

Pre-screening Notification

Responsible Authority:	<u>Box 1.</u> Orkney Islands Council
Title of the plan:	<u>Box 2.</u> Orkney Islands Council Visitor Management Plan 2027-2037
What prompted the plan: (e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)	<u>Box 3.</u> The Visitor Management Plan has been prepared in response to sustained seasonal tourism pressure on Council services, infrastructure and public spaces, combined with increasing fiscal constraints. The plan is an administrative instrument developed to improve operational coordination, prioritisation and resource planning.
Plan subject: (e.g. transport)	<u>Box 4.</u> Tourism
Brief summary of the plan: (including the area or location to which the plan related)	<u>Box 5.</u> The Visitor Management Plan is a 10-year operational plan which provides a structured, evidence-based approach to managing tourism impacts on Orkney Islands Council services, infrastructure and public spaces throughout Orkney. The plan focuses exclusively on operational visitor management within the Council's remit. It identifies tourism pressures and sets out prioritised operational measures required to maintain public service resilience under sustained and seasonal demand, helping to safeguard community wellbeing, protect natural and cultural heritage and enhance the visitor experience. Strategic or capital infrastructure proposals are not covered by the plan, and will be taken forward through the appropriate plans and processes, such as the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan, or where applicable, the Local Development Plan, with separate environmental assessments undertaken where required.
Brief summary of the likely environmental consequences: (including whether it has been determined that the plan is likely to have no or minimum effects, either directly or indirectly)	<u>Box 6.</u> The Visitor Management Plan is operational in nature and does not propose or enable development, land-use change or physical works. It is expected to have no significant environmental effects, with only minimal positive effects arising indirectly from improved visitor management through better operational coordination across Council services that support tourism, educational and behavioural measures, and research and strategy development.
Brief summary of how environmental principles have been considered: (including whether any of the guiding principles, as set out in section 13 of the Continuity Act, are relevant to the plan)	<u>Box 7.</u> The guiding environmental principles have been considered proportionately in preparing the Visitor Management Plan. The plan takes account of the environmental pressures associated with tourism, with a focus on avoiding further harm and improving how existing pressures are managed. In practical terms, it aims to promote environmental stewardship by acting early where risks are identified and taking steps to avoid environmental damage occurring in the first place. Its regenerative approach also recognises the need to support the longer-term condition and resilience of affected places and reflects the Council's wider commitments to environmental protection, climate action, and responsible tourism.

	(1) The principle that protecting the environment should be integrated into the making of policies: Environmental protection is integrated through the regenerative tourism approach underpinning the plan, and the principles used to develop and prioritise its actions. This approach seeks to strengthen environmental stewardship by preventing avoidable impacts and improving the long-term resilience of places affected by tourism. This is reinforced by the Council's commitment to climate action, including its support for the Glasgow Declaration. (2) The precautionary principle as it relates to the environment: The plan adopts a regenerative approach that seeks to prevent further damage. A long-term evidence base, strengthened monitoring, and community engagement support the early identification of emerging pressures and environmental risks. Where the nature or extent of a potential environmental effect is uncertain, the Plan provides a framework for gathering further evidence and considering proportionate responses rather than waiting for impacts to become established. (3) The principle that preventative action should be taken to avert environmental damage: The plan responds to identified pressures, including inappropriate behaviour, access issues and waste disposal, through responsible tourism messaging and improved visitor information, including targeted pre-arrival guidance and information at relevant locations. These measures are preventative and seek to influence behaviour and prevent avoidable pressures before further environmental damage occurs. (4) The principle that environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source: The plan prioritises measures that address identified environmental pressures at source. Where pressures are identified, subsequent actions will focus on the behaviours, activities or service gaps contributing to them, supporting proportionate rectification within the Council's remit and reducing the potential for damage to continue or recur. (5) The principle that the polluter should pay: The plan considers income options that would allow visitors to contribute towards the costs of facilities and services that they use and where their activity creates an identifiable environmental or service burden, such as waste disposal. Income generated can be reinvested in the upkeep and improvement of the facilities and services affected, helping to support their continued operation over the longer term.
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