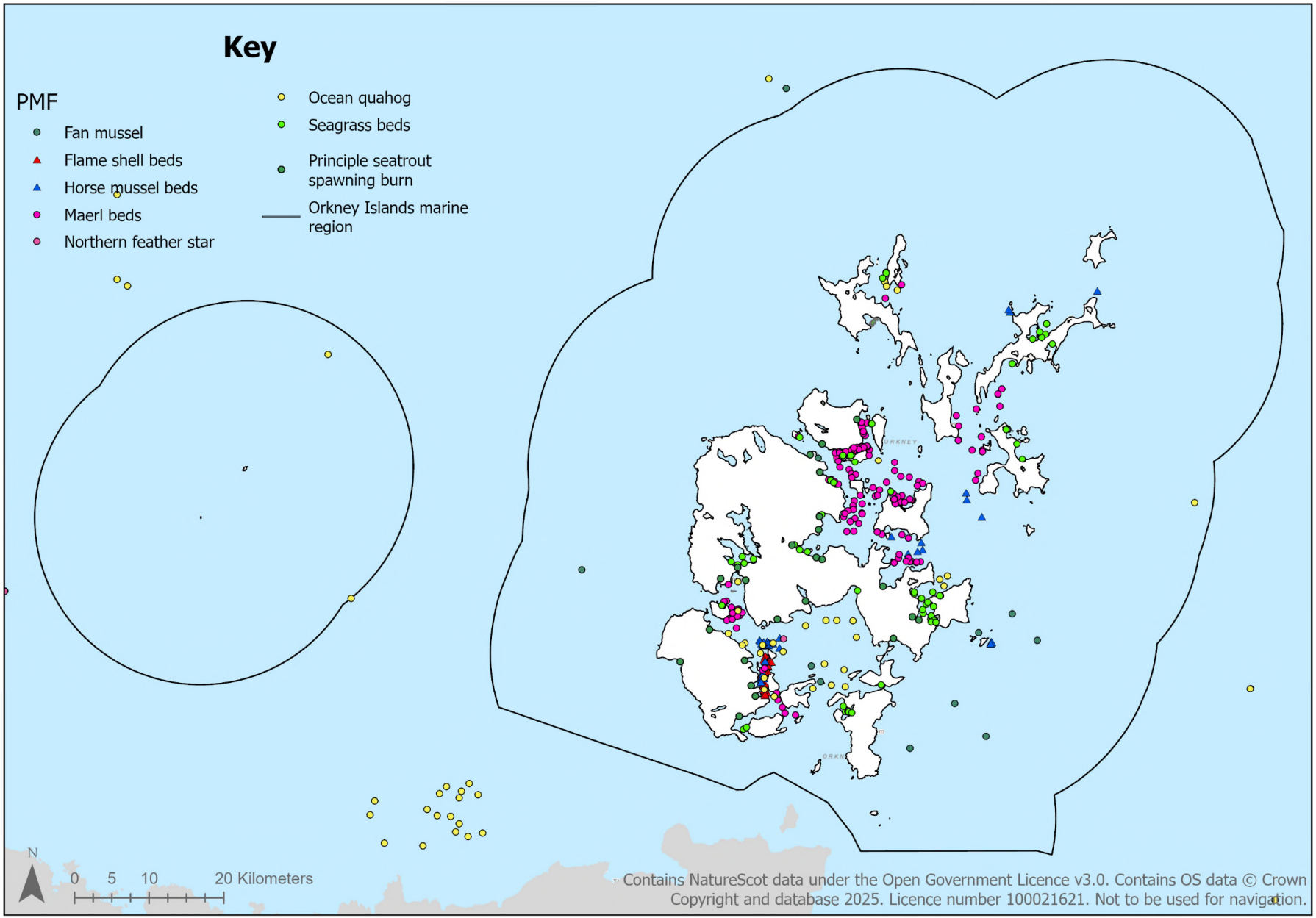
Nature Conservation Receptor Spatial Guidance

Map 1: Nature conservation site receptors



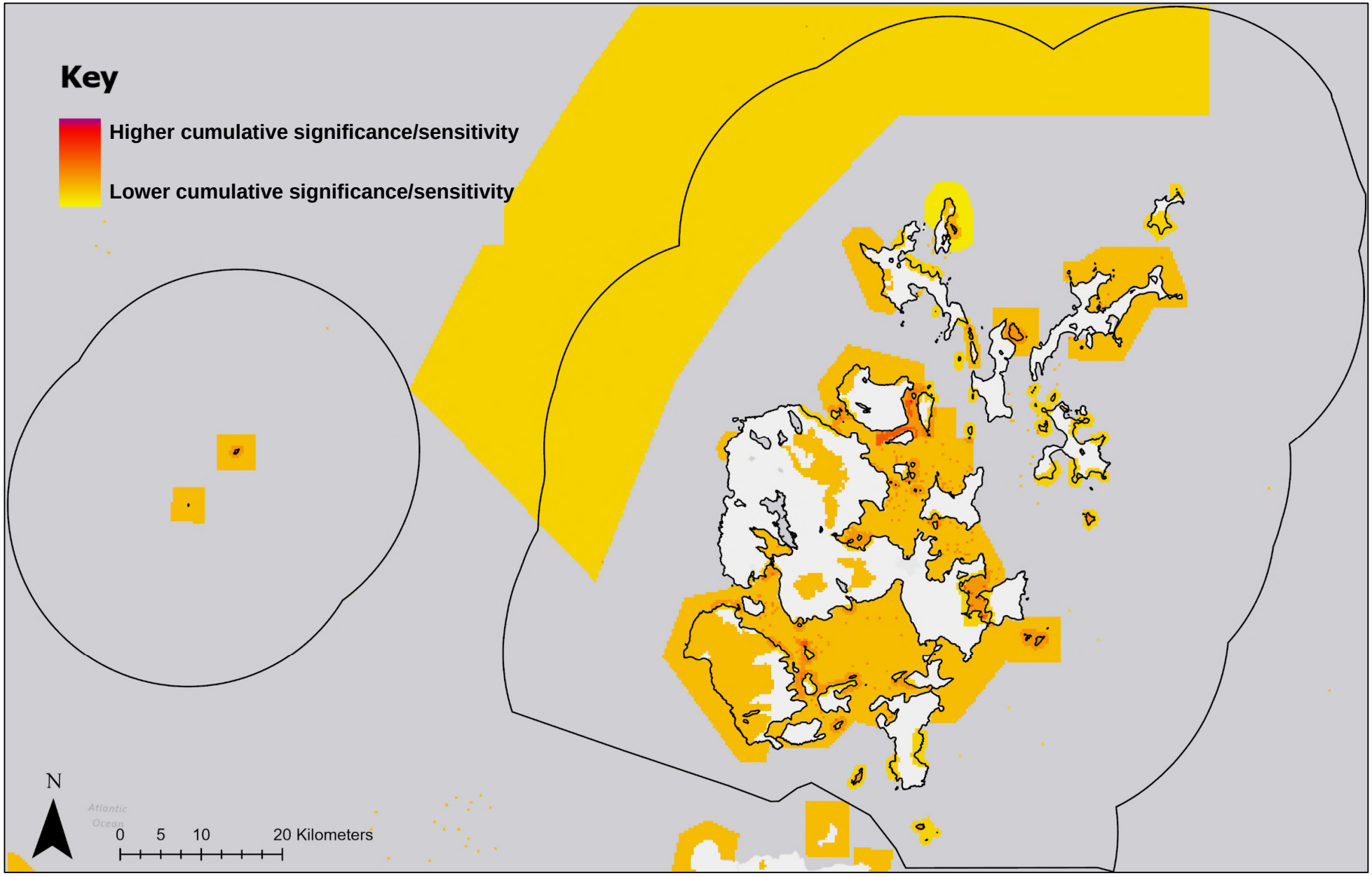
Nature conservation sites that have no identified pressure interactions with finfish farming development and/or activities have been screened out of the significance and sensitivity analysis and mapping in this spatial guidance. See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for more information.

Map 2: Priority Marine Feature receptors



The Geodatabase of Marine Features Adjacent to Scotland (GeMS) Priority Marine Feature records in the Orkney Islands marine region are identified in Map 2. There are PMFs locations that have not yet been recorded and are therefore not identified in the spatial data used within this Guidance.

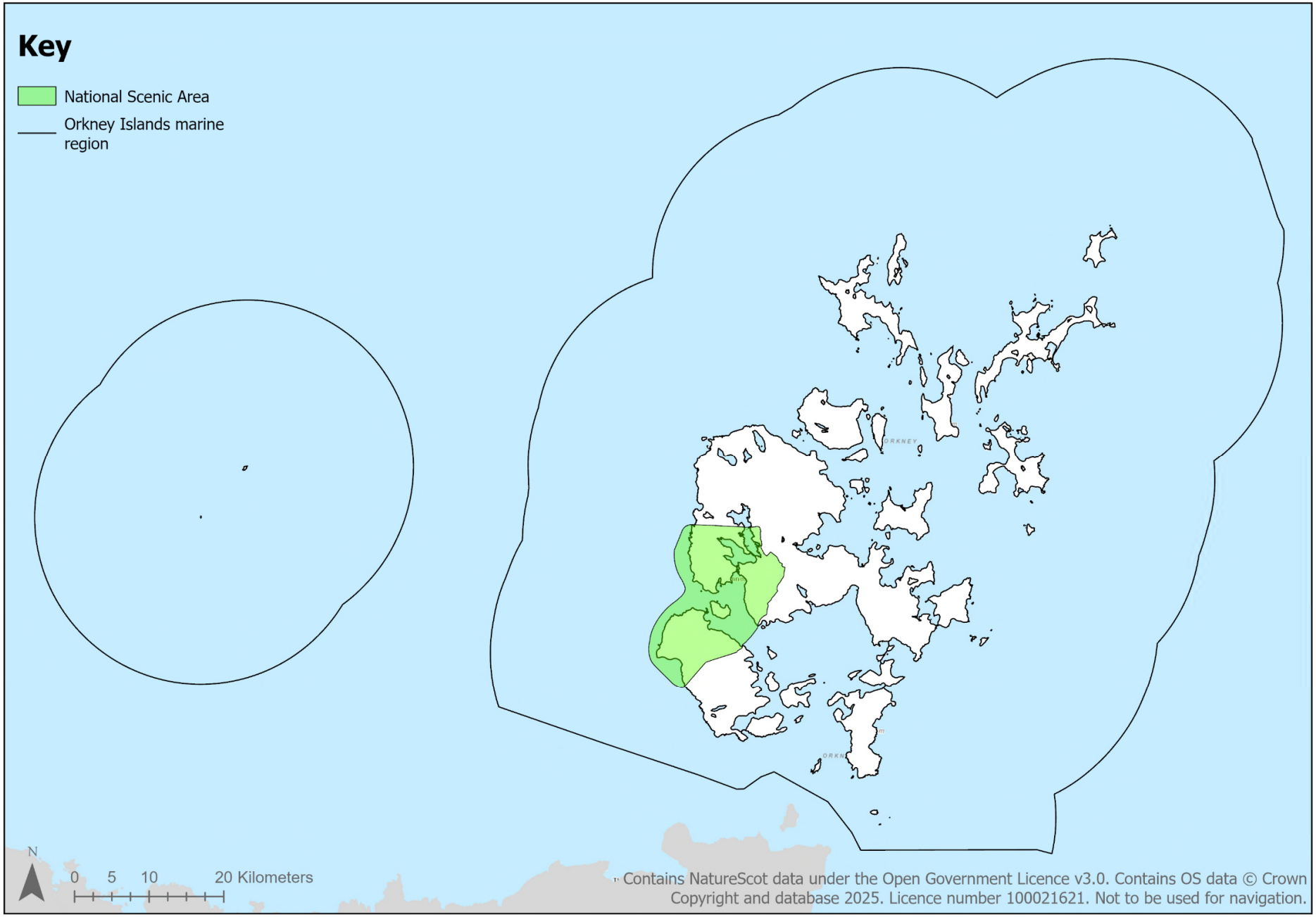
Map 3: Nature conservation receptor significance and sensitivity



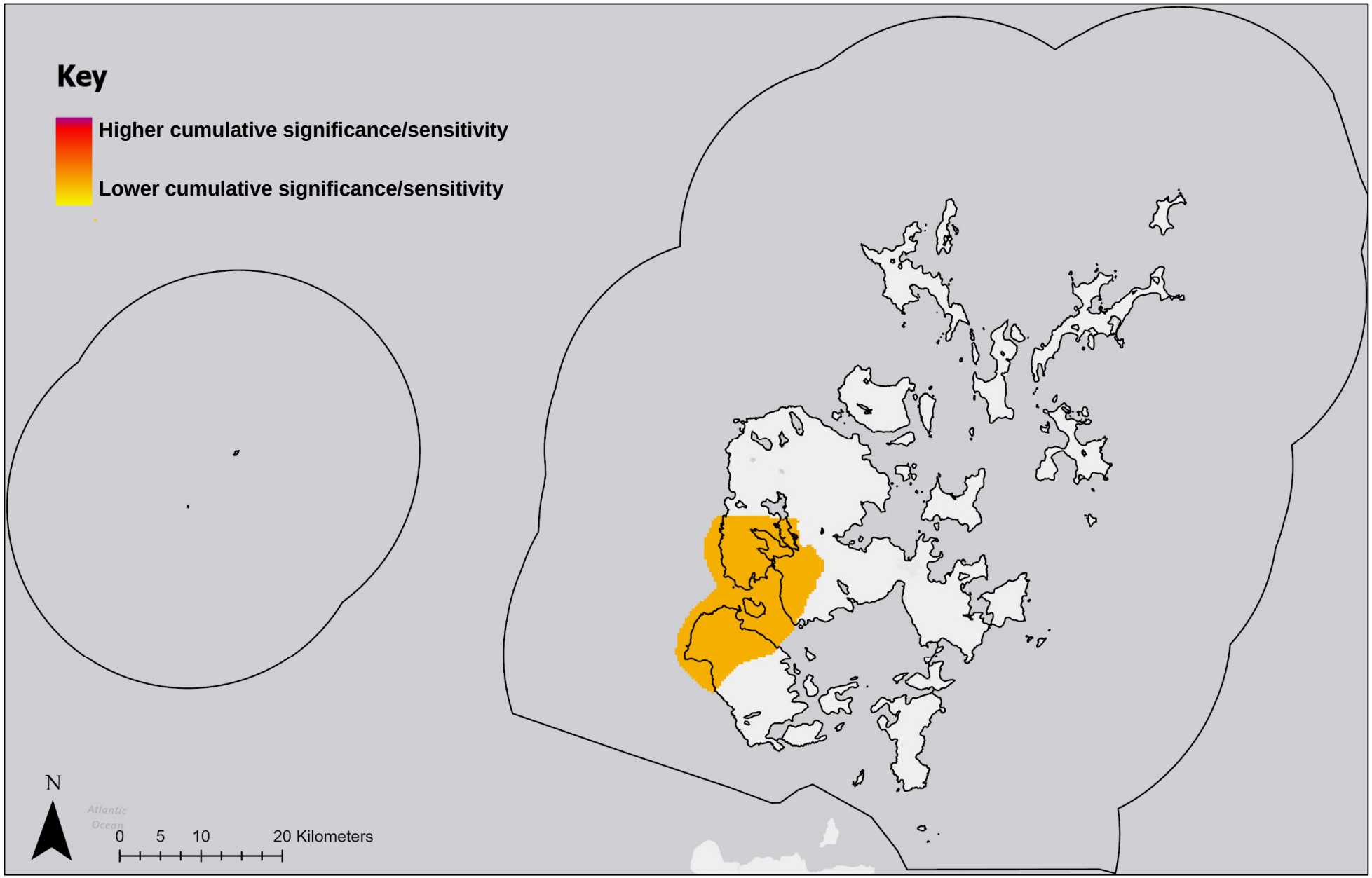
Map 3 presents the cumulative significance and sensitivity values for the identified nature receptors (i.e. the sum of overlaying receptor values).

Landscape and Seascape Receptor Spatial Guidance

Map 4: Landscape and seascape receptors



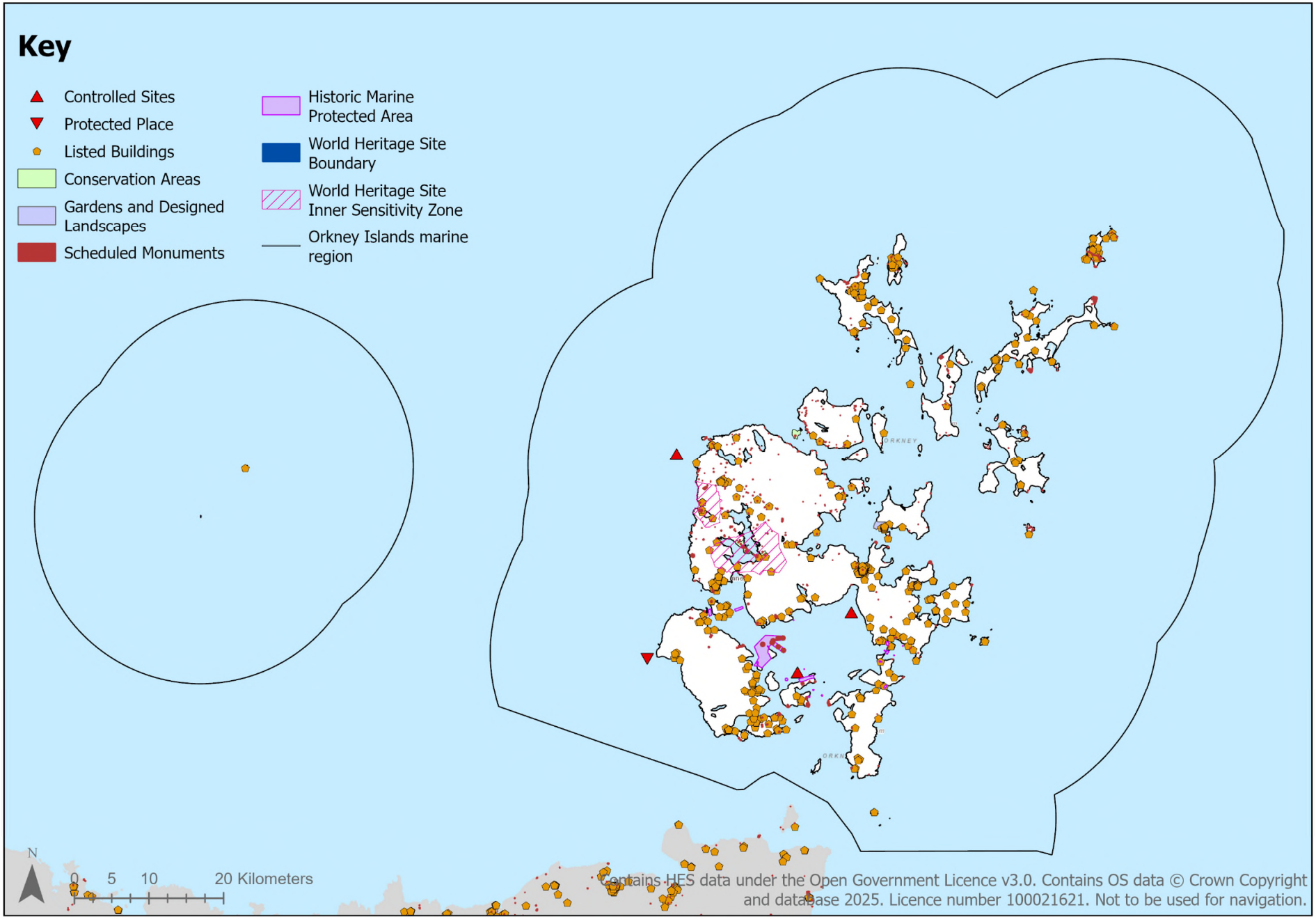
Map 5: Landscape and seascape receptor significance and sensitivity



Map 5 presents the significance and sensitivity value for the identified landscape receptor (i.e. the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area).

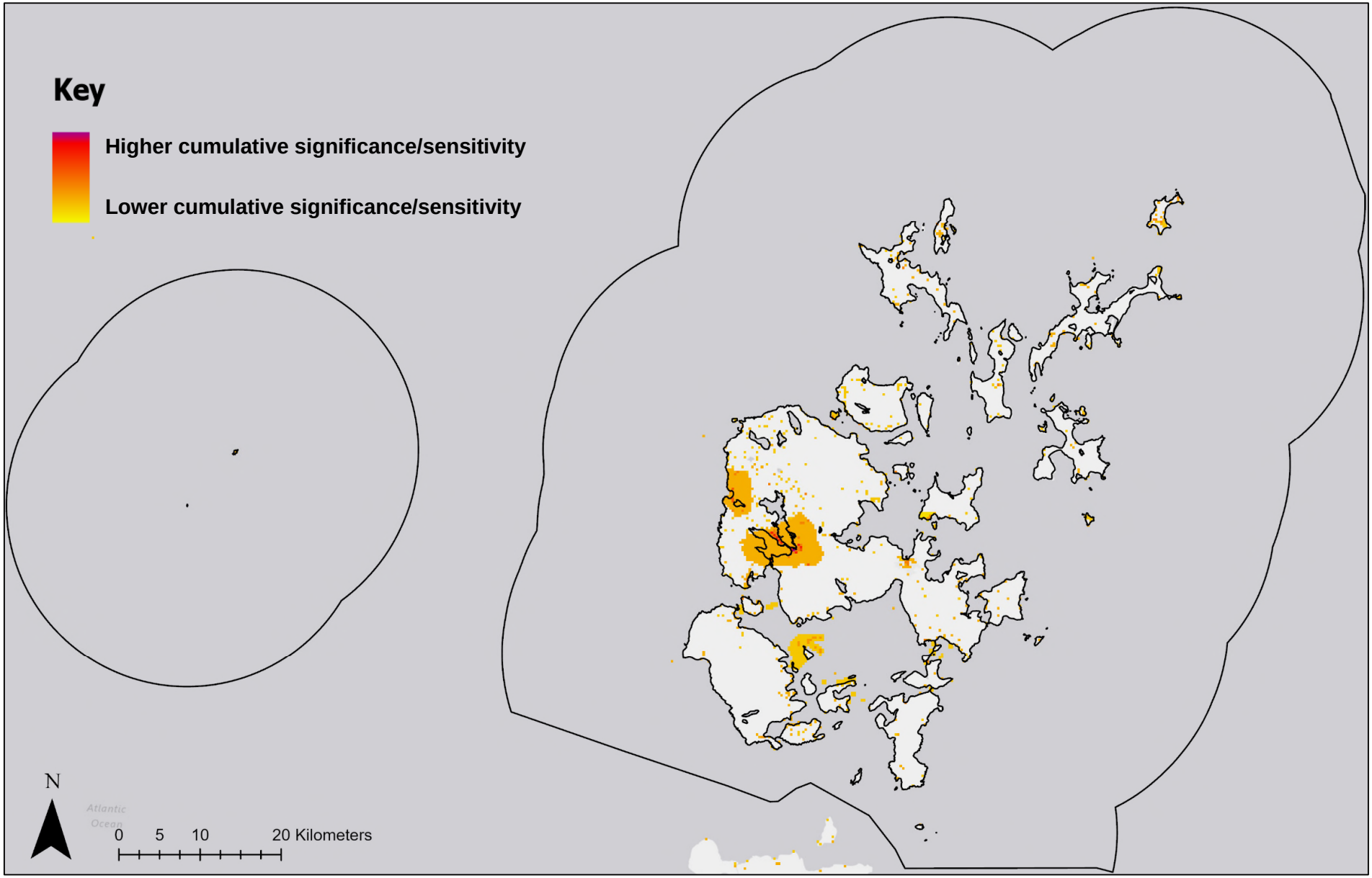
Historic Environment Receptor Spatial Guidance

Map 6: Historic environment asset receptors



Coastal historic environment assets have been identified in Map 6 to inform the assessment of impacts on their setting.

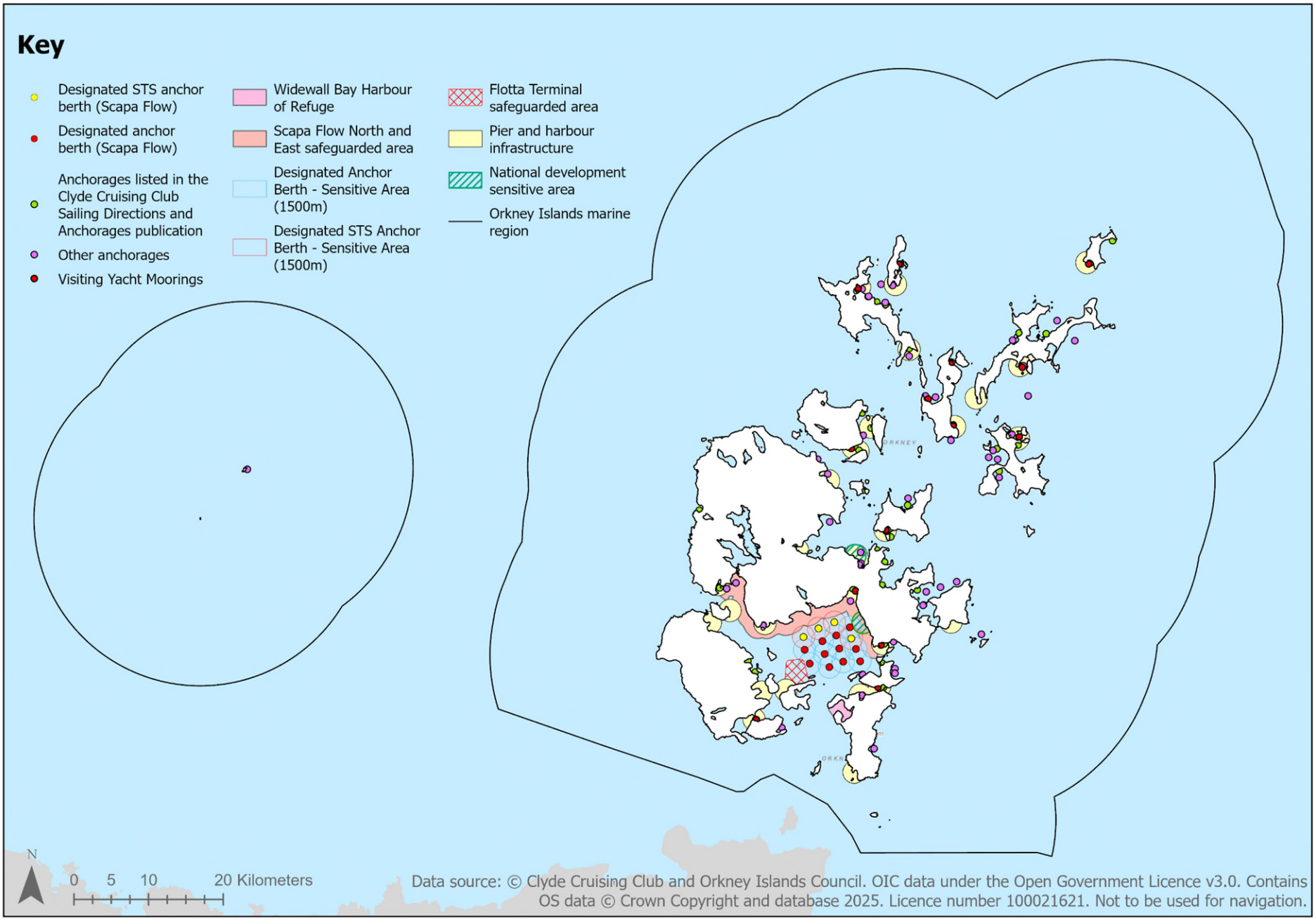
Map 7: Historic environment asset receptor significance and sensitivity



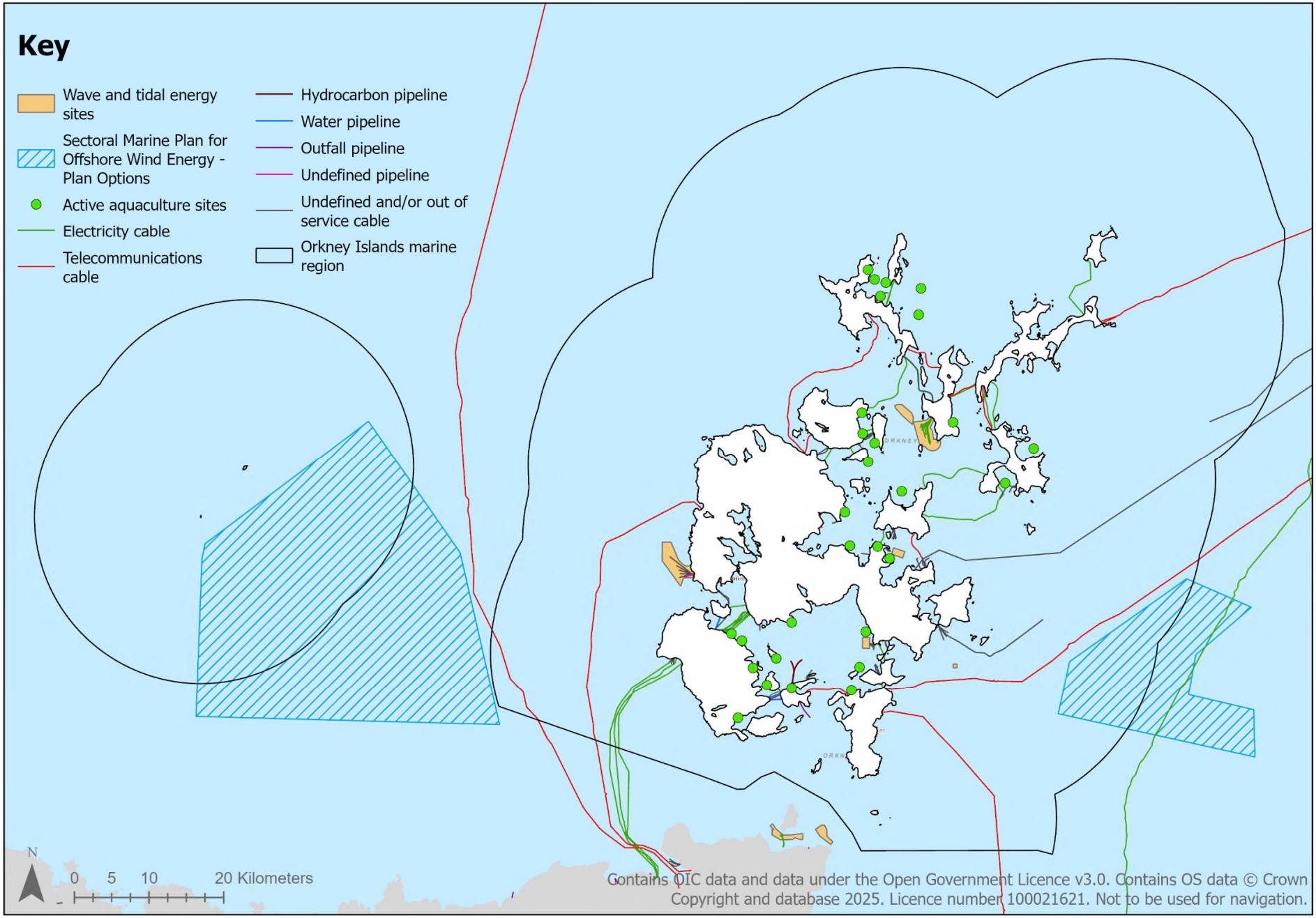
Map 7 presents the cumulative significance and sensitivity values for the identified receptors (i.e. the sum of overlaying receptor values).

Socio-Economic, Infrastructure and Operations Receptor Spatial Guidance

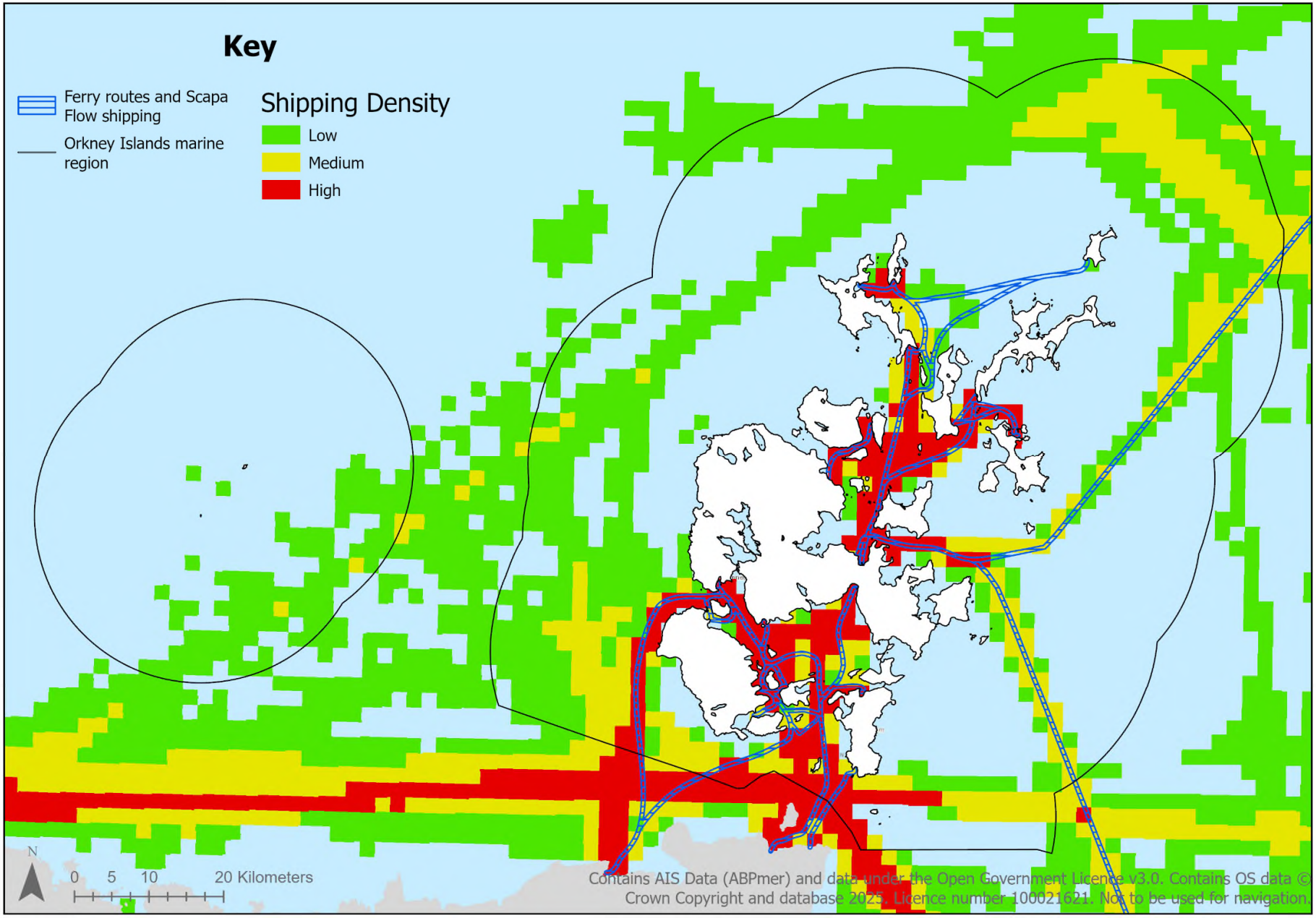
Map 8: Harbour infrastructure and operations receptors



Map 9: Energy, utilities and aquaculture infrastructure receptors

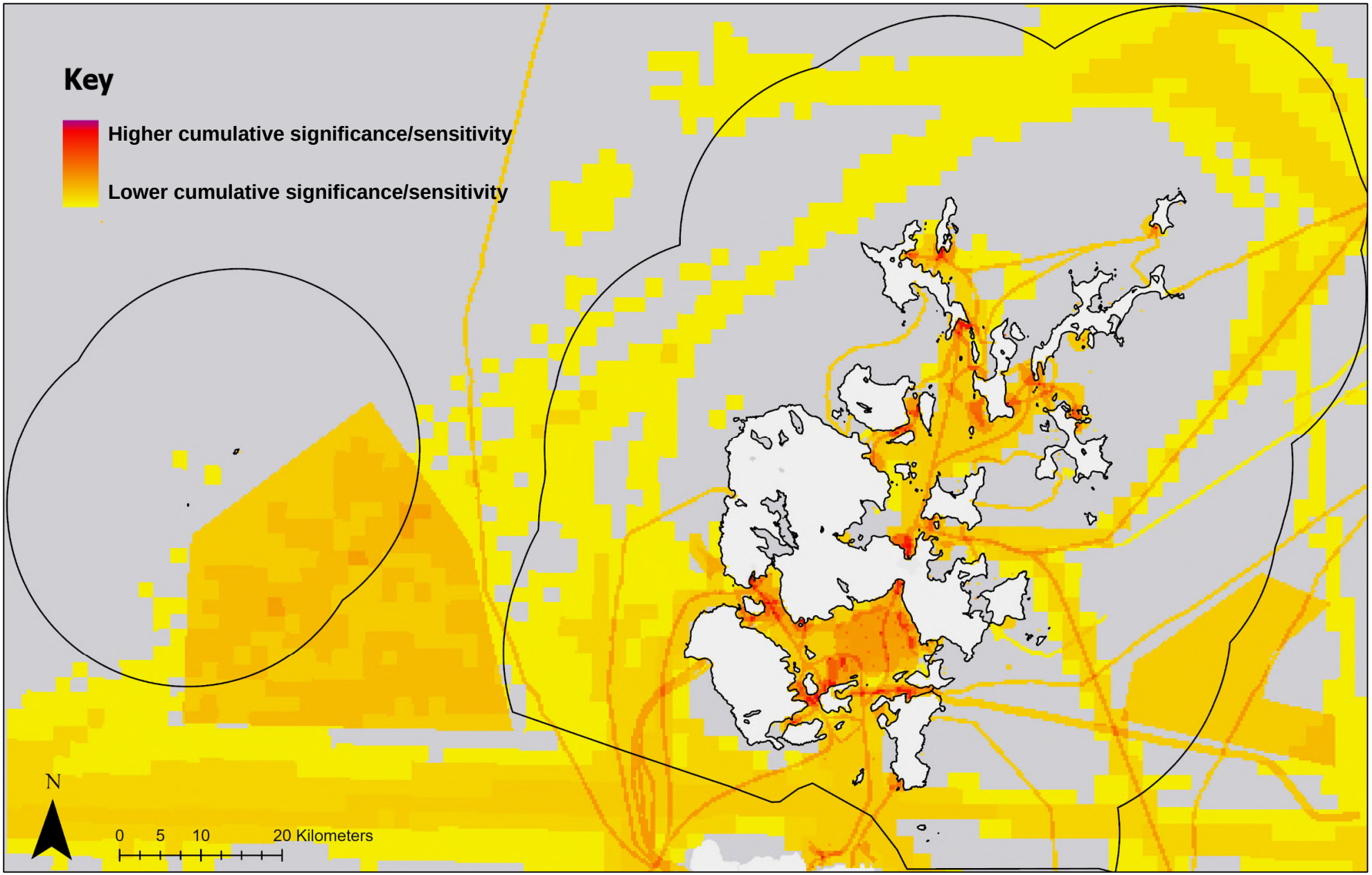


Map 10: Shipping density and ferry routes



Map 10 identifies Automatic Identification System (AIS) data, Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

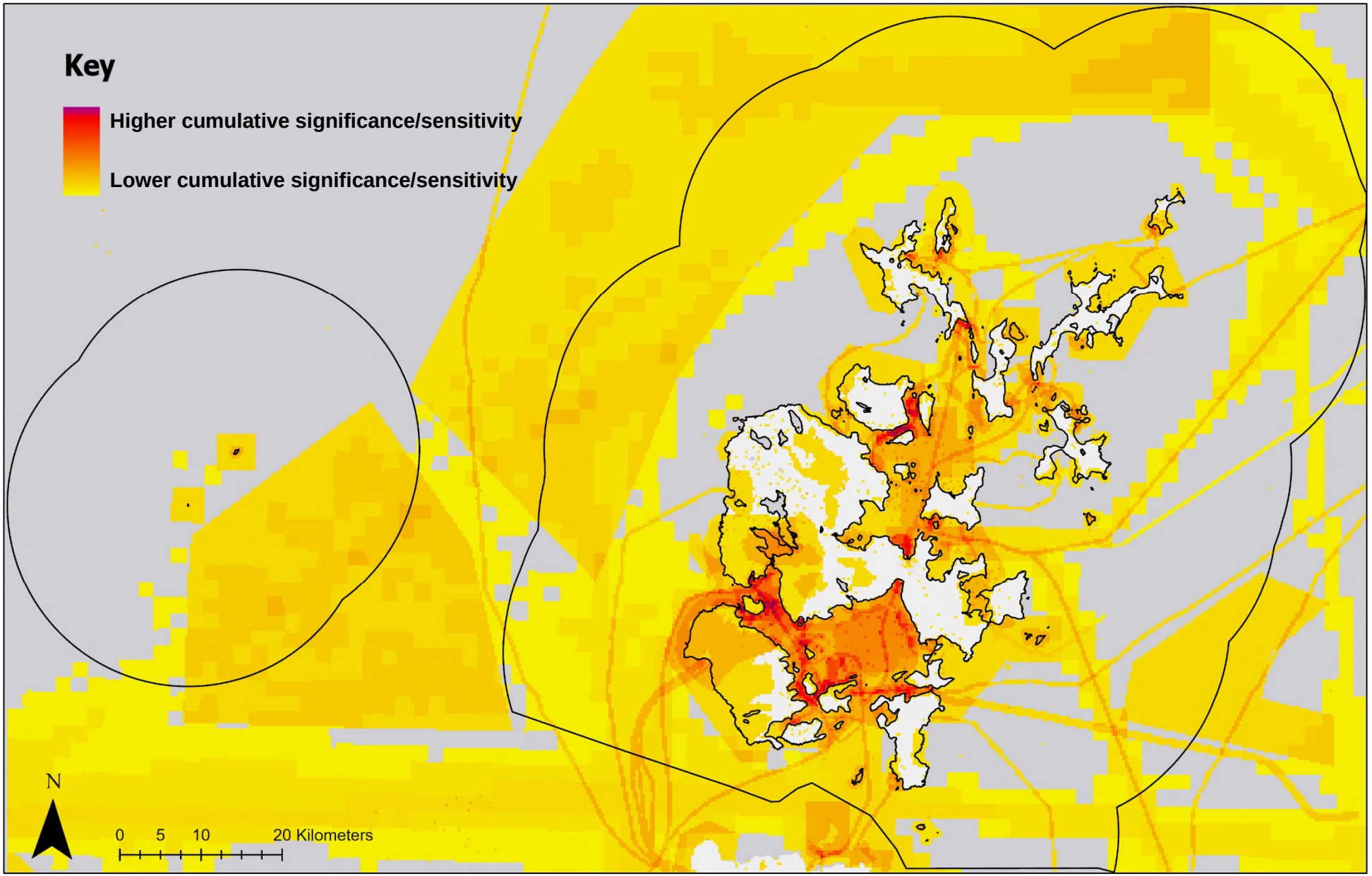
Map 11: Socio-economic infrastructure and operations receptor significance and sensitivity.



Map 11 presents the cumulative significance and sensitivity values for the identified socio-economic receptors (i.e. the sum of overlaying receptor score values).

All Receptors Spatial Guidance

Map 12: All receptor significance and sensitivity



Map 12 presents the cumulative significance and sensitivity scores for all identified receptors (i.e. the sum of overlaying receptor values).

Appendix 1: Special Protection Areas and qualifying features sensitivity assessment

A1.1 Special Protection Areas (SPAs) that have no identified pressure/interaction to their qualifying features with finfish farming development and/or activities have been screened out and are therefore not included in Map 3 (Nature Conservation Significance and Sensitivity).

A1.2 An individual site sensitivity value has been attributed to the relevant SPAs within Orkney and the Orkney Islands marine region that have a pathway to impact from finfish farming development and/or activities.

A1.3 The sensitivity value for each SPA has been attributed on the basis of the sensitivity of the site's qualifying bird features to finfish farming development and/or activities.

A.4 The assessment of relevant finfish farm consent applications will take into account, through the relevant process, any impacts or effects on receptors located outwith the Orkney Islands marine region.

A1.5 The foraging ranges of the SPA qualifying features are identified in Table A2.

A1.6 The sensitivity value for each SPA has been attributed by following steps 1 to 4:

Step 1: Identify the qualifying features for each SPA (see Table A1: Column B);

Step 2: Identify the pressures/interactions from finfish farming development and/or activities for each SPA qualifying bird feature using FeAST assessments (see Table A2: Column B);

Step 3: Identify the sensitivity of the qualifying bird features to each pressure/interaction using values of low (1), medium (2) or high (3). For qualifying bird features affected by multiple pressures/interactions, the highest pressure sensitivity value was assigned to the feature (see Table A2: Column C).

Step 4: The individual SPA sensitivity value was assigned based on the most sensitive qualifying feature within the SPA citation (see Table A1: Column E).

Table A1. Special Protection Area sensitivity summary

A **Special Protection Area (SPA)**	B **Qualifying feature and condition**	C **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	D **FeAST 'Feature Sensitivity' [FROM TABLE A2]** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	E **SPA Sensitivity Value** *(Attributed on the bases of most sensitive qualifying feature)*
Auskerry	Breeding European storm petrel (Unfavourable declining, 2018)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	High (3)
	Breeding Arctic tern (Favourable declining, 2018)	See Table A2	High (3)	
Calf of Eday	Breeding cormorant (Favourable maintained, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	High (3)
	Breeding fulmar (Favourable maintained, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding great black-backed gull (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding kittiwake (Unfavourable no change, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding guillemot (Unfavourable no change, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding seabird assemblage (Unfavourable no change, 2024)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	
Copinsay	Breeding fulmar (Favourable maintained, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	High (3)
	Breeding great black-backed gull (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding guillemot (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding kittiwake (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding seabird assemblage (Unfavourable no change, 2016)	Screened out	N/A	
East Sanday Coast	Non-breeding bar-tailed godwit (Favourable maintained, 2016)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	N/A

A **Special Protection Area (SPA)**	B **Qualifying feature and condition**	C **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	D **FeAST 'Feature Sensitivity' [FROM TABLE A2]** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	E **SPA Sensitivity Value** *(Attributed on the bases of most sensitive qualifying feature)*
	Non-breeding turnstone (Favourable maintained, 2016)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	
	Non-breeding purple sandpiper (Favourable maintained, 2016)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	
Hoy	Breeding Arctic skua (Unfavourable declining, 2020)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	High (3)
	Breeding great skua (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	
	Breeding great black-backed gull (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding guillemot (Unfavourable no change, 2017)	See Table 2	High (3)	
	Breeding kittiwake (Unfavourable declining, 2017)	See Table 2	High (3)	
	Breeding peregrine (Favourable maintained, 2013)	Screened out	N/A	
	Breeding red-throated diver (Favourable maintained, 2009)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	
	Breeding fulmar (Unfavourable no change, 2017)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding puffin (Unfavourable declining, 2005)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding seabird assemblage (Unfavourable declining, 2020)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	
Marwick Head	Breeding guillemot (Unfavourable no change, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	High (3)
	Breeding kittiwake (Unfavourable recovering, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding seabird assemblage (Unfavourable declining, 2017)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	
Papa Westray	Breeding Arctic skua (Unfavourable declining, 2016)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	High (3)
	Breeding Arctic tern (Unfavourable no change, 2017)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding hen harrier (Favourable maintained, 2013)	Screened out	N/A	Medium (2)

A **Special Protection Area (SPA)**	**B** **Qualifying feature and condition**	**C** **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	**D** **FeAST 'Feature Sensitivity' [FROM TABLE A2]** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	**E** **SPA Sensitivity Value** *(Attributed on the bases of most sensitive qualifying feature)*
Orkney Mainland Moors	Non-breeding hen harrier (Favourable maintained, 2014)	Screened out	N/A	
	Breeding short-eared owl (Favourable maintained, 2005)	Screened out	N/A	
	Breeding red-throated diver (Favourable maintained, 2009)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	
Pentland Firth Islands	Breeding Arctic tern (Unfavourable no change, 2018)	See Table A2	High (3)	High (3)
Rousay	Breeding guillemot (Unfavourable no change, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	High (3)
	Breeding Arctic skua (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	
	Breeding Arctic tern (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding fulmar (Favourable maintained, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding kittiwake (Unfavourable declining, 2016)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding seabird assemblage (Unfavourable declining, 2016)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	
Sule Skerry and Sule Stack	Breeding gannet (Favourable maintained, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	High (3)
	Breeding European storm petrel (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	
	Breeding guillemot (Favourable maintained, 2019)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding Leach's petrel (Unfavourable no change, 2024)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	
	Breeding puffin (Favourable maintained, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding shag (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding seabird assemblage (Favourable maintained, 2019)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	
Switha	Non-breeding Greenland barnacle goose (Favourable maintained, 2013)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	N/A

A **Special Protection Area (SPA)**	**B** **Qualifying feature and condition**	**C** **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	**D** **FeAST 'Feature Sensitivity' [FROM TABLE A2]** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	**E** **SPA Sensitivity Value** *(Attributed on the bases of most sensitive qualifying feature)*
West Westray	Breeding guillemot (Unfavourable no change, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	High (3)
	Breeding Arctic skua (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	Medium (2)	
	Breeding Arctic tern (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding fulmar (Favourable maintained, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding kittiwake (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding razorbill (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding seabird assemblage (Unfavourable declining, 2017)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	
North Orkney*	Breeding red-throated diver	See Table A2	Medium (2)	High (3)
	Non-breeding great northern diver	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Non-breeding Slavonian grebe	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Non-breeding velvet scoter	See Table A2	High (3)	
Scapa Flow*	Breeding red-throated diver	See Table A2	Medium (2)	High (3)
	Non-breeding black-throated diver	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Non-breeding common eider	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Non-breeding European shag	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Non-breeding great northern diver	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Non-breeding long-tailed duck	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Non-breeding red-breasted merganser	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Non-breeding Slavonian grebe	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding fulmar (favourable maintained)	See Table A2	High (3)	High (3)
	Breeding kittiwake (Unfavourable, no change)	See Table A2	High (3)	

A Special Protection Area (SPA)	B Qualifying feature and condition	C Pressures/interactions: finfish farming	D FeAST 'Feature Sensitivity' [FROM TABLE A2] *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	E SPA Sensitivity Value *(Attributed on the bases of most sensitive qualifying feature)*
North Caithness Cliffs	Breeding puffin (Unfavourable declining)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding guillemot (favourable maintained)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding peregrine (unfavourable declining)	See Table A2	High (3)	
	Breeding razorbill (favourable maintained)	See Table A2	High (3)	
**As Scapa Flow SPA and North Orkney SPA are relatively recent designations (2021), the status of the qualifying features is currently unavailable.*				

Table A2. SPA qualifying bird features sensitivity summary*

A Species	B Pressures/interactions: finfish farming	C Sensitivity	D Over-all Sensitivity	E Recommended Foraging Range (km)
Arctic skua (breeding)	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium	Medium	2.7
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium		
Arctic tern (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	40.5
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Nitrogen and phosphorus enrichment	Medium		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium		
	Synthetic compound contamination (inc. pesticides, antifoulants, pharmaceuticals)	Medium		

A Species	B Pressures/interactions: finfish farming	C Sensitivity	D Over-all Sensitivity	E Recommended Foraging Range (km)
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	High		
Common goldeneye (non-breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	Scapa Flow SPA boundary
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Death or injury by collision below water	Medium		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	High		
European shag (non-breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	9.2±4.9
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Death or injury by collision below water	Medium		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	High		
Fulmar (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	1200.2
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	High		
Gannet (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	High	High	509.4
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Death or injury by collision below water	Medium		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	Medium		
Great skua (breeding)	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium	Medium	931.2
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium		
Common Guillemot (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	153.7
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Death or injury by collision below water	High		
	Nitrogen and phosphorus enrichment	Medium		

A Species	B Pressures/interactions: finfish farming	C Sensitivity	D Over-all Sensitivity	E Recommended Foraging Range (km)
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	High		
Kittiwake (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	300.6
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High		
	Synthetic compound contamination (inc. pesticides, antifoulants, pharmaceuticals)	Medium		
Leach's petrel (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	Medium	657
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	Medium		
Puffin (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	265.4
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Death or injury by collision below water	High		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	Medium		
Razorbill (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	164.6
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Death or injury by collision below water	High		
	Nitrogen and phosphorus enrichment	Medium		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High		
Red-throated diver (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	Medium	9+1**
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Death or injury by collision below water	Medium		
	Nitrogen and phosphorus enrichment	Medium		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium		

A Species	B Pressures/interactions: finfish farming	C Sensitivity	D Over-all Sensitivity	E Recommended Foraging Range (km)
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	Medium		
European storm petrel (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	Medium	336
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	Medium		
Black-throated diver (non-breeding)	Mortality (by-catch through entanglement in nets in the water column)	High	High	Scapa Flow SPA boundary
	Disturbance (vessel movement and displacement from foraging areas)	Medium		
Common eider (non-breeding)	Mortality (by-catch through entanglement in nets in the water column	High	High	3.2±4.2
Cormorant (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	33.9
	Death or injury by collision above water	Medium		
	Death or injury by collision below water	Medium		
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	High		
Great black-backed gull (breeding)	Barrier to spp. movement (including displacement)	Medium	High	73
	Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High		
	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	High		
Great northern diver (non-breeding)	Mortality (by-catch through entanglement in nets in the water column)	High	High	North Orkney and Scapa Flow SPA boundary
	Disturbance (vessel movement and displacement from foraging areas)	Medium		
Long-tailed duck (non-breeding)	Mortality (by-catch through entanglement in nets in the water column)	High	High	North Orkney and Scapa Flow SPA boundary

A Species	B Pressures/interactions: finfish farming	C Sensitivity	D Over-all Sensitivity	E Recommended Foraging Range (km)
Red-breasted merganser (non-breeding)	Mortality (by-catch through entanglement in nets in the water column)	High	High	North Orkney and Scapa Flow SPA boundary
	Disturbance (vessel movement and displacement)	Medium		
Slavonian grebe (non-breeding)	Mortality (by-catch through entanglement in nets in the water column)	High	High	North Orkney and Scapa Flow SPA boundary
	Disturbance (vessel movement and displacement from foraging areas)	Medium		
Velvet scoter (non-breeding)	Mortality (by-catch through entanglement in nets in the water column)	High	High	North Orkney SPA boundary
Greenland barnacle goose (non-breeding)	No pressure/interaction - screened out	N/A	None	N/A
Hen harrier (breeding)	No pressure/interaction - screened out	N/A	None	N/A
Bar-tailed godwit (non-breeding)	No pressure/interaction - screened out	N/A	None	N/A
Peregrine (breeding)	No pressure/interaction - screened out	N/A	None	N/A
Purple sandpiper (non-breeding)	No pressure/interaction - screened out	N/A	None	N/A
Short-eared owl (breeding)	No pressure/interaction - screened out	N/A	None	N/A
Turnstone (non-breeding)	No pressure/interaction - screened out	N/A	None	N/A

*Recommended foraging ranges taken from NatureScot Guidance Note 3: https://www.nature.scot/doc/guidance-note-3-guidance-support-offshore-wind-applications-marine-birds-identifying-theoretical

** for red-throated divers, because of their sensitivity to aquaculture a figure of 10km (maximum foraging range plus 1km for swimming) is used, as advised by NatureScot

Appendix 2: Special Areas of Conservation assessment

A2.1 SACs that have no identified pressure/interaction to their qualifying features with finfish farming development and/or activities have been screened out and are therefore not included in Map 3 (Nature Conservation Significance and Sensitivity).

A2.2 An individual site sensitivity value has been attributed to the SACs within Orkney and the Orkney Islands marine region that have a pressure/interaction to their qualifying features from finfish farming development and/or activities.

A2.3 The sensitivity value for each SAC has been attributed on the basis of the sensitivity of the site's qualifying features to finfish farming development and/or activities.

A2.4 The assessment of the relevant finfish farm consent applications will take into account, through the relevant process, any impacts or effects on receptors located outwith the Orkney Islands marine region.

A2.5 The sensitivity value for each SAC has been attributed by following steps 1 to 4:

Step 1: Identify the qualifying features for each SAC (see Table A3: Column B);

Step 2: Identify the pressures from finfish farming development and/or activities on each SAC qualifying feature in consultation with NatureScot (see Table A3: Column C);

Step 3: Identify the sensitivity of these qualifying features to each identified pressure using values of low (1), medium (2) or high (3) (see Table A3: Column D).

Step 4: Assign the individual SAC sensitivity value based on the most sensitive qualifying feature within the SAC citation (see Table A3: Column E).

Table A3: SAC Summary Table

A **Special Area of Conservation**	**B** **Qualifying feature and condition**	**C** **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	**D** **Sensitivity** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	**E** **Sensitivity Value** *(Attributed on the bases of most sensitive qualifying feature)*
Faray and Holm of Faray	Grey seal (Unfavourable declining, 2014)	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	High (3)	High (3)
		Noise (above and below water)	High (3)	
Loch of Stenness	Lagoon (Favourable maintained 2005)	Penetration and/or disturbance of the substrate below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion	High (3)	High (3)
		Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed	High (3)	
		Changes in suspended solids (water clarity)	High (3)	
		Smothering and siltation rate changes	High (3)	
		De-oxygenation	High (3)	
		Nutrient enrichment/organic enrichment	High (3)	
		Introduction or spread of invasive non-indigenous species (INIS)	High (3)	
Sanday	Reefs (Favourable maintained, 2011)	Penetration and/or disturbance of the substrate below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion	High (3)	High (3)
		Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed	High (3)	
		Changes in suspended solids (water clarity)	High (3)	
		Smothering and siltation rate changes	High (3)	

A **Special Area of Conservation**	**B** **Qualifying feature and condition**	**C** **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	**D** **Sensitivity** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	**E** **Sensitivity Value** *(Attributed on the bases of most sensitive qualifying feature)*
		Deoxygenation	High (3)	
		Nutrient enrichment/organic enrichment	High (3)	
		Introduction or spread of INIS	High (3)	
	Subtidal sandbanks (Favourable maintained, 2011)	Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed	High (3)	
		Smothering and siltation rate changes	High (3)	
		De-oxygenation	High (3)	
		Nutrient enrichment/organic enrichment	Medium (2)	
		Introduction or spread of INIS	High (3)	
	Intertidal mudflats and sandflats (Favourable maintained, 2011)	No pressure/interaction – screened out	N/A	
	Harbour seal (Unfavourable declining, 2024)	Visual disturbance (behaviour)	High (3)	
		Noise (above and below water)	High (3)	

Appendix 3: Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas assessment

A3.1 An individual site sensitivity value has been attributed to the Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas (NC MPA) within the Orkney Islands marine region that have protected features with identified pressure/interaction with finfish farming development and/or activities.

A3.2 The sensitivity value for each NC MPA has been attributed on the basis of the sensitivity of the site's protected feature(s) to finfish farming development and/or activities.

A3.3 The assessment of the relevant finfish farm consent applications will take into account, through the relevant process, any impacts or effects on receptors located outwith the Orkney Islands marine region.

A3.4 The sensitivity value for each NC MPA has been attributed by following steps 1 to 4:

Step 1: Identify the protected features for each NC MPA (see Table A4: Column B);

Step 2: Identify the pressures from finfish farming development and/or activities on each NC MPA protected feature using Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool (FeAST) assessments (see Table A4: Column C);

Step 3: Identify the sensitivity of these qualifying features to each pressure using values of low (1), medium (2) or high (3) (see Table A4: Column D).

Step 4: Assign the individual NC MPA sensitivity value based on the most sensitive qualifying feature within the NC MPA designation (see Table A4: Column E).

Table A4: Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas Summary

A **Nature Conservation MPA**	**B** **Qualifying feature**	**C** **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	**D** **FEAST 'Feature Sensitivity'** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	**E** **Sensitivity Value** *(Attributed on the bases of most sensitive qualifying feature)*
Wyre and Rousay Sounds	Kelp and seaweed communities on sublittoral sediment	Introduction or spread of non-indigenous species and translocations (competition)	Medium (2)	High (3)
		Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium (2)	
	Maerl beds	De-oxygenation	Medium (2)	
		Introduction or spread of non-indigenous species and translocations (competition)	High (3)	
		Nitrogen and phosphorus enrichment	High (3)	
		Organic enrichment	High (3)	
		Physical change (to another seabed type)	High (3)	
		Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High (3)	
		Siltation rate changes (light)	High (3)	
		Surface abrasion	High (3)	
		Synthetic compound contamination (inc. pesticides, antifoulants, pharmaceuticals)	High (3)	
		Siltation rate changes (heavy)	High (3)	
	Marine Geomorphology of the Scottish Shelf Seabed	No pressure/interaction – screened out	None	
Papa Westray	Black guillemot (foraging range 4.9 km)	Barrier to mobile species movement	Medium (2)	Medium (2)
		Death or injury by collision below water	Medium (2)	
		Death or injury by collision above water	Medium (2)	
		Removal of non-target species (lethal)	Medium (2)	
		Visual disturbance (behaviour)	Medium (2)	

A **Nature Conservation MPA**	**B** **Qualifying feature**	**C** **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	**D** **FEAST 'Feature Sensitivity'** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	**E** **Sensitivity Value** *(Attributed on the bases of most sensitive qualifying feature)*
	Marine Geomorphology of the Scottish Shelf Seabed	No pressures/interactions	None	
North-west Orkney	Sandeels	Organic enrichment	Medium (2)	High (3)
		Physical change (to another seabed type)	High (3)	
		Siltation rate changes (light)	Medium (2)	
		Surface abrasion	Medium (2)	
		Siltation rate changes (heavy)	High (3)	
	Marine Geomorphology of the Scottish Shelf Seabed	No pressure/interaction – screened out	None	

Appendix 4: Priority Marine Features assessment

A4.1 The Geodatabase of Marine Features Adjacent to Scotland (GeMS) PMF records within the Orkney Islands marine region are identified in Map 2. There are PMF locations that have not yet been recorded and are therefore not identified in the spatial data used within this Guidance. PMFs records will be periodically updated within this Guidance as detailed in Appendix 5 to incorporate any updated records.

A4.3 PMFs are a subset of species and habitats identified on national, UK or international lists. Therefore, all PMFs are of at least national conservation significance in Scotland, but may be of UK level or international significance. Each PMF recorded in the Orkney Islands marine region has been attributed a significance value on the basis of national or international conservation status. Refer to Table A5 for the conservation status and significance value attributed to relevant PMF.

A4.4 An individual PMF sensitivity value has been attributed to PMFs within the Orkney Islands marine region that have identified pressure/interaction with finfish farming development and/or activities

A4.5 The sensitivity value for each PMF has been attributed by following steps 1 to 4:

Step 1: Identify the PMF's present within Orkney's marine region (Table A5, Column A);

Step 2: Advice was taken from NatureScot on which PMFs to include within the Spatial Guidance;

Step 3: Identify the pressures/interactions on the selected PMFs from finfish farming using Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool (FeAST) assessments (see Table A5: Column D);

Step 4: Identify the sensitivity of selected PMFs to each pressure using values of low (1), medium (2) or high (3) (Table A5, Column E);

Step 5: Assign the overall PMF sensitivity value based on the highest sensitivity of a FeAST-listed pressure/interaction (Table A5, Column F).

Table A5: Priority Marine Features Summary

A Priority Marine Feature (PMF)	B PMF Conservation Status	C Significance value (1=low, 2=medium, 3=high)	D Pressures/interactions: finfish farming	E FEAST 'Feature sensitivity' *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	F Sensitivity Value*
Maerl Beds	International significance (Habitats Directive Appendix 1) and OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats and species Region III.	3	De-oxygenation	Medium (2)	High (3)
			Introduction or spread of non-indigenous species and translocations (competition)	High (3)	
			Nitrogen and phosphorus enrichment	High (3)	
			Organic enrichment	High (3)	
			Physical change (to another seabed type)	High (3)	
			Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High (3)	
			Siltation rate changes (light)	High (3)	
			Surface abrasion	High (3)	
			Synthetic compound contamination (inc. pesticides, antifoulants, pharmaceuticals)	High (3)	
			Siltation rate changes (heavy)	High (3)	
Seagrass beds	International significance (Habitats Directive Appendix 1) and OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats	3	Introduction or spread of non-indigenous species and translocations (competition)	Medium (2)	High (3)
			Nitrogen and phosphorus enrichment	Medium (2)	
			Organic enrichment	High (3)	

A **Priority Marine Feature (PMF)**	B **PMF Conservation Status**	C **Significance value** **(1=low, 2=medium, 3=high)**	D **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	E **FEAST** **'Feature sensitivity'** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	F **Sensitivity Value***
	and species. All regions where they occur.		Physical change (to another seabed type)	High (3)	
			Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High (3)	
			Siltation rate changes (light)	High (3)	
			Surface abrasion	Medium (2)	
			Siltation rate changes (heavy)	High (3)	
Flame shell beds	National Significance UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat/ species). Scotland is a particularly important location for this species in the international context.	2	Organic enrichment	High (3)	High (3)
			Physical change (to another seabed type)	High (3)	
			Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High (3)	
			Siltation rate changes (light)	Medium (2)	
			Surface abrasion	High (3)	
			Siltation rate changes (heavy)	High (3)	
Horse mussel beds	International significance (Habitats Directive Appendix 1) and OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats and species. All regions where they occur.	3	Organic enrichment	Medium (2)	High (3)
			Physical change (to another seabed type)	High (3)	
			Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High (3)	
			Siltation rate changes (light)	Medium (2)	
			Surface abrasion	Medium (2)	
			Siltation rate changes (heavy)	High (3)	
Fan mussel aggregations (Low	National Significance (BAP priority habitat/ species, and Wildlife and Countryside Act	2	Physical change (to another seabed type)	High (3)	High (3)
			Removal of non-target species (lethal)	High (3)	

A **Priority Marine Feature (PMF)**	**B** **PMF Conservation Status**	**C** **Significance value** **(1=low, 2=medium, 3=high)**	**D** **Pressures/interactions: finfish farming**	**E** **FEAST** **'Feature sensitivity'** *(low = 1, medium = 2, high = 3)*	**F** **Sensitivity Value***
or limited mobility species)	- Schedule 5). Scotland is a particularly important location for this species in the international context.		Surface abrasion	Medium (2)	
			Siltation rate changes (heavy)	Medium (2)	
Northern Feather Star	National Significance (Nationally Important Marine Feature (NIMF)) and PMF	2	Organic enrichment	Medium	3
			Physical change (to another seabed type)	Medium	
			Removal of non-target species	Medium	
			Siltation changes (low)	Medium	
			Siltation changes (high)	High	
			Surface abrasion	Medium	
Ocean Quahog	International Significance (OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats and species - Region II)	3	Physical change (to another seabed type)	High	3
			Removal of non-target species	Medium	
			Siltation changes (high)	High	

**Attributed on the basis of most sensitive qualifying feature*

Appendix 5: Receptor location data updates

A5.1 It is important that receptor locations are identified using the most up to date data. The receptors identified in Table A6 may be reviewed and updated to ensure that the data are current and up to date. Table A6 identifies the data sources used for receptor locations and updates.

Table A6: Data sources

Receptor	Data source
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	NatureScot SiteLink
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	NatureScot SiteLink
Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas (NC MPA)	NatureScot SiteLink
Priority Marine Features (PMF)	NatureScot Geodatabase for Marine Habitats and Species adjacent to Scotland
Seal haul-out sites	Scottish Government (Marine Directorate) and Sea Mammal Research Unit
National Scenic Area (NSA)	NatureScot SiteLink
World Heritage Site and Inner Sensitivity Zone	Historic Environment Scotland
Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area (HMPA)	Historic Environment Scotland
Scheduled Monuments	Historic Environment Scotland
Listed buildings	Historic Environment Scotland
Controlled Sites or Protected Places	Ministry of Defence
Conservation Areas	Historic Environment Scotland
Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes	Historic Environment Scotland
Indicative ferry routes	Orkney Islands Council
Shipping Density Areas	Marine Management Organisation
Widewall Bay Harbour of Refuge	Orkney Islands Council
Pier and harbour infrastructure locations (not the associated sensitive areas)	Orkney Islands Council
Designated Anchor Berths (Scapa Flow)	OceanWise
Anchorages listed in the Clyde Cruising Club Sailing Directions and Anchorages Publication	Clyde Cruising Club Sailing Directions and Anchorages Publication
Visiting Yacht Moorings	Orkney Islands Council
Other established anchorages	OceanWise and Clyde Cruising Club

Receptor	Data source
Submarine electricity cables	OceanWise
Submarine telecommunication cables	OceanWise
Out of Service (OoS) subsea cables	OceanWise
Hydrocarbon pipelines	OceanWise
Subsea water pipelines	OceanWise
Wave and tidal energy sites - Crown Estate Scotland lease and agreement for lease areas	Crown Estate Scotland
The Sectoral Plan for Offshore Wind Energy – Plan Options	Crown Estate Scotland
Active aquaculture sites	Scottish Government (Marine Directorate)

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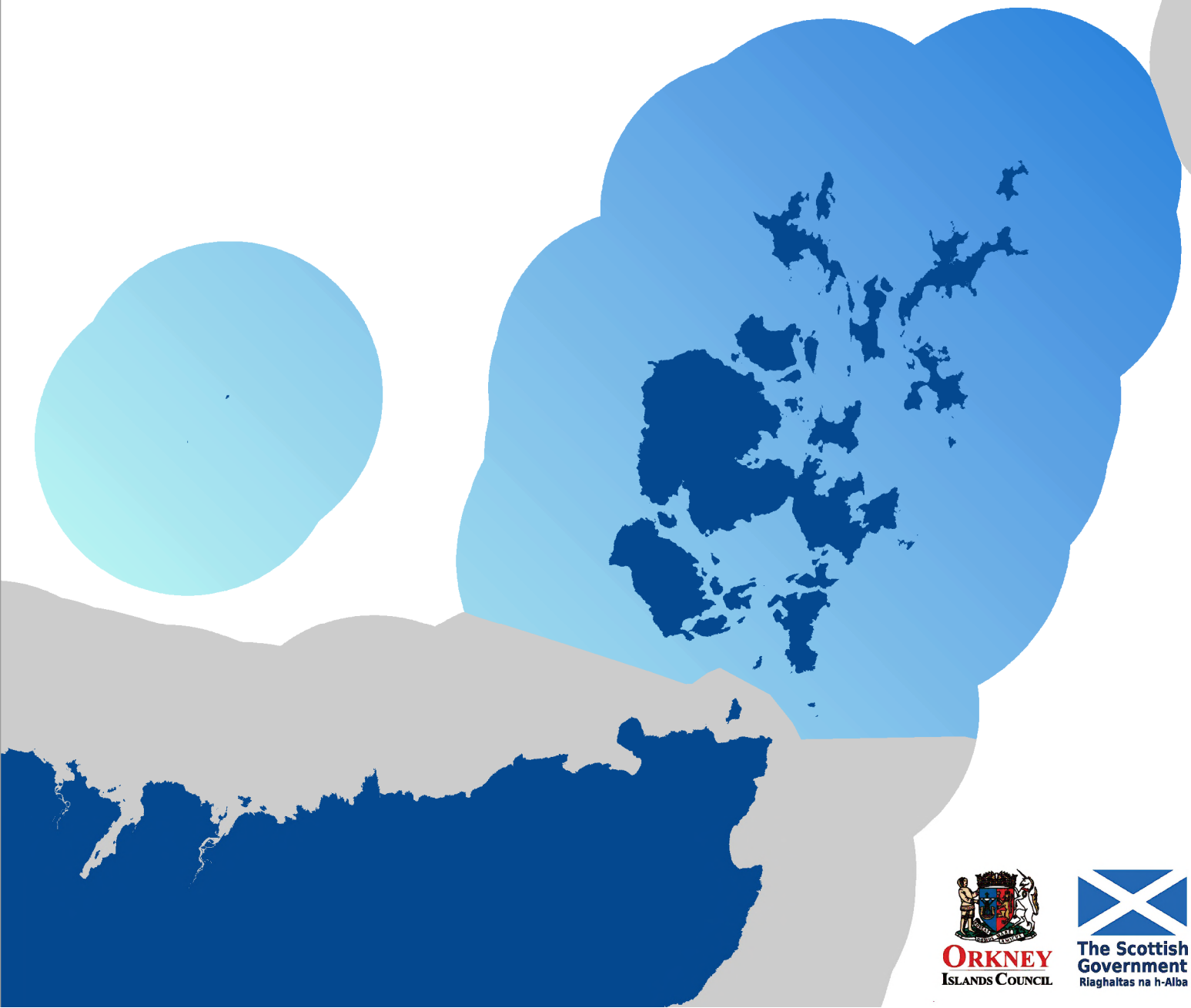
Appendix 2

Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance

Consultation and Modifications Report



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Acronyms

Term	Acronym
FeAST	Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool
FFSG	Finfish Spatial Guidance
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NMPi	National Marine Plan interactive
NSA	National Scenic Area
OIC	Orkney Islands Council
OMPAG	Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group
PMF	Priority Marine Feature
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area

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1. Executive Summary

Orkney Islands Council has prepared the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance[1] (FFSG) as non-statutory planning guidance to support decision-making on finfish farming development and/or activities within the Orkney Islands marine region. Its purpose is to aid implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan *Sector Policy 2b: Finfish and shellfish farming* by identifying areas of greater and lesser potential sensitivity, improving transparency for stakeholders and enabling informed participation in the planning process.

A web-based interactive spatial tool can be accessed at Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance (arcgis.com)[2]. This service allows users to identify nearby receptors from a given point by clicking on a desired location.

Development of the FFSG began in 2021 with early engagement of industry, regulators, and community representatives to inform the method for and preparation of the Guidance, followed by a formal consultation period from 1 August to 25 October 2024. Consultation on the spatial guidance was linked with the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan consultation, where nine in-person consultation events were held around Orkney, supplemented by two online sessions, resulting in over 250 participants attending events. Feedback highlighted both strong support for the Guidance—particularly in clarifying sensitivities and providing accessible tools—and also concerns, including the risk of misinterpretation, overly precautionary sensitivity values, and the need to consider mitigation, scale, and design factors.

This report details how this feedback informed a range of modifications to the Guidance, including supporting text, incorporation of new spatial data and maps, adjustments to receptor sensitivity and significance assessments, and clarifications on undesignated heritage assets. The final FFSG reflects these improvements, offering a balanced and up-to-date resource that supports sustainable aquaculture development whilst considering environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure features.

[1] https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/orkney-islands-marine-region-finfish-farming-spatial-guidance/

[2] Orkney Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3ec2b843d89346e3ac0e2f476b4568bd

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2. Introduction

2.1. Background

The Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance[3] ('FFSG') was prepared by Orkney Islands Council (OIC) as non-statutory planning guidance to support decision-making on finfish farming development and/or activities within the Orkney Islands marine region..

The purpose of this Spatial Guidance is to support the implementation of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, *Sector Policy 2b: Finfish and shellfish farming* by identifying areas of greater and lesser potential sensitivity and/or constraint for finfish farming developments and/or activities.

It provides greater clarity for stakeholders on the significance, and potential sensitivity, of identified environmental, historic, social, economic and infrastructure features to finfish farming development and/or activities and aims to inform stakeholder understanding and participation in the planning and decision-making process.

A web-based interactive spatial tool can be accessed at Orkney Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance (arcgis.com)[4].This service allows users to identify nearby receptors from a given point by clicking on a desired location. The search distance from the clicked location can be set by the user (e.g., all receptors within 1km), with the option to view further information on the receptors present within the search area.

2.2. The purpose of the Consultation and Modifications Report

The FFSG has been prepared through a process of stakeholder engagement and consultation, alongside the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan. The timeline for this is outlined in the Regional Marine Plan for the Orkney Islands: Statement of Public Participation[5].

This Consultation and Modifications Report sets out the process of consultation that took place in 2024 (Section 3), a consultation respondent profile (Section 4), a summary of the issues raised in response to the consultation (Section 5) and details of the modifications made to the FFSG post consultation (Section 6).

The Consultation Response Form, which was used to invite comment on the FFSG: Consultation Draft is presented in Appendix 1.

[3] https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/marine-planning/orkney-islands-marine-region-finfish-farming-spatial-guidance/
[4] https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3ec2b843d89346e3ac0e2f476b4568bd
[5] 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

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

3. Overview of the Consultation

3.1. Consultation and engagement

Development of the FFSG began in 2021, in order to support the implementation of Sector Policy 2b: *Finfish and shellfish farming* in the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan.

Very early engagement was carried out directly with locally operating finfish farming organisations and members of the Orkney Marine Planning Advisory Group (OMPAG). This included circulating a methods statement for comment and discussion within OMPAG, alongside regular discussions and guidance from the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government.

After the method statement for the Guidance had been finalised, the FFSG: Consultation Draft was developed and circulated within OMPAG and industry bodies. Specific sub-group meetings were held with relevant stakeholders at this time to discuss opportunities and issues in more depth, in order to make the FFSG as useful as possible for statutory bodies, potential developers and other stakeholders. With one of the aims of the FFSG being to enable more informed participation in the planning process, consideration was given to ensuring it is as accessible as possible, whilst also providing the appropriate amount of detail and depth for more advanced uses.

Before public consultation, the draft FFSG was also presented to OIC Elected Members, who provided further comments before later endorsing the FFSG: Consultation Draft for public consultation through OIC committee.

The FFSG: Consultation Draft was then deposited for public consultation alongside the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Consultation Draft from 1 August 2024 to 25 October 2024.

The aim of the consultation and wider stakeholder engagement process was to engage a diverse audience as effectively as possible, which is detailed in section 3.2 below. This included targeting and designing engagement activities to each island that was visited 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 FFSG.

OIC are committed to ensuring that local communities have the opportunity to engage directly and have their voices heard.

3.2. Community consultation and engagement events

As part of the public consultation from 1 August to 25 October 2024, nine in-person community consultation events were delivered which ran through the day and into the evening in multiple locations throughout the Orkney Islands, including Stronsay, Rousay, St Margaret’s Hope, Shapinsay, Hoy, Stromness, Kirkwall, Sanday and Westray.

At these events, which were also held for the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan consultation, large screens or laptops were set up with the web-based interactive spatial tool available to view and use, alongside physical copies of the FFSG: Consultation Draft and consultation feedback forms.

The consultation and drop-in events were advertised widely, including posters being put up in key areas around Mainland Orkney and the isles, marine planners being interviewed on BBC Radio Orkney, local organisations and Development Trusts being asked to advertise and share the event details, and a social media campaign through local (OIC) and national (Scottish Government) channels. Consultation information was available from the OIC website and was sent out in email alerts to the 360+ Orkney marine planning stakeholders signed up to the OIC Marine Planning mailing list.

Each event was set up in locations where local people visit as part of their day-to-day activities including local cafés, Development Trust centres, or youth clubs in order to capture passing local people of all ages. Short presentations and films were used to showcase marine planning and the Orkney marine environment and highlight the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan and FFSG's relevance within each local area. A high turnout was experienced for the consultation events.

Two further online community consultation and engagement sessions were delivered to maximise participation opportunities and allow those to attend who couldn't be at an in-person event.

From these engagement sessions over 250 visitors were recorded as having attended, and many in-depth discussions were held about the FFSG, the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan and many wider, more general marine topics of importance to the community.

4. Consultation respondent profile

4.1. Overview

In total across the consultation, seven written consultation responses were received, all representing organisations. Within these responses, over 41 individual comments were submitted, logged and analysed.

It should be noted that due to extensive early engagement (pre-consultation period) many initial comments from statutory bodies and consultees sitting on the Advisory Group had been addressed through the initial development period.

4.2. 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 **Error! Reference source not found.**:

- Businesses (2)
- Industry bodies (1)
- Interest groups (2)
- Public bodies (2)

The consultation respondents can be categories as nature, aquaculture, recreation, and historic environment interests. See figure 2.

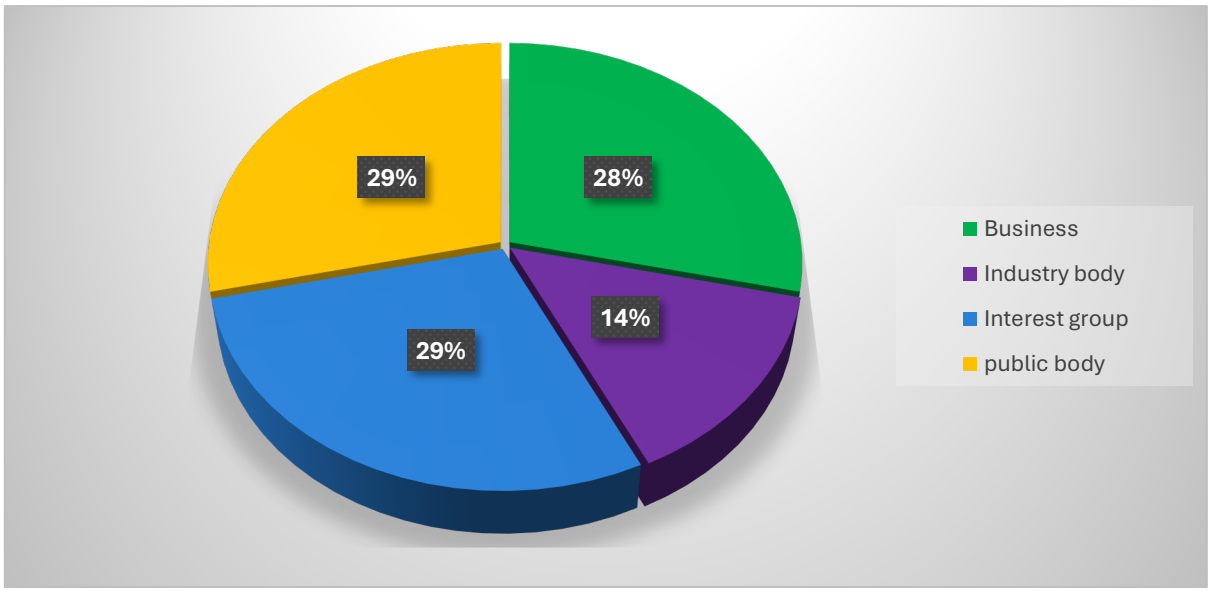

Figure 1 - Consultation responses received for the Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance

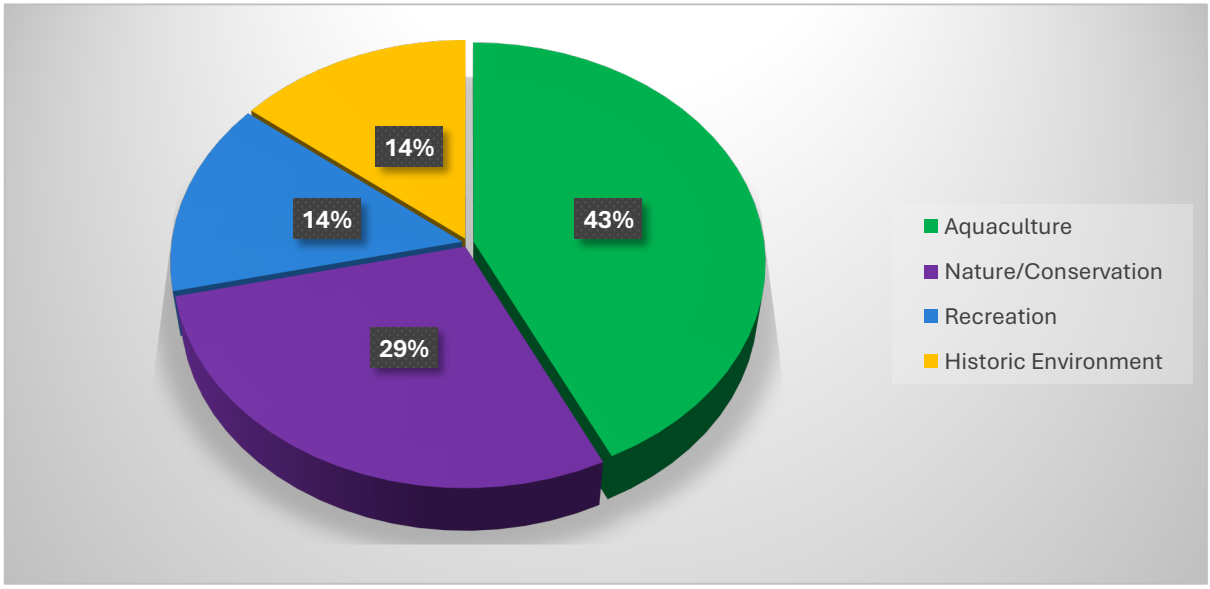

Figure 2 - Consultation responses by sector/interest

5. Consultation Responses

This section of the report provides a summary of the issues raised in response to the FFSG consultation questions, as detailed in Appendix 1: Consultation Response Form.

5.1. Purpose and policy context of the Orkney Islands Finfish Spatial Guidance (Q1)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan will be limited without the addition of this Spatial Guidance, and we strongly support its use to identify areas of greater and lesser potential sensitivity and/or constraint for finfish farming development.
- It should be clarified why aquaculture was chosen as the first industry to have this Spatial Guidance developed.
- The sector is already aware of all these sensitivities and constraints, which are assessed on a case-by-case-basis and its usefulness may be limited as a result. As this Guidance is a higher-level overview, it would be better suited to novel developments rather than finfish farming aquaculture.
- There is the risk that this Spatial Guidance could be misinterpreted.
- There is a lack of recognition of the importance of fish farming when compared to other sectors.
- We welcome the commitment to develop shellfish farming spatial guidance next.

5.2. Use of the Finfish Spatial Guidance (Q2)

Summary of consultation response issues

- It would be helpful if somewhere in the document there was a note recommending relevant stakeholders to consult with for developments.
- There should be some additional clarification around the requirement to ‘have regard to the spatial guidance’.
- The Guidance could be worded more strongly to demonstrate that locations with the highest sensitivity are unsuitable for open net pen finfish farming. This would give clarity to current developments whilst not restricting areas for potential development where technological advancements may allow.
- The Spatial Guidance does not take account of scale, siting, design, mitigation or other regulatory controls such as Controlled Activities Regulations and many of the sensitivity ratings are overly precautionary. Its usefulness is therefore limited and may be misapplied or misinterpreted
- Finfish operators have expert in house resource in terms of stakeholder outreach and constraint mapping. All identified constraints are known to the sector, and the extensive consenting process already ensures no unacceptable significant effects on any sensitive receptors are permitted.
- When describing impacts or sensitivity, the word “potential” must be used consistently throughout the document.

- As the heatmap is only of Orkney, it should perhaps be added that the assessment of any individual finfish farm planning application will take into account any Special Protection Area (SPA) outwith Orkney that may have connectivity to the area of the proposal.
- Identification of significance for 'Infrastructure/features of social, economic and/or community value' is subjective and dependent on the level of information available.

5.3. The interactive map portal (Q3)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The interactive tool tutorial video is a very useful overview of how the feature works
- We feel the ability to both overlay different receptors of concern and control distance from a potential site will be very useful for prospective developers.
- We are strongly supportive of the inclusion of information on both the receptor sensitivity and significance as key information when considering site suitability for prospective aquaculture sites. From the demonstration video it was not clear whether there would be a filter option to show receptors by categories of significance and/or sensitivity but we would support this.
- The finfish sector has dedicated teams which perform spatial analysis and constraint mapping pre-development. The sector will not therefore utilise the online interactive map portal to inform potential developments. It would be more useful to focus such development on other sectors which are perhaps less resourced or are of a smaller scale, for example shellfish/seaweed farming.
- There is the potential for confusion with multiple separate resources, e.g. NatureScot SiteLink, Marine Directorate National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi) etc.

5.4. Receptor location updates (section 5) and data identified in Appendix 5 table A6 (Q4)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Some data sources could be clarified e.g. 'Anchorages' looks like it includes multiple sources but is just given as OceanWise.
- It is agreed that it is important that the location of the receptors is identified using the most up to date data and we support the guidance receptor information in the Guidance being updated without the need for public consultation.
- It is not only the location of receptors that it is important to review but also the sensitivity and significance when required e.g. when a Priority Marine Feature is shown to be at increased risk from improved understanding of cumulative impacts, climate change or where there is evidence the feature is further threatened and degraded.
- The frequency of updates is unclear, it should be updated as often as practicable.

- Some of the point data might be better represented as polygons (e.g. anchorages) to better represent their location.
- The level of safeguarding of potential harbour developments seems excessive, particularly in Scapa Flow. This could be interpreted as favouring the development of one commercial sector against others.
- The Guidance accurately identifies nationally and internationally important designated historic environment assets but currently does not identify undesignated historic environment assets such as wreck sites that have not been designated as scheduled monuments or Historic Marine Protected Areas. Our concern would be that a developer may check for designated assets following this guidance but may not realise that an undesignated wreck is in the area.
- We strongly support the inclusion of nature conservation receptors and understand the use of the site boundaries within the Spatial Guidance tool. It may be appropriate in the Guidance for some receptors to extend beyond site boundaries where we know connectivity is a concern.
- Land-based historical assets that will have no physical impact and which are unlikely to have an impact on setting from fish farming should not be included.

5.5. Identified Receptors (Section 6 and Table 1) (Q5)

Summary of consultation response issues

- It is questioned whether land-based historic environment assets should be included. Mapping the locations of historic assets is fine but the cumulative significance and sensitivity map is again misleading.
- The inclusion of nature conservation receptors is strongly supported. It could be beneficial if some of these extended beyond their physical site (footprint) boundaries to represent connectivity.
- The 'other anchorages' are listed as point data. This is because what was given is the approximate centroid of the anchorage. It might be better to mark them as circles with a radius, say, of 25 metres.
- There are pressures and interactions featured in Tables 2 and A2 which we believe are not relevant to fish farming, namely the inclusion of phosphorus and nitrogen enrichment. Both these pressures are not material considerations and are identified and addressed prior to the development of any farm.
- The sea trout sensitivity score of 3 is too high and does not reflect current Scottish Government advice.
- A lot of attention has been given to the text around fish farming impacts on the special qualities of a National Scenic Area (NSA) which we believe is not accurate and could be misleading.
- The North Orkney SPA is given 8 qualifying features when there should only be 4.
- We are not convinced that Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool (FeAST) is the correct tool to identify sensitivity of SPA bird features which have different levels of sensitivity to disturbance and entanglement. The FeAST tool doesn't identify specific fish farming pressures. Instead, it identifies generic pressures,

some of which might be relevant to aquaculture in certain circumstances. This needs to be made clear in guidance wording.

5.6. Identified significance and sensitivity of receptors (Section 7 and Table 2) (Q6)

Summary of consultation response issues

- It is recommended to include undesignated wreck sites as a receptor.
- We fully support the recognition for all nature conservation receptors which have the highest level of sensitivity to the impacts from finfish farming development/activities.
- Nearly all receptors have a sensitivity rating of high which is misleading and does not reflect the available evidence.
- As above, fish farms will have no direct physical impact on land-based historic environment receptors or on the setting of many of these.
- We do not agree with the high sensitivity ratings for the following:
    - Seal Haul-Out Sites. What is the justification for a 500m buffer?
    - National Scenic Areas – Potential impacts depend on the character of the landscape, scale of development and special qualities for which the NSA is designated. It is possible for a new development to have no adverse impacts on the special qualities of an NSA.
    - Principal Sea Trout Spawning Burns - The information referenced does not identify sea trout as being of high sensitivity to potential pressures from fish farming.
- Some of the supporting information in Table A2 is out of date. Specifically, foraging distances provided for each species should now follow those in https://www.nature.scot/doc/guidance-note-3-guidance-support-offshore-wind-applications-marine-birds-identifying-theoretical published by NatureScot in January 2023.

5.7. Spatial Guidance Maps (Q7)

Summary of consultation response issues

- There should be another 'other anchorage' at the head of Ore Bay south of Lyness.
- The inclusion of other marine users is a useful tool for understanding where there may already be significant anthropogenic pressures on the water environment so further development may be unsuitable which is a key step in understanding the cumulative impacts on an ecosystem. These Spatial Guidance maps are designed to be used for finfish development and we would encourage, as part of the Regional Marine Plan, for spatial guidance to be developed and then integrated for all sectors.
- We want to praise the inclusion of Map 3: Nature conservation receptors significance and sensitivity as understanding the cumulative scores for these receptors is key to ensuring development is located in the most suitable areas.

- Finfish developments are relatively insignificant in spatial terms when compared to other marine developments (wind farms, piers and harbours). Given the limited physical extent of finfish aquaculture, the current spatial guidance maps appear too broad in scale to account for the minimal area our developments occupy. This high-level approach risks overlooking critical siting details and potential mitigation measures that can be effectively applied to avoid significant impacts, even in areas marked as highly constrained. A finer, more nuanced scale would better represent the modest spatial impact of finfish farming and reflect its compatibility within multiple designated areas when appropriate mitigation strategies are in place.

5.8. Appendix 1: Special Protection Area and Qualifying Features sensitivity assessment (Q8)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Only SPAs with high potential sensitivity to effects associated with finfish farming have been included within Appendix 1. A more useful approach would have been to include all SPAs and assign sensitivity on that basis. This would provide a more fulsome overview of the wider SPA network and its sensitivity within the region.

5.9. Appendix 2: Special Areas of Conservation assessment (Q9)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Only Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) with high potential sensitivity to effects associated with finfish farming have been included within Appendix 2. A more useful approach would have been to include all SACs and assign sensitivity on that basis. This would provide a more fulsome overview of the wider SAC network and its sensitivity within the region.

5.10. Appendix 3: Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas assessment (Q10)

Summary of consultation response issues

- The Papa Westray Marine Protected Area (MPA) has been assigned a sensitivity score of ‘High (3)’. This is despite no pressures/interactions having been identified with respect to the marine geomorphological feature, and predominantly medium (2) FeAST scores for black guillemot in terms of potential sensitivity to specific pressures. The overall sensitivity of the MPA should be amended to medium (2).

5.11. Appendix 4: Priority Marine Feature assessment (Q11)

Summary of consultation response issues

- Only Priority Marine Features which are theorised to have high sensitivity to effects associated with aquaculture are included within Appendix 4. It is therefore difficult to see the value in the appendix. A more balanced approach may have been to include all Priority Marine Features (PMF) habitats which are present within Orkney and then graded these accordingly in terms of high/medium/low sensitivity to finfish aquaculture effects. This would provide a more balanced assessment of current understanding of potential risk and the nuances of PMFs which have low sensitivity to such effects.

5.12. Other Comments

Summary of consultation response issues

No comments received.

Table 1 – Summary of modifications

Modification	Reason
Sector Policy 2 updated to align with latest Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan version, across all sections and references.	To reflect changes to the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Consultation Draft post consultation.
Terminology updated throughout the FFSG to align with the modified Regional Marine Plan	To align with the post consultation Plan
References to 'Consultation Draft' removed where appropriate from Regional Marine Plan and Spatial Guidance titles and text.	To reflect post-consultation status.
Section 8 numbering updated.	Correct error with paragraph numbers.
Paragraph 6.2 added.	To highlight that there are potential sensitive receptors outwith the mapped area that will still be assessed through the relevant processes. E.g. SPAs with connectivity.
Paragraph 6.3 added.	To provide context on undesignated wrecks and outline how these will be assessed.
Map 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 replaced with new maps, including updated captions.	Updated spatial data used to bring the maps up to date (2025).
Map 3, 5, 11, and 12 replaced with new maps, including updated captions	Latest significance and sensitivity maps inserted following updates to spatial data and updated significance and sensitivity assessments following consultation.
Table A1 updated with latest conditions of SPA Qualifying Features.	To bring qualifying feature and condition data (Table A1, Column B) up to date with latest information (2025).
Some qualifying features removed from Table A1 for North Orkney SPA and Scapa Flow SPA.	To correct an error.
North Caithness Cliffs SPA added to Table A1 and Spatial Guidance.	This is a 'highly sensitive' SPA and is located immediately adjacent to the Orkney Islands Marine Region boundary. It has therefore been added to Map 3.
Foraging ranges of bird species updated in Table A2 (column E).	New data provided by NatureScot, superseding the recommendations that were used during the writing of the Consultation Draft.
Black Guillemot removed from Table A2.	Only the Common Guillemot is a qualify feature for Orkney SPAs, not Black

	Guillemot. Therefore, black guillemot sensitivity analysis not needed in this table.
Red-throated diver foraging range increased to add an additional kilometre above actual range (now 10km)	On advice of NatureScot due to particularly high sensitivity to finfish farming developments.
Footnote added to Table A2 directing to latest guidance on foraging ranges.	To provide a reference for where this information has been obtained from.
Table A3 - SAC qualifying features and conditions (Column B) updated.	To bring qualifying feature and condition data (Table A3, column B) up to date with latest information (2025).
Table A4 (Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas Summary) updated with latest FeAST descriptions on pressures/interactions.	To bring the Fish Farming Spatial Guidance in line with the latest modifications to NatureScot's FeAST tool.
Corrected qualifying feature for North-west Orkney MPA (Marine Geomorphology of the Scottish Shelf Seabed).	Error in initial drafting.
Table A5, column D (pressures/interactions) updated with latest FeAST descriptions.	To bring guidance up-to-date with the updated terminology in FeAST.
References to Proposed Historic MPA updated to remove the word 'proposed'.	To reflect the formal designation of Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area in August 2025.
Where appropriate, 'potential' added before any text discussing impacts.	To emphasise that the impacts of finfish farming developments can be avoided, minimised and/or mitigated with appropriate design and practice.
Symbology on maps updated to better reflect actual extent whilst ensuring readability when printed.	To ensure maps are as accurate as possible whilst clearly displaying all the relevant information.
New spatial data uploaded into online interactive mapping tool.	Updated spatial data used to bring the plan up to date (2025).
New significance and sensitivity map uploaded into online, interactive tool.	Latest significance and sensitivity map added to basemap in online interactive tool to bring up-to-date with post-consultation Spatial Guidance. Expected to go live week commencing 22/09/25
Landing page for Spatial Guidance updated.	To make the interactive tool more prominent in landing page.
Supporting text updated in interactive map pop-ups.	To bring supporting data in line with latest Spatial Guidance assessments, text, and latest Regional Marine Plan Policy. Expected to go live week commencing 22/09/25.

New raster-grid projection for heatmaps.	Utilising new software to increase accuracy and detail of heatmapping approach.
Caveat added to Map 1 ***Nature conservation site receptors*** regarding screened out receptors	To clarify mapped receptors may have been screened out of heatmapping and direct to Appendix 1, 2 and 3 for further information.
Northern feather star and Ocean quahog PMF added into PMF list (Appendix 5) and associated maps.	Northern feather stars and Ocean quahogs are highly sensitive to finfish farm developments and have been screened-in PMF list for this guidance.
Sensitivity and significance 'scores' changed to 'values'.	To better reflect the approach and method to the Spatial Guidance.
Section 5 'Receptor updates' text updated	To add that relevant receptors may be periodically updated to reflect updates to FeAST, as raised during the consultation. I.e. updates to the associated significance and sensitivity.
Distinction made between Clyde Cruising Club anchorages, visiting yacht moorings, and other anchorages in Table 1 and Map 8	To reflect that these have been assessed independently of each other and originate from different data sources.
Paragraph 3.5 re-structured	For clarity/ease of understanding
Hyperlinks/referencing style updated throughout	For consistency through document and with Regional Marine Plan, and improved accessibility if using a printed version of the guidance.
Paragraph A1.4 added	To highlight that there are potential sensitive receptors outwith the mapped area that will still be assessed through the relevant processes. Text also added to Table 2.
Paragraph A1.5 added	To highlight bird species foraging ranges and direct to the relevant area of the plan.
Phrase "pathway to impact" replaced with "pressure/interaction" throughout document	To generalise statement and make it applicable to a wider range of impacts/effect.
Paragraph A2.4 added	To highlight that there are potential sensitive receptors with connectivity outwith the mapped area that will still be assessed through the relevant processes. Text also added to Table 2.
A new paragraph inserted after A4.2	To provide more detail on priority marine feature significance and direct to Table A5 for more information on their conservation status and attributed significance and sensitivity values.

Table A6 updated	To more accurately reflect data sources
Several minor adjustments to text in 'receptor significance' column and 'receptor sensitivity' column in table two.	To reflect latest terminology in Regional Marine Plan and improve consistency throughout the documents Some further detail given to clarify specific impacts (e.g. Sea Trout Spawning Burns)
Paragraph inserted after A3.2	To highlight that there are potential sensitive receptors with connectivity outwith the mapped area that will still be assessed through the relevant processes. Text also added to Table 2.
Remove reference to activities	To appropriately align the status of the FFSG with the definitions in Table 1 of the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan
Policy reference changed from "Sector Policy 2A: Finfish and shellfish farming" to "Sector Policy 2b: Finfish and shellfish farming"	To reflect final Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan policy

Appendix 1: Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance Response Form

Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance – Consultation Draft

Consultation Response Form

Q1. Do you have any comments on the purpose and policy context of the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance? (Section 1-2)

Q2. Do you have any comments on 'How to use this spatial guidance' (Section 3)?

Q3. Do you have any comments on the online interactive map portal (Section 4)?

Q4. Do you have any comments on the receptor location updates (Section 5), including the data identified in Appendix 5, Table A6.

Q5. Do you have any comments on the identified receptors (Section 6 and Table 1)?

Q6. Do you have any comments on the identified significance and sensitivity of receptors? (Section 7 and Table 2)

Q7. Do you have any comments on the Spatial Guidance maps (Section 8)

Q8. Do you have any comments on Appendix 1: Special Protection Area and Qualifying Features sensitivity assessment? (including Table A1 and A2)

Q9. Do you have any comments on Appendix 2: Special Areas of Conservation assessment (including Table A3)

Q10. Do you have any comments on Appendix 3: Nature Conservation MPAs assessment (including Table A4)

Q11. Do you have any comments on Appendix 4: Priority Marine Feature assessment (including Table A5)

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

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