

# St Kilda World Heritage Site Management Plan 2011 - 2016



the National Trust  
for Scotland

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**Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Environmental Report  
November 2010**



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## Non technical summary

### Introduction

St Kilda was inscribed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1986 in recognition of its Natural Heritage; for its exceptional beauty and for the significant habitats that it supports. In July 2004 this was extended to include the surrounding marine environment.



In July 2005 further recognition for the islands cultural heritage was awarded making it one of only a few places in the world with mixed World Heritage Status for both its natural and cultural significance.

The St Kilda Management Group comprising The National Trust for Scotland with its key stakeholders the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland, Defence Estates (for Ministry of Defence), QinetiQ (contractors to Ministry of Defence), Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has prepared a draft management plan to update the previous management plan published in 2003. The draft management plan sets out the long term vision for the management and protection of the St Kilda World Heritage Site. It follows on from the 2003 – 2008 management plan and in the most part continues the vision outlined in that plan. The draft plan itself contains a number of objectives that are hoped can be achieved in the five year span of this iteration of the plan, as well as a restatement of the long term vision for the site. The key issues for the plan are:

- 1. Conservation Management** – Integrating conservation of the natural and historic environment with sensitive public access and interpretation
- 2. Conservation Management** – Sustaining the attributes that make St Kilda of outstanding universal value

- 3. Marine Heritage** – Developing a comparable level of protection for the marine environment, as that on land
- 4. Access** – Enhancing provision of access (including virtual access)
- 5. Research** – Enhancing knowledge about the islands and their natural and cultural features
- 6. Education and Interpretation** – Further developing educational and interpretive programmes
- 7. Management and Engagement** – Building stronger relationships between the World Heritage Site stakeholders
- 8. Promotion** – Promoting St Kilda’s World Heritage Status and Outstanding Universal Value
- 9. Resources** – securing adequate resources to meet the operational needs of the property

The St Kilda Management Group considered that the management plan was likely to have significant environmental effects and as such a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) of the plan has been undertaken in line with the requirements of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The purpose of SEA is to make sure that information on the environmental effects of a plan or programme is gathered and made available to plan-makers and decision takers as the plan is prepared and implemented. Its overall aim is to help promote sustainable development by ensuring that environmental issues are considered as the plan is being prepared. SEPA and SNH were consulted on the approach taken to the environmental assessment.

This Environmental Report:

- describes the legislation and policy content of the management plan
- describes the environmental baseline of the WHS
- explains how the environmental assessment was carried out, and which parts of the draft management plan were assessed
- sets out the findings of the environmental assessment
- proposes measures to help mitigate the potentially negative environmental effects of the plan
- suggests indicators to help monitor the environmental effects of the plan

## **Context**

One of the early stages of the SEA process is to consider the relationship of the plan to other relevant policies, plans, strategies and environmental objectives. This allows key environmental issues to be identified for consideration during the plan preparation process. It is also important to identify both the plans and strategies that will influence the draft management plan and those that will be influenced by the draft management plan. [Annex A](#) sets out the review of the legislation, policies, plans and strategies that are considered to be of most direct relevance to the draft management plan.

To help consider the environmental effects of the draft management plan information about the environmental baseline of the WHS and its surroundings was gathered. This included information on biodiversity, flora, fauna, landscape, historic environment and climatic factors. [Table 2](#) in the Environmental Report summarises the environmental baseline and more detailed information is included in [Annex B](#).

## **Assessment of the environmental effects of the draft management plan**

A set of questions, called SEA objectives, were used to help predict the environmental effects of the draft management plan. These are shown in [Table 5](#). This is a common way of assessing the environmental effects of plans, and helps to make the assessment systematic and consistent.

It was found that the draft management plan will have generally positive effects on the natural and historic environment as well as the landscape quality of St Kilda. Very few negative effects were predicted and it was noted that these can be effectively mitigated through careful consideration through the delivery of the objectives of the plan.

The detailed results of the assessment are described in [section 4](#) of the report and Annexes [C](#), [D](#) and [E](#).

## **Mitigation measures**

After predicting the environmental effects of the plan, measures to help avoid or reduce potential negative effects can be suggested to ensure that the management plan has a few negative environmental effects as possible. However, in this case no recommendations have been made in this regard as the nature of the environmental nature of the management plan it was found that where the potential arises for negative effects, these effects are mitigated by other objectives.

## **Monitoring**

It is important to ensure that it is understood how the management plan is affecting the environment over the next five years and as such a recommendation for monitoring has been suggested in [section 5](#) of the report.

## **Consultation**

This Environmental Report accompanies the draft management plan for an seven week period of public consultation from 12 November 2010 to 31 December 2010 and any comments that you would like to make on either document are welcomed. A number of questions have been included in the Environmental Report which you may use to help your response. The questions are:

**Question 1:** Do you have any comments on the baseline information or the environmental problems/issues identified?

**Question 2:** Do you have any comments on the approach taken for the environmental assessment of the St Kilda WHS Draft Management Plan?

**Question 3:** Do you agree with the results of the environmental assessment and have we identified the key issues associated with the management plan for the St Kilda WHS?

**Question 4:** Do you have any comments on the approach to environmental mitigation and monitoring?

# 1. Introduction

## Background



- 1.1 St Kilda was inscribed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation ([UNESCO](#)) as a World Heritage Site in 1986 in recognition of its Natural Heritage; for its exceptional beauty and for the significant habitats that it supports. In July 2004 this was extended to include the surrounding marine environment. In July 2005 further recognition for the islands cultural heritage was awarded making it one of only a few places in the world with mixed World Heritage Status for both its natural and cultural significance.
- 1.2 UNESCO require that appropriate management systems are in place at WHSs. It is UK policy that every WHS should have an up-to-date management plan. Management plans specify how the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Site will be protected and managed for future generations. The draft management plan provides a strategic framework for achieving the protection of the natural and cultural assets in the WHS and will identify specific actions and objectives for implementation of the framework within the WHS.
- 1.3 Management plans should be regularly reviewed and monitored. The current Management Plan was prepared by The National Trust for Scotland with its key stakeholders the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland, Defence Estates (for Ministry of Defence), QinetiQ (contractors to Ministry of Defence), Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. This plan was published in 2003 and now requires updating.
- 1.4 [Table 1](#) sets out the key facts about the management plan including the area it covers and its purpose.

**Table 1: Key Facts**

<b>Responsible Authority</b>	National Trust for Scotland (on behalf of the key stakeholders)
<b>Title of plan</b>	St Kilda World Heritage Site Management Plan 2011 - 2016
<b>Plan subject</b>	Natural and Historic Environment
<b>Period covered by the plan</b>	Five years
<b>What prompted the plan</b>	The UK has obligations under the World Heritage Convention 1972 in relation to effective management of WHSs which require that every site has an appropriate management structure in place. It is UK policy that every World Heritage Site should have an up to date management plan.
<b>Frequency of updates</b>	Every five years
<b>Plan area</b>	The plan is for the management of the St Kilda World Heritage Site (see map in <a href="#">Figure 1</a> ).
<b>Purpose of plan</b>	To specify how the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS will be protected and managed for future generations.
<b>Contact point for queries on the plan and the SEA</b>	Vicky Cairns St Kilda WHS Management Planner The National Trust for Scotland Hermiston Quay 5 Cultins Road Edinburgh EH11 4DF

## Content of the draft management plan

1.5 The draft management plan must follow UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. It includes the following sections:

- Executive summary & purpose of the management plan
- Site description & brief history
- Statement of significance
- Interests in the World Heritage Site (WHS)
- Issues affecting the WHS
- Vision & long term aims (2011 – 2041)
- Short/Medium term objectives (2011 – 2016)
- Monitoring strategy, Implementation and Performance Indicators/Actions

1.6 The draft management plan sets out the long term vision for the management and protection of the St Kilda World Heritage Site. It follows on from the 2003 – 2008 management plan and in the most part continues the vision outlined in that plan. The draft plan itself contains a number of objectives that are hoped

can be achieved in the five year span of this iteration of the plan, as well as a restatement of the long term vision for the site.

## **The SEA process**

- 1.7 The requirement for SEA comes from the European Directive 42/2001/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plan and programmes on the environment (commonly known as the SEA Directive). This is implemented in Scotland through the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.
- 1.8 The purpose of SEA is to ensure that information on the environmental effects of a plan or programme is gathered and made available to plan-makers and decision takers as the plan is prepared and implemented. The overarching aim of SEA is to promote sustainable development.
- 1.9 Under section 5(4) of the Act, plans, programmes and strategies with the potential to have significant environmental effects are to be subject to environmental assessment prior to adoption. The St Kilda Management Group considered that the management plan is likely to result in significant environmental effects and submitted a screening report to the Scottish Government's SEA Gateway on 14 May 2010 to seek the views of the Consultation Authorities (SNH and SEPA). SEPA confirmed that for their interests (air, water, soil, human health and climatic effects) they considered that the plan was unlikely to have significant effects. Given that SNH have a role in the preparation and implementation of the plan they opted not to respond to the screening/scoping consultation.
- 1.10 As the next stage in the SEA process, the environmental assessment was 'scoped' and SNH and SEPA consulted on the proposed scope and level of detail of the assessment. SEPA were content to agree with the intention to scope out the SEA topics of population, human health, soil, water and material assets. Furthermore, SEPA were content with the proposed approach of scoping out climate change mitigation but to scope in consideration of potential effects of projected climate change on management of the WHS.
- 1.11 Following on from the scoping stage, an environmental assessment of the draft plan was carried out as it was being developed. This Environmental Report presents the results of that environmental assessment, sets out the measures proposed to mitigate the potentially adverse effects of the plan and suggests indicators to monitor the effects of the plan.
- 1.12 This Environmental Report accompanies the draft management plan for a seven week period of public consultation from 12 November 2010 to 31 December 2010. The Management Plan that accompanies this report provides details of how to make comments on the draft management plan and the Environmental Report.
- 1.13 Once the consultation period is complete, the need for changes to the draft management plan will be reviewed. Where changes are made which could result in significant environmental effects, an assessment will be undertaken

of their impact, and reported in the SEA Post Adoption Statement. This will be published along with the final management plan.

## 2. Context

### Other plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives

- 2.1 One of the early stages of the SEA process is to consider the relationship of the plan to other relevant policies, plans, strategies and environmental objectives. This allows key environmental protection objectives to be identified for consideration during the plan preparation process. It is also important to identify both the plans and strategies that will influence the management plan and those that will be influenced by the management plan. An understanding of the context and the hierarchy that the plan sits within is also useful for giving early thought to mitigation measures and where they may be best implemented.
- 2.2 [Annex A](#) sets out the review of the current legislation, policies, plans and strategies that are considered to be most directly relevant to the draft management plan. It has been assumed that the key environmental objectives for each of the environmental parameters identified in schedule 3 of the Act are translated into national policy and strategy and the environmental protection framework provided by European legislation has not been reviewed in detail. Instead, the focus has been to review the key areas of legislation relevant to the management plan and its assessment.
- 2.3 The key environmental objectives identified from the review of legislation, policies, plans and strategies are:
- To protect and enhance species and habitats
  - To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment
  - To halt the loss of biodiversity and continue to reverse previous losses through targeted action for species and habitats
  - To safeguard landscapes
  - To increase awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the natural and historic environment
  - To promote and encourage opportunities for people of all abilities to enjoy access to wildlife and the countryside
  - To manage access appropriately to avoid damage to archaeological sites or habitats, and disturbance to wildlife, especially breeding birds, by heavy public use of sensitive areas
  - To be positioned to respond to the predicted effects of climate change

### Environmental baseline

- 2.4 In order to establish the environmental effects of the draft management plan it is necessary to understand the environmental baseline of the area that is likely to be affected. Schedule 3 of the Act lists the environmental parameters that should be considered in SEA. To focus the SEA, baseline information has been gathered on the environmental issues that are likely to be affected by the plan (see Table 2). Information has not been gathered on those

environmental parameters scoped out of the assessment ([Table 3](#) sets out the environmental topics that are scoped in/out of the assessment).

- 2.5 Baseline information has been provided on the environmental features within the WHS. Baseline information has not been provided on environmental features that will not be affected by the plan. Table 2 sets out the key baseline information for each environmental topic. A fuller description of the environmental baseline and a list of data sources can be found in [Annex B](#).

**Table 2: Key baseline information**

Environmental parameter	Key baseline features and information
<b>Biodiversity, flora and fauna</b>	<p>St Kilda WHS (World Heritage Site)</p> <p>St Kilda SPA (Special Protection Area)</p> <p>St Kilda SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest)</p> <p>St Kilda NNR (National Nature Reserve)</p> <p>St Kilda SAC (Special Area of Conservation)</p> <p>St Kilda MCA (Marine Consultation Area)</p> <p>Protected species</p> <p>Wider biodiversity</p>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<p>St Kilda WHS</p> <p>Scheduled Monuments – there are four scheduled monuments within the WHS. These designations cover a significant area of Hirta and are as follows:</p> <p><a href="#">St Kilda village and related structures (SM 2276)</a></p> <p><a href="#">St Kilda, Gleann Mor, settlement (SM 2277)</a></p> <p><a href="#">St Kilda, Claigeann an Tigh Faire, platform and cleitean (SM 3197)</a></p> <p><a href="#">St Kilda, Geo Chrubaidh, settlement (SM 3240)</a></p> <p>Regionally/locally important archaeological sites and unscheduled archaeology – there are many sites included on the <a href="#">Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland database</a> in the WHS.</p>
<b>Climatic factors</b>	<p><a href="#">SNIFFER</a> 2006 Online Handbook of Climate Trends across Scotland. <a href="http://www.seaguidance.org.uk">http://www.seaguidance.org.uk</a></p> <p><a href="#">UKCIP</a> Climate Modelling, <a href="#">SCCIP</a> Climate Information</p>
<b>Landscape</b>	<p>St Kilda NSA</p> <p>St Kilda Archipelago GCR (Geological Conservation Review Site)</p> <p>St Kilda (Tertiary Igneous) GCR</p>

## **Environmental Issues**

- 2.6 The potential for increased visitors to St Kilda means that its physical fabric and natural features located close to recreation/paths can be at increased risk. The management plan will have to consider how it can maintain a balance between sustainable tourism and sufficient protection of the site's attributes.

## **Evolution of the environment without the management plan**

- 2.7 If a management plan were not developed for the St Kilda site then the site would remain with an out of date plan for its future management and protection. This may result in a lack of coordinated effort in the management of the WHS, with a resultant risk to its Outstanding Universal Value. This may have consequences for its status and would likely bear a detrimental effect on the natural and historic environment that are protected by the site. It would be unlikely, however, to significantly affect the other environmental parameters identified in schedule 3.

**Question 1: Do you have any comments on the baseline information or the environmental problems/issues identified?**

### 3. Assessment approach and methods

#### Scoping the environmental topics to be included in the assessment

- 3.1 A key part of the SEA process is identifying the environmental parameters (from schedule 3 of the Act) that are likely to be affected by the plan. This can lead to some environmental topics being “scoped out” of the assessment and helps to focus the SEA on the key environmental issues. A scoping report was prepared in May 2010 which set out the proposed scope and level of detail of the assessment and comments were sought from SNH and SEPA.
- 3.2 The scoping report included an initial assessment to identify the environmental parameters that are likely to be affected by the draft management plan. SEPA agreed with the scope of the assessment and, given that SNH have a role in the preparation and implementation of the plan they opted not to respond to the scoping consultation.
- 3.3 Table 3 sets out the scope of the assessment with reference to the environmental topics included in schedule 3 of the Act. Justification is provided for those environmental topics that are scoped out of the assessment.

**Table 3: Scoping in/out**

Environmental parameter	Scoped in/out	Potential issues arising from the management plan and justification for scoping out
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	In	<p>The entirety of the St Kilda archipelago is covered by a range of natural designations – WHS, SSSI, SAC, SPA, MCA and NNR.</p> <p>It is home to the primitive Soay sheep and also to a number of unique sub-species such as the St Kilda wren and field mouse.</p> <p>The marine environment of the St Kilda archipelago is of international importance and the management plan will seek to enhance its protection.</p>
Population and Human Health	Out	It is considered that the plan will not have a significant effect on population and human health. St Kilda is largely uninhabited with a small amount of operational personnel present.
Soil	Out	It is considered that the plan will not have a significant effect on soil. The interactions between soil and the unmanaged animal population will be addressed through biodiversity, flora and fauna.

Environmental parameter	Scoped in/out	Potential issues arising from the management plan and justification for scoping out
Water	Out	It is considered that the plan will not have a significant effect on water. Effects for the marine environment have been assessed as part of the Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna topic.
Air	Out	It is considered that the plan will not have significant effect on air quality as none of the objectives are likely to lead to an increase in air pollution or improve current air quality.
Climatic Factors	Out	It is considered that the management plan will not have a significant effect on climate change in terms of emission of greenhouse gases.
	In	The projected effects of climate change may have implications for the management of the WHS, particularly increased incidents of extreme weather and coastal erosion and sea temperature rise may affect the bird populations. Therefore these aspects of climatic factors have been considered within the assessment.
Material Assets	Out	Due to the limited infrastructure within the site it is considered that the management plan will not have a significant effect on material assets (waste, transport infrastructure, minerals, energy etc).
Cultural Heritage	In	The cultural heritage of St Kilda is of international importance and the management plan will seek to protect this.
Landscape	In	St Kilda is designated as a National Scenic Area (NSA) as well as two Geological Conservation Reviews Sites (GCR). The remoteness of the islands within their seascape, as well as the spectacular land formations that make up the islands are an important part of this designation. Effects on the landscape of St Kilda arising from the implementation of the management plan have been considered within the assessment.

### Scoping the parts of the draft management plan to be included in the assessment

3.4 As well as identifying the environmental topics that were considered likely to be affected by the plan, the scoping report also described the proposed scope of the assessment in terms of the elements of the draft management plan that would be assessed. At that time, it was considered that the environmental

assessment would most likely be focussed on the vision, guiding principles and objectives, and this approach has not changed. Table 4 identifies the parts of the draft management plan that have been assessed in the SEA.

**Table 4: Sections of the draft management plan that have been assessed**

Section of the draft management plan	Is this assessed?
Part One	No, this section provides an introduction to the aims and need for a management plan as well as background on the World Heritage Site
Part Two	No, this section provides an evaluation of the outcomes from the 2003-2008 Management Plan
Part Three Guiding Principles (2011 – 2041)	<b>Yes</b> , the assessment of the Guiding Principles is described in Section 5 and Annex C
Part Three Short to Medium term objectives (2011 – 2016)	<b>Yes</b> , the assessment of the draft plan objectives is described in Section 5 and Annexes D and E. The 41 objectives have been sifted to focus the assessment on the objectives that are likely to have significant environmental effects
Part Four	No, this section describes the existing baseline by setting out the issues which currently face the site
List of abbreviations	No

### Scoping the level of detail of the assessment

- 3.5 At the scoping stage it was suggested that the environmental assessment would be undertaken at a level of detail that is appropriate to the draft management plan. For example, the detailed aspects of the plan (i.e. objectives) would be assessed in a greater level of detail than the overarching vision. This is the approach that has been taken.
- 3.6 In reaching a view on the level of detail of assessment it is necessary to understand the place of the draft management plan in the overall hierarchy of management and project planning for the WHS. The draft management plan sets the overarching framework for the management of the site and defines a 30-year vision and aims along with shorter term (five-year) issues and objectives.

## How was the draft management plan assessed?

3.7 As noted above, the following elements of the draft management plan were identified for inclusion in the assessment:

- Guiding Principles (Vision)
- Objectives (Detailed Actions)

3.8 At scoping stage an assessment framework was developed to provide a consistent way of assessing each element of the draft management plan. In line with common practice, SEA objectives were developed for each of the environmental parameters scoped in to the assessment. More detailed assessment criteria were also developed to support the SEA objectives and to help consider the environmental effects of the more detailed components of the draft management plan (i.e. objectives).

**Table 5: SEA Objectives and criteria**

Environmental parameter	SEA Objective Will the management plan ...?	SEA Criteria How will the management plan affect ...?
Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent damage and encourage favourable condition to designated sites and protected species</li> <li>• Manage access to the WHS appropriately to avoid damage to historic assets or habitats, and disturbance to wildlife, by heavy public use of sensitive areas (Objection also used for Cultural Heritage)</li> <li>• Prevent the introduction of invasive species into the archipelago</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...St Kilda WHS</li> <li>...St Kilda SPA</li> <li>...St Kilda SSSI</li> <li>...St Kilda NNR</li> <li>...St Kilda SAC</li> <li>...St Kilda MCA</li> <li>...Protected species</li> <li>...Wider Biodiversity</li> </ul>
Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to effective adaptation to the predicted effects of climate change</li> </ul>	

Environmental parameter	SEA Objective Will the management plan ...?	SEA Criteria How will the management plan affect ...?
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment</li> <li>• Manage access to the WHS appropriately to avoid damage to historic assets or habitats, and disturbance to wildlife, by heavy public use of sensitive areas</li> </ul>	<p>...St Kilda WHS</p> <p>...St Kilda scheduled monuments</p> <p>...historic environment features and their setting</p>
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance the landscape value of St Kilda</li> </ul>	<p>...St Kilda NSA</p> <p>...St Kilda GCRs</p>

3.9 The assessment of impact for effects was undertaken using a simple scoring system:

- ✓✓ significant positive effect
- ✓ positive effect
- ✓/✗ positive and/or negative effect
- ✗ negative effect
- ✗✗ significant negative effect
- ? uncertain effect
- neutral effect

3.10 This framework was used to assess the draft plan's Guiding Principles and objectives, and the results of the assessment are described in [section 4](#).

3.11 A two stage approach to the assessment of the draft objectives has been undertaken. It was considered that a number of the objectives may not have any direct or indirect environmental effects and it was felt that the assessment should be focused on the objectives that were likely to have significant environmental effects. First a screening exercise on the objectives included in the draft management plan was carried out to sift the objectives into those that are unlikely to have significant environmental effects and those that are likely to have significant environmental effects. This was done by reviewing each of the draft objectives against the environmental topics scoped in to the assessment with reference to the environmental baseline and problems, and judging whether or not the objectives were likely to have significant environmental implications.

3.12 [Annex D](#) documents this stage of the assessment and each of the 41 objectives included in the draft plan were reviewed. 17 of the 41 objectives were not considered likely to have significant environmental effects and were

not assessed further. These objectives were largely related to education, collections, logistics etc. and have no direct or indirect physical impact.

- 3.13 24 objectives were assessed in more detail as part of the second stage of the assessment. The assessment framework in [Table 5](#) was used to assess these objectives and the results are described in [section 4](#).

**Question 2: Do you have any comments on the approach taken for the environmental assessment of the St Kilda WHS Draft Management Plan?**

## 4. Assessment of the draft management plan

### Alternatives

- 4.1 Consideration was given to the alternative of the preparation of the plan. However, given that the draft management plan is a continuation of the previous plan, as well as the overall direction of the plan being largely prescribed by the UNESCO guidance, any alternative to the plan (i.e. 'do nothing') was not considered to be a reasonable option. Furthermore, during the assessment consideration was given to alternatives to the Guiding Principles and objectives, however, no alternative approach was considered to have a more beneficial impact on the environment than those contained within the draft management plan. This is mainly due to the strong environmental nature of the plan.

### Vision and long-term aims

- 4.2 The vision for the WHS is intended to provide a strategic view over 30 years and is set out in the draft plan. The draft vision is:

*The Vision is for St Kilda to continue to be renowned internationally as a site of outstanding heritage significance for its natural terrestrial and marine heritage and for its relict cultural landscape. This will be achieved through an integrated approach to conservation of all cultural and natural features; sensitive public access and interpretation.*

*The archipelago will benefit from maintenance of the highest conservation standards and from the fullest protection afforded by the designations in order to safeguard its features from potential threats. It will benefit from a collaborative approach by key stakeholders to achieve sympathetic, integrated management of all elements of the archipelago. The experience for both the virtual and actual visitor will be unrivalled, with St Kilda established as a model for environmental education and informed interpretation.*

*This Vision will be underpinned by a management structure and resources that will deliver integrated conservation advice and management; support on-site staffing needs; liaison with visitors, stakeholders and the local community and support a collaborative approach between the Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and the Ministry of Defence and its agents.*

- 4.3 It was considered that the most productive method of assessing the vision was to assess the 11 Guiding Principles that underpin this vision. These Guiding Principles were assessed against the SEA objectives and the assessment tables are shown in [Annex C](#). It was found that the that, in general , the guiding principles would result in positive effects in particular for the natural and historic environment. No recommendations were made to improve the vision.

- 4.4 The Guiding Principles flow from the vision and in turn inform the priorities for the medium-term (5 years) objectives. The long term aims for the WHS 2011 – 2016 are set out in Section 3 of the draft management plan.
- 4.5 The Guiding Principles were all assessed against the SEA objectives and the assessment tables are shown in [Annex C](#). The aims were generally found to have a significantly positive effect on the biodiversity, flora, fauna, cultural heritage and landscape. Negative effects were predicted when decisions for the protection of the natural and historic environment came into conflict. As the management plan notes when such considerations are in conflict decisions will be made on the relative significance of each asset in question. In terms of climate change adaptation one negative was predicted for the principle of non-intervention in natural processes. However, the plan does allow for intervention when significant sites are under threat from forces such as coastal erosion.

## Objectives

- 4.6 The 41 objectives included in the draft plan were screened to focus the assessment on those that were likely to have significant environmental effects. [Annex D](#) documents this process.
- 4.7 Following this screening process 24 objectives remained to be assessed in more detail using the SEA objectives and the SEA criteria set out in [Table 5](#). [Annex E](#) sets out the results of this assessment. The key impacts for each of the environmental topics scoped in to the assessment are summarised in Table 6. The objectives in the plan are accompanied by prescriptions which were used to focus the assessment on the specific areas of delivery.

**Table 6: Summary of the results of the assessment of the draft objectives**

Environmental topic	Key impacts
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	<p>Significant positive effects were identified from a large number of objectives relating to protection and management of the natural heritage.</p> <p>Potential negative effects were identified where natural and cultural heritage considerations come into conflict.</p>
Historic Environment	<p>Significant positive effects were identified from a large number of objectives relating to protection and management of the cultural heritage.</p> <p>Potential negative effects were identified where natural and cultural heritage considerations come into conflict.</p>
Climatic Factors	<p>No negative effects were predicted in terms of climate change adaptation with a number of objectives predicted to have positive effects.</p>

Landscape	Many of the objectives were found to have significant positive effects on the landscape quality of the archipelago.
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**Question 3: Do you agree with the results of the environmental assessment and have we identified the key issues associated with the management plan for the St Kilda WHS?**

### **Cumulative effects**

- 4.8 The guiding principles have potential for positive effects across all environmental parameters which should accumulate to result in significantly positive benefits for the site as a whole. This would be a direct result of an integrated approach to management which takes account of all environmental issues when identifying solutions to problems.
- 4.9 Considering the assessment of Guiding Principles and objectives no one parameter shows significant negative cumulative effects from the implementation of the plan as a whole. Where negative effects are predicted for one topic these are often mitigated by other objectives in the plan which will result in neutral/positive effects for that topic. The natural environment, historic environment and landscape parameters are likely to see significant positive benefits accrued should all the objectives be implemented.

## **5. Mitigation and monitoring**

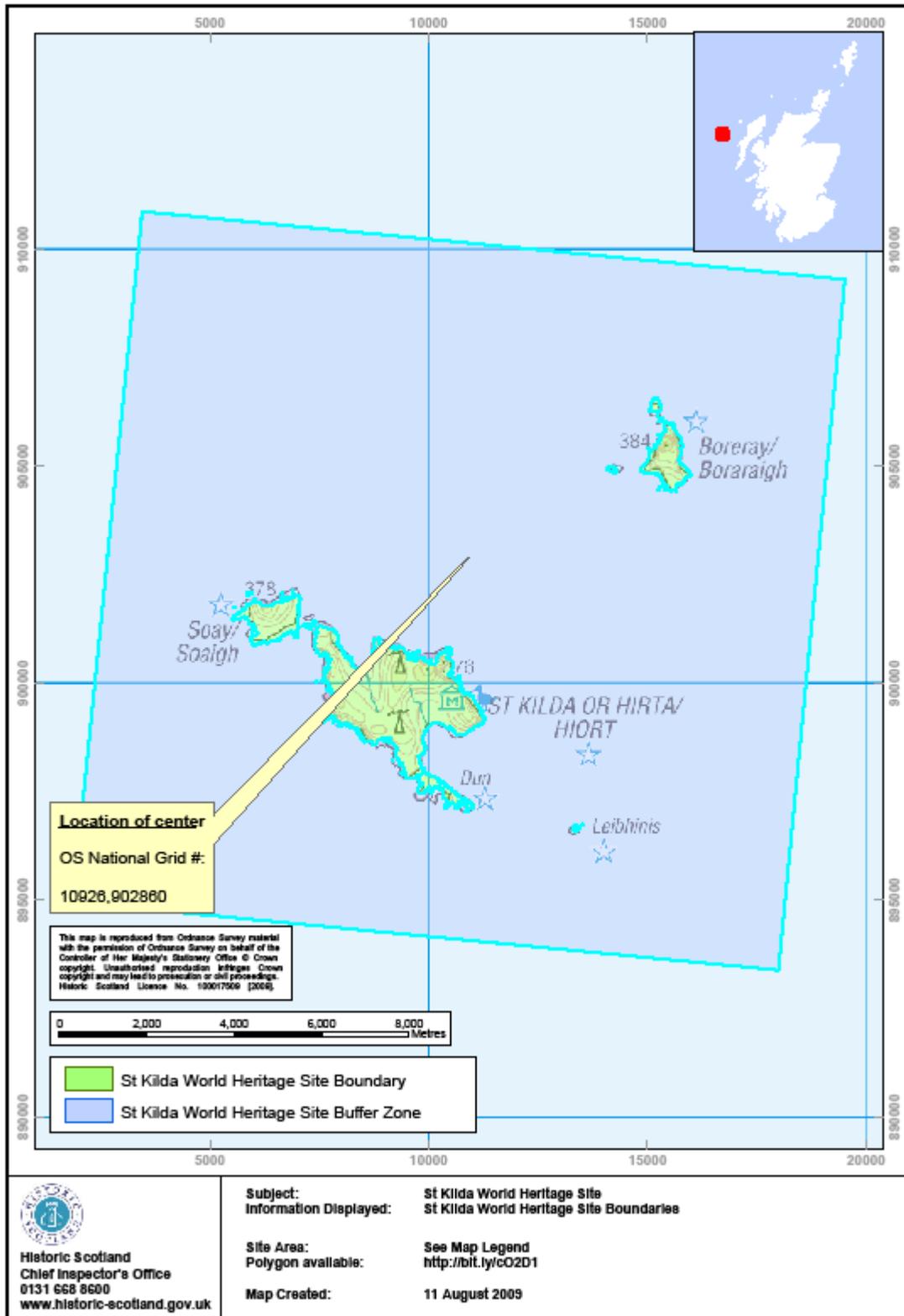
- 5.1 Through the strategic environmental assessment, mitigation can be achieved in a number of different ways. Mitigation can involve making changes to the plan itself e.g. amending aims or objectives, mitigation can also involve adding environmental aims or objectives to the plan to strengthen the inclusion of environmental issues and mitigation can also include proposing more detailed measures that should be considered as the plan is implemented.
- 5.2 No recommendations have been made to improve the clarity and coverage of the draft Guiding Principles and the objectives. Given the nature of the management plan the Guiding Principles and objectives are already environmental in nature and, where the potential arises for negative effects from objectives, these effects are largely mitigated by other objectives.
- 5.3 In terms of monitoring it is recommended that a study is considered on the effects of projected change in climatic conditions on the threat to the archipelago from invasive species. For example, changes in water temperature over the long term may make the marine environment more susceptible to habitat changes, allowing species that previously would not have thrived in the current conditions to thrive, leading to alterations in the existing environmental balance.

**Question 4: Do you have any comments on the approach to environmental mitigation and monitoring?**

## **6. Next steps**

- 6.1 The public consultation period on the draft management plan and environmental report ends on 31 December 2010. A final version of the management plan will be prepared following the consultation period to take into account comments made. All changes will be screened to consider if they raise significant environmental issues that have not already been considered in the environmental assessment
- 6.2 It is a requirement of the SEA Act to demonstrate how the ER (and all the comments expressed on it) has been taken into account in the adopted management plan. This will be explained in the SEA Post Adoption Statement which will be published along with the final version of the management plan. The SEA Post Adoption Statement will also include a final version of the monitoring indicators to take into account comments made on this report.

**Figure 1: St Kilda World Heritage Site**



## Annex A: Review of other plans, strategies and legislation

PPS	Key Points	Relevance for the management plan (how PPS affects or is affected by the management plan...)
<b>International and European</b>		
<a href="#">The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage</a> (the World Heritage Convention 1972) (UNESCO)	<p>Aims to promote cooperation among nations to protect heritage around the world that is of such outstanding universal value that its conservation is important for current and future generations.</p>	<p>The Management Plan will be written to conform to the UNESCO Convention and the Operational Guidelines for its implementation.</p>
<a href="#">European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage</a> (Revised 1992)	<p>Aims to protect archaeological heritage. Describes archaeological heritage as including structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, moveable objects, monuments of other kinds as well as their context, whether situated on land or under water.</p>	<p>The Management Plan will seek to protect archaeological heritage where it is present.</p>
<a href="#">European Landscape Convention</a> (signed by the UK Government and ratified by the Council of Europe in 2006)	<p>Promotes the protection, management and planning of all landscapes in Europe. Highlights the importance and need for public involvement in the development of landscapes. Encourages a joined-up approach through policy and planning in all areas of land-use, development and management, including the recognition of landscape in law.</p>	<p>The Management Plan will seek to protect the landscape value of St Kilda.</p>
<a href="#">EU Birds Directive 1979</a>	<p>Protection of wild birds and their habitats, including through designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs).</p>	<p>The Management Plan will seek to protect the St Kilda SPA.</p>

PPS	Key Points	Relevance for the management plan (how PPS affects or is affected by the management plan...)
<a href="#">EU Habitats and Species Directive 1992</a>	Protection of habitats and species other than birds including through designation of Special Areas of Conservation as part of the Natura 2000 network (with SPAs).	The Management Plan will seek to protect the St Kilda SAC.
<b>National</b>		
Making a difference for Scotland's Species: A Framework for Action 2007	Sets out principles for deciding when and how to manage species, and identifies priorities for action.	Where relevant, the management plan will have regard to the principles outlined.
The Stirling Charter, Conserving Scotland's Built Heritage: Declaration of Historic Scotland's Conservation Philosophy	Sets out broad principles for the conservation of built heritage in Scotland.	Where relevant, the management plan will have regard to the principles outlined.
<a href="#">Ancient Monuments &amp; Archaeological Areas Act 1979</a>	Sets out how Scheduled Monuments should be protected.	Objectives identified in the plan to have regard for the protection of scheduled monuments.

PPS	Key Points	Relevance for the management plan (how PPS affects or is affected by the management plan...)
<a href="#">Scottish Planning Policy</a>	Sets out the aims of the planning system and national policies on development topics including historic environment, natural environment, water etc.	Objectives identified in the plan to have regard for the protection of environmental topics.
<a href="#">Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)</a>	Sets out Scottish Ministers' policies for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.	Objectives identified in the plan to conform to Ministerial policy for protection and enhancement of the historic environment.
<a href="#">Creating Our Future: Minding Our Past, Scotland's National Cultural Strategy (Scottish Executive 2000)</a>	Where relevant, the management plan will have regard to the actions for cultural development  Identifies a wide range of complementary actions to take forward cultural development in all areas	Sets out a framework of action by the Scottish Government for Scotland's cultural life, including heritage.
<a href="#">Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)</a>	Gives protection to listed species from disturbance, injury, intentional destruction or sale.	Objectives identified in the plan to have regard to national aims for protection of biodiversity.
<a href="#">Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004</a>	Sets out a series of measures which are designed to conserve biodiversity and to protect and enhance the biological, geological and natural heritage of Scotland.  Includes a duty on public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity; also protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest and threatened species.	Objectives identified in the plan to have regard for the protection of biodiversity.  The Management Plan will seek to protect the St Kilda SSSI.

PPS	Key Points	Relevance for the management plan (how PPS affects or is affected by the management plan...)
UK Biodiversity Action Plan	Aims to conserve and enhance biological diversity within the UK, contributing to the conservation of global diversity.	Objectives identified in the plan to have regard to local aims for protection of biodiversity.
<a href="#">Scottish Biodiversity Strategy</a>	Sets out a vision for the future health of our biodiversity and maps out a 25 year framework for action to conserve and enhance biodiversity Scotland's contribution to meeting the Convention on Biological Diversity.	Objectives identified in the plan to have regard to national aims for protection of biodiversity.
<a href="#">Scottish Tourism: The Next Decade</a>	Sets priorities for tourism.	Where relevant the management plan will contribute to sustainable development principles.
<b>Regional and Local</b>		
<a href="#">Western Isles Structure Plan 2003</a>	Sets the strategic framework for investment and decision making in the Western Isles.	Objectives identified in the plan to have regard for the policies contained within the Western Isles Structure Plan.
<a href="#">Western Isles Local Plan 2008</a>	Together with the Structure Plan, the Local Plan provides the statutory development plan for the Western Isles.	Objectives identified in the plan to have regard for the policies contained within the Western Isles Local Plan.

PPS	Key Points	Relevance for the management plan (how PPS affects or is affected by the management plan...)
<a href="#">Western Isles Cultural Strategy 2006-2010</a>	Formally recognises, safeguards and develops the Western Isles cultural identity in partnership with local and national agencies, community organisations and individuals.	Objectives identified in the plan to have regard for strategic themes identified in the Cultural Strategy.
<a href="#">St Kilda World Heritage Site Management Plan 2003 - 2008</a>	Sets out objectives for managing the cultural and natural (including marine) heritage interests in balanced and integrated way. Sets out the statement of significance, vision statement, statement of intent, management structure and detailed objectives for the period 2003-8.	The previous plan will directly inform preparations of the current plan.

## Annex B: Baseline Information

### Introduction

A description of the environmental baseline is set out below. Information on climactic factors is only available at the national level. We have not provided detailed baseline information for the environmental parameters scoped out of the SEA – air, material assets, soil, population and human health. A list of data sources is included at the end of this annex.

### Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna



Biodiversity encompasses the whole variety of life on Earth. It is important for our health and wellbeing and for the ecosystem services that it provides. The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy aims to conserve biodiversity for the health, enjoyment and wellbeing of the people of Scotland now and in the future.

The entirety of the St Kilda WHS is covered by a range of natural heritage designations, reflecting its importance as a site of nature conservation interest. Information on these designations is provided below.

#### ***Designated Areas***

##### *Special Area of Conservation*

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are areas designated under the European Directive commonly known as the 'Habitats' Directive. They are internationally important areas that, together with Special Protection Areas (designated under the Wild Birds Directive for wild birds and their habitats) form the Natura 2000 network of sites.

The St Kilda SAC covers both land and the surrounding sea, its qualifying interests being vegetated sea cliffs (terrestrial) and the reefs and submerged or partially submerged sea caves.

##### *Special Protection Area*

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are classified under the European Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC), commonly known as the Birds Directive. SPAs are intended to safeguard the habitats of the species for which they are selected and to protect the birds from significant disturbance. Together with Special Areas of Conservation they form the Natura 2000 network of sites.

St Kilda is included under this Directive as, during the breeding season the area supports around 700,000 individual seabirds such as Razorbill, Guillemot, Kittiwake, Manx Shearwater, Fulmar, Puffin, Great Skua, Leach's Storm-Petrel, Storm Petrel as well as 23% of the breeding North Atlantic population of Gannet.

### Site of Special Scientific Interest

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) represent the best of Scotland's natural heritage. They are 'special' for their plants, animals or habitats, their rocks or landforms, or a combination of such natural features. Together they form a network of the best examples of natural features throughout Scotland, and support a wider network across Great Britain and the European Union.

The entirety of St Kilda was designated a SSSI in 1964 on account of its nationally important wildlife, geology and geomorphology. It is protected from change in land management which might damage the features for which it was designated. These features are:

#### Geological:

Geomorphology: Coastal geomorphology of Scotland

Igneous petrology: Tertiary igneous

Quaternary geology and geomorphology: Quaternary of Scotland

#### Biological:

Coastlands: Maritime cliff

Birds: Seabird colony

Birds: Gannet *Morus bassanus*, breeding

Birds: Guillemot *Uria aalge*, breeding

Birds: Leach's petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*, breeding

Birds: Puffin *Fratercula arctica*, breeding

Birds: Razorbill *Alca torda*, breeding

Birds: Storm petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*, breeding

### National Nature Reserve

National Nature Reserves (NNR) are places where the best examples of Scotland's wildlife and landscapes are protected. The over-arching policy for NNRs is that each reserve should achieve at least one of the following key purposes:

- i. To provide opportunities for everyone to visit and enjoy the best of Scotland's nature
- ii. To allow specialised management for wildlife which depends on it
- iii. To offer opportunities for long-term research into management for nature, and to demonstrate good practice to others

The reasons for St Kilda's designation as a NNR include its unique indigenous fauna such as its sub-species of wren and field mouse, the primitive Soay sheep and its considerable geological interest.

## Marine Consultation Area

A Marine Consultation Area (MCA) is a non-statutory designation recognising high quality and sensitive marine habitats and species and was prompted by emerging development pressures (primarily aquaculture) around the Scottish coastline at that time.

## Historic Environment



[Scottish Historic Environment Policy](#) describes the historic environment as encompassing built heritage features (ancient monuments, archaeological sites and landscapes, historic buildings, townscapes, parks, gardens and designed landscapes, as well as marine heritage) and the setting in which they sit, and the patterns of past use, in landscapes and within the soil, and also in our towns, villages and streets. It also recognises that the historic environment has less tangible aspects including the historical, artistic, literary, linguistic and scenic associations of places and landscapes.

## Designated Areas

St Kilda contains a number of items designated for their historical importance.

These are:

Type	Name	Details
<b>World Heritage Site</b>	St Kilda	
<b>Scheduled Monuments</b> There are four scheduled monuments within the WHS. These designations cover a significant area of Hirta and are as follows:	St Kilda village and related structures (SM 2276)	<a href="#">View details</a>
	St Kilda, Gleann Mor, settlement (SM 2277)	<a href="#">View details</a>
	St Kilda, Claigeann an Tigh Faire, platform and cleitean (SM 3197)	<a href="#">View details</a>
	St Kilda, Geo Chrubaidh, settlement (SM 3240)	<a href="#">View details</a>
<b>Regionally/locally important archaeological sites and unscheduled</b>	There are many sites included on the <a href="#">Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland database</a> in the WHS.	<a href="#">Search RCAHMS database</a>

## Climate

The SEPA State of Scotland's Environment 2006 report notes that climate change is evident in Scotland from observed trends in temperature, rainfall and snow cover. It identifies that climate change is causing changes in the growing, breeding and migration seasons, shifts in species abundance and diversity, higher river flows leading to flood risk, and sea level rise causing erosion. The report states that if climate change is not tackled it will accelerate causing damaging effects on physical, biological and chemical process with significant consequences for Scotland's environment, economy and society. The climate change scenarios quoted in the report predicts temperature rises in Scotland of up to 4C by the end of the century, wetter winters and drier summers, increased winter rainfall intensity and decreasing snow cover.

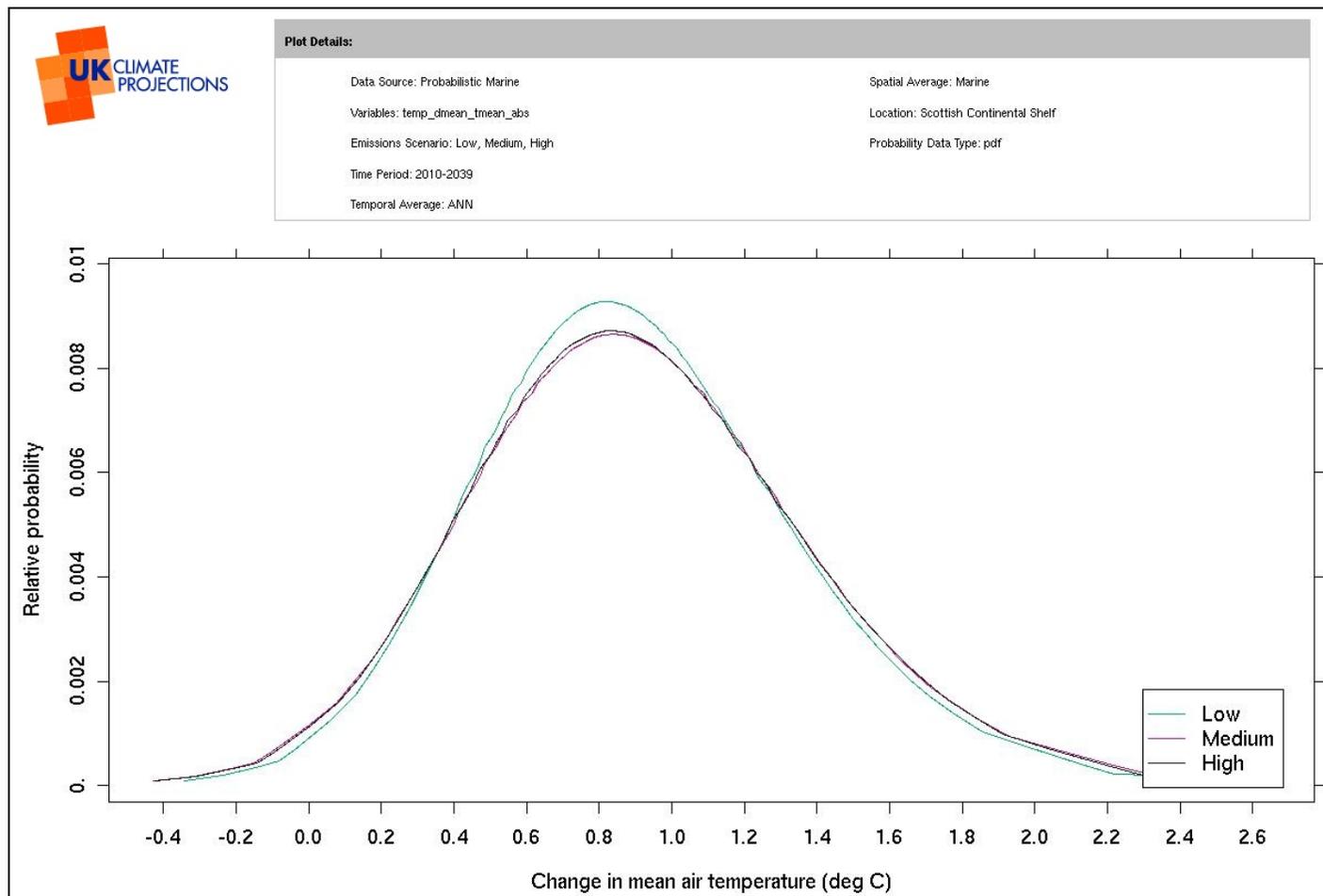
### Potential impacts on St Kilda

Coastal erosion has recently been exacerbated throughout Village Bay, this is likely to cause significant potential loss to archaeological remains, such as parts of the Head Dyke and Feather Store. Strategic decisions are required regarding how these features should be treated over the course of the Management Plan.

Projections show that potential impacts from climate change are likely to include more ground flooding from increased storminess and rising sea levels. More rain penetration and damage from storms is likely to have some effect on St Kilda. Predicted drier and warmer summers may cause subsidence to land, structures and buildings. Extreme weather event reports over the last 10 year period have steadily increased, with a peak in 2006 of 11 events.

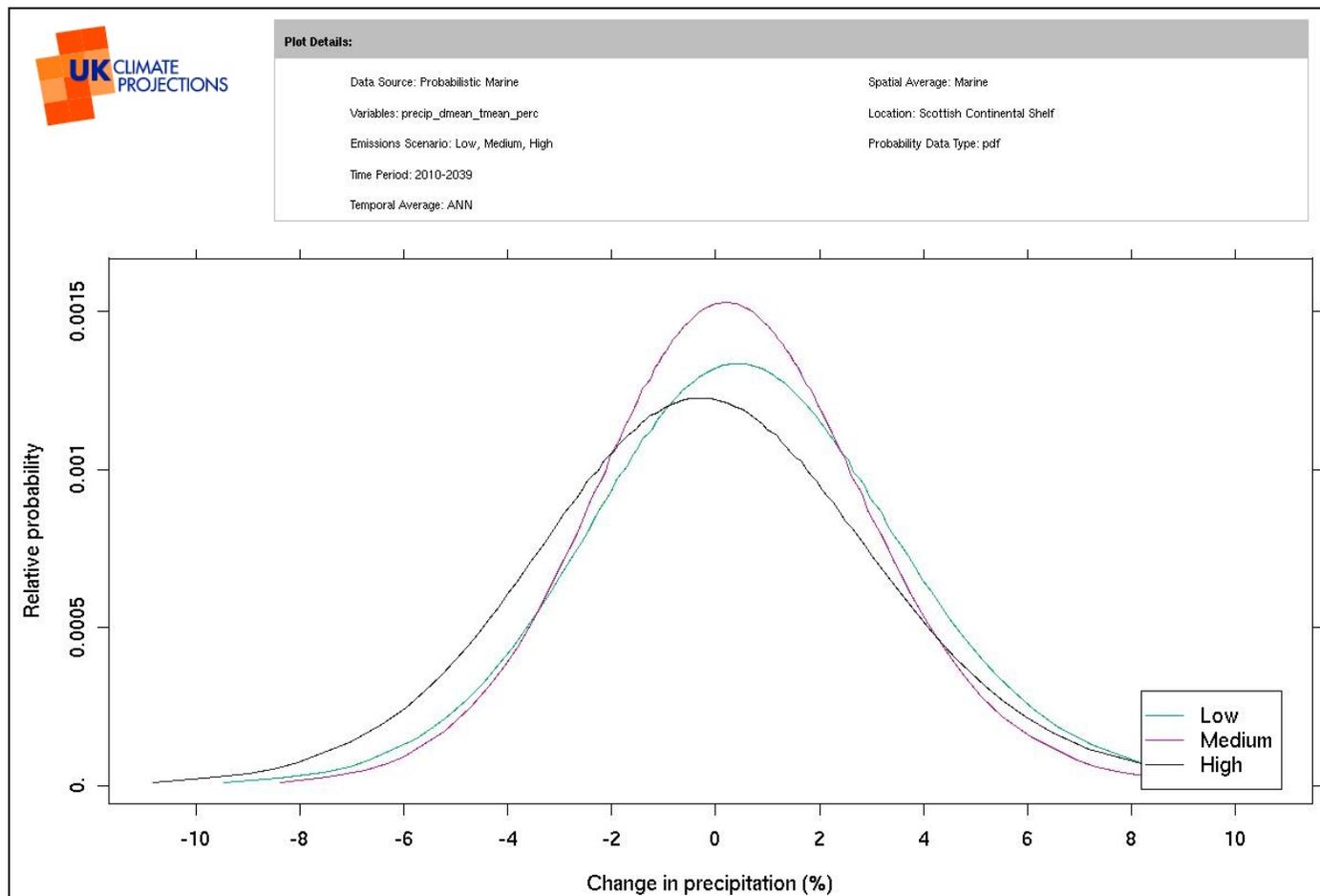
The following information from the DEFRA's [United Kingdom Climate Projections User Interface](#) website give an indication to the projected changes in climatic conditions (temperature and rainfall) over the long-term timescale of the management plan.

## St Kilda - change in mean air temperature (annual) over period 2010-39.



(c) Crown Copyright 2009. The UK Climate Projections data have been made available by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) under licence from the Met Office, Newcastle University, University of East Anglia and Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory. These organisations accept no responsibility for any inaccuracies or omissions in the data, nor for any loss or damage directly or indirectly caused to any person or body by reason of, or arising out of, any use of this data.

## St Kilda - change in precipitation (annual) over period 2010-39



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## Landscape



### National Scenic Areas

National Scenic Areas (NSA) are Scotland's only national landscape designation. They are those areas of land considered of national significance on the basis of their outstanding scenic interest which must be conserved as part of the country's natural heritage. They have been selected for the characteristic features of scenery comprising a mixture of richly diverse landscapes including prominent landforms, coastline, sea and freshwater lochs, rivers, woodlands and moorlands.

St Kilda was designated as a National Scenic Area (NSA) in 1981 and was designated on account of its spectacular volcanic forms, precipitous cliffs and picturesque qualities as well as its interplay between natural and cultural features.

### Geological Conservation Review

A major initiative to identify and describe the most important geological sites in Britain began in 1977, with the launching of the Geological Conservation Review (GCR). The GCR is designed to identify those sites of national and international importance needed to show all the key scientific elements of the Earth heritage of Britain. These sites display sediments, rocks, fossils, and features of the landscape that make a special contribution to our understanding and appreciation of Earth

science and the geological history of Britain, which stretches back hundreds of millions of years.

## Annex C: Assessment of Guiding Principles (Vision)

Table 1: Assessment of draft management plan Guiding Principles

SEA Topic	Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	Climatic Factors	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Comments
1. Conservation of the archipelago's natural and cultural heritage will be the primary management objective	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Significant positive effect for biodiversity, flora and fauna through commitment to conserve and enhance</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Positive effects likely as conservation management likely to aid in combating coastal erosion.</p>	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Significant positive effect for cultural heritage through commitment to conserve and enhance</p>	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Significant positive effect for landscape as commitment to conserve and enhance those assets which make up the landscape character of the archipelago</p>	<p>Overall the Guiding Principle comes out strongly positive for the SEA Topics.</p>
2. Conservation management will be integrated, with natural and cultural interests considered together	<p>✓/?</p> <p>Positive effects likely, however uncertainty exists where conflict arises between management of natural and cultural heritage</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Positive effects likely as conservation management likely to aid in combating coastal erosion.</p>	<p>✓/?</p> <p>Positive effects likely, however uncertainty exists where conflict arises between management of natural and cultural heritage</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Positive effects likely as conservation management likely to maintain the landscape quality of the archipelago.</p>	<p>As noted uncertainty exists where conflict arises between management of natural and cultural heritage features. Potential conflicts are explored further in the assessment for the more detailed objectives</p>
3. For natural heritage interests, natural processes will normally be allowed to continue without intervention	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Significant positive effect for biodiversity, flora and fauna as guiding principle allows for intervention when threats such as disease etc. threaten significant species/habitats</p>	<p>✗</p> <p>Potential negative effects likely as no intervention will not fulfil the SEA objective of contributing to effective adaptation to the projected effects of climate change. However, the guiding principle does acknowledge that intervention will be required when protection of significant natural heritage assets is required</p>	<p>✓/✗</p> <p>Potential negative effects for cultural heritage as uncontrolled vegetation, unmanaged sheep etc could damage standing buildings and archaeological remains. However, potential positive effect as indigenous sheep part of cultural landscape of the islands as well as aiding in vegetation management</p>	<p>✓/0</p> <p>Potential positive effect as minimal intervention likely to maintain the existing landscape quality of the archipelago.</p>	<p>Minor negatives for historic environment however policy for minimal intervention means mitigation is not possible</p>
4. For cultural heritage interests, conservation action will proceed on the basis of minimum intervention required to retain the significance of the site	<p>✓</p> <p>Potential positive effect for biodiversity, flora and fauna as objective will lead to minimum disturbance to those features which form habitats for biodiversity, flora and fauna</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Positive effects likely as conservation management likely to aid in combating coastal erosion affecting cultural heritage assets.</p>	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Significant positive effect predicted as the guiding principle allows for consolidation and repair of cultural assets as needs arise</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Potential positive effect as minimal intervention likely to maintain the existing landscape quality of the archipelago.</p>	<p>Overall the Guiding Principle comes out strongly positive for the SEA Topics.</p>

SEA Topic	Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	Climatic Factors	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Comments
5. No new species of animal or plant will be introduced by humans into the archipelago	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Potential significant positive effects as the prevention of the introduction of invasive species will aid in the protection of the existing biodiversity, flora and fauna of the archipelago</p>	<p>○</p> <p>No clear link between guiding principle and SEA Topic</p>	<p>○</p> <p>No clear link between guiding principle and SEA Topic</p>	<p>○</p> <p>No clear link between guiding principle and SEA Topic</p>	<p>Potential significant positive effects predicted for biodiversity, flora and fauna through the protection of existing biodiversity balance</p>
6. For the marine heritage, a comparable level of protection as that on land will be sought, to maintain and protect its significance	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Potential significant positive effects as the raising of the level of protection of the marine environment should aid in managing both marine species in their own right as well as preserving feeding grounds for the bird population of the archipelago</p>	<p>?/○</p> <p>The relationship between the guiding principle and the SEA Topic is uncertain. However, any effect unlikely to be significant</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Potential positive effect as below watermark caves may contain archaeological deposits from earlier era when caves were above sea level. Guiding principle may also serve to protect cultural features such as wrecks</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Potential positive effect as principle may serve to protect islands from</p>	<p>Overall the Guiding Principle comes out strongly positive for the SEA Topics.</p>
7. Any new development (whether changes in procedures or to infrastructure) on the islands will only proceed if its effect on all aspects of heritage significance are evaluated and judged to have only minimal detrimental effect upon the heritage features, landscape or wild land qualities. Developments will only be permitted if they are essential and reversible, and if there is no conflict with statutory obligations	<p>○/✗</p> <p>Any new development on the archipelago has the potential to have a negative effect on natural heritage. However, the mitigation within the Guiding Principle itself would likely lead to a neutral effect overall.</p>	<p>○/✓</p> <p>While the relationship between the guiding principle and the SEA Topic is uncertain if the new development such as works to combat coastal erosion, particularly in the Village Bay area positive effects for this SEA Topic are likely</p>	<p>○/✗</p> <p>Any new development on the archipelago has the potential to have a negative effect on cultural heritage. However, the mitigation within the Guiding Principle itself would likely lead to a neutral effect overall.</p>	<p>○/✗</p> <p>Any new development on the archipelago has the potential to have a negative effect on landscape quality. However, the mitigation within the Guiding Principle itself would likely lead to a neutral effect overall.</p>	<p>While potential negative effects have been identified the mitigation within the Guiding Principle is likely to lead to a neutral effect.</p>
8. Research will be encouraged where it improves the understanding of the heritage features of the property, or assists in guiding management of the outstanding universal values, and requires the unique opportunities that St Kilda offers	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Potential significant positives through greater understanding of the value of the archipelago and partnership working with those responsible for managing the natural environment such as SNH</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Minor positive effect from better understanding leading to good management decisions</p>	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Significant positives likely through partnership working with those responsible for managing the historic environment such as HS.</p>	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Significant positives likely through partnership working with other stakeholders such as SNH and HS</p>	<p>Overall the Guiding Principle comes out strongly positive for the SEA Topics.</p>

SEA Topic	Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	Climatic Factors	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Comments
<b>Guiding principle</b>					
9. Education and interpretation programmes will aim to inspire, enthuse and educate visitors, instilling a long-lasting appreciation for both the qualities of this unique place and the importance of sustainable conservation management of St Kilda	<p>✓✓/?</p> <p>Potential significant positives through greater understanding of the value of the archipelago and partnership working with those responsible for managing the natural environment such as SNH</p>	<p>○</p> <p>No clear link between guiding principle and SEA Topic</p>	<p>✓✓/?</p> <p>Significant positives likely through partnership working with those responsible for managing the historic environment such as HS</p>	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Significant positives likely through partnership working with other stakeholders such as SNH and HS</p>	Overall the Guiding Principle comes out strongly positive for the SEA Topics.
10. Responsible access to the islands will be encouraged	<p>○/✗</p> <p>Access to islands pose threat for biodiversity, flora and fauna but not significant through prescriptions for responsible access</p>	<p>○</p> <p>No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives</p>	<p>○/✗</p> <p>Access to islands pose threat for fragile archaeological features but not significant through prescriptions for responsible access</p>	<p>○/✗</p> <p>Access to islands pose threat for the landscape but not significant through prescriptions for responsible access</p>	Only mitigation for potential negative effects would be to not allow access to the islands. This is not considered an option.
11. The Trust will consider environmental impacts in all aspects of its activities with regards to St Kilda and will encourage others to do likewise	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Consideration of environmental impacts on all activities likely to have a significant positive effect on the topic</p>	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Consideration of environmental impacts on all activities likely to have a significant positive effect on the topic</p>	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Consideration of environmental impacts on all activities likely to have a significant positive effect on the topic</p>	<p>✓✓</p> <p>Consideration of environmental impacts on all activities likely to have a significant positive effect on the topic</p>	Overall the Guiding Principle comes out strongly positive for the SEA Topics

## Annex D: Screening of draft objectives

Draft management plan objective	Is this assessed?
1. To minimise the degradation of the archaeology of St Kilda	Yes
2. To minimise the degradation of certain structures (in use and ruinous) within the zone of intervention and those included in the Cleit Conservation Programme by undertaking planned monitoring and maintenance	Yes
3. To regularly monitor the archaeological structures that are beyond the zone of intervention on Hirta and outwith the CCP, and further afield	No. The monitoring of the structures in itself will not create an environmental effect. This action will not have an environmental effect.
4. To gain a greater understanding of the wreck sites on and around the archipelago	Yes
5. To ensure that the collections and artefacts from St Kilda currently in Trust ownership are appropriately cared for	No. The objective relates to research and its accessibility. This action will not have an environmental effect.
6. To enhance access to archival sources	No. The objective relates information accessibility. This action will not have an environmental effect.
7. To maintain and enhance the landscape of St Kilda	Yes
8. To ensure that there is no significant damage to the geological and geomorphological features, both on land and underwater	Yes
9. To maintain the Natura plant communities in favourable condition	Yes
10. To gain a greater understanding of the important plant communities present on the archipelago, especially the bryophote and lichen communities	Yes

Draft management plan objective	Is this assessed?
11. To gain a better understanding of the terrestrial animals and birds on the archipelago especially the indigenous species of wren and field mouse	Yes
12. To ensure the genetic conservation of the flocks of Soay sheep on Soay and Hirta, and of the Blackface sheep on Boreray	Yes. Assessed together with Objective 24
13. To secure greater protection for all the features of the marine World Heritage Site	No. Assessed as guiding principle in Annex 6.
14. To maintain all important intertidal and underwater habitats in favourable condition	Yes
15. To ensure human activities focused around the village bay do not pose undue threats to the marine environment nor seabirds	Yes
16. To maintain the populations of internationally important breeding seabirds in favourable condition, as indicated by total numbers and the proportion of the relevant biogeographical population	Yes
17. To protect the loafing and feeding areas of the internationally important seabird colonies of St Kilda	Yes
18. To identify and implement a long term strategy for dealing with coastal erosion in Village Bay	Yes
19. To undertake rescue excavation and recording of threatened archaeological sites only where no other form of management can effectively save them	Yes
20. To keep the islands free of introduced species, in particular rodents, mustelids, cats and dogs	Yes
21. To gain a greater understanding of the key aspects of the archipelago's natural and cultural heritage	Yes. Assessed together with Objective 22

Draft management plan objective	Is this assessed?
22. To enhance management of the WHS by drawing on the experience of others	Yes. Assessed together with Objective 21
23. To ensure that information gathered on or about St Kilda is collected, collated and managed to agreed standards, and the results of any research made widely available	No. The objective relates to research and its accessibility. This action will not have an environmental effect.
24. To continue to use the sheep flocks as a natural laboratory into Herbivore ecology and genetics	Yes. Assessed together with Objective 12
25. To enable responsible access to St Kilda	Yes. Assessed together with Objective 26
26. To continue to provide limited visitor facilities on Hirta	Yes. Assessed together with Objective 25
27. To make the St Kilda websites first class resources for anyone with an interest in St Kilda	No. The objective in itself is not likely to have environmental effects.
28. To foster closer links between the islands and schools and links with the educational curriculum	No. The objective in itself is not likely to have environmental effects.
29. To promote a greater understanding and appreciation of the islands and the importance of sustainable conservation management through the interpretation provided both on and off Hirta	No. The objective in itself is not likely to have environmental effects.
30. To foster stronger links with communities in the Western Isles and with supporters further afield	No. The objective relates to partnership working which in itself will not have an environmental effect.
31. To continue working closely with the St Kilda Club for the benefit of St Kilda	No. The objective relates to partnership working which in itself will not have an environmental effect.

Draft management plan objective	Is this assessed?
32. To promote greater awareness of the value of St Kilda	No. The objective in itself is not likely to have environmental effects.
33. To make all working practices on Hirta and all supporting operations as sustainable as possible	Yes
34. To ensure Trust staff maintain an overview of the islands and liaise with stakeholders as appropriate	No. The objective relates to partnership working which in itself will not have an environmental effect.
35. To ensure that the operational needs of the archipelago are supported by adequate staffing levels	No. The objective in itself is not likely to have environmental effects.
36. To review the role of St Kilda work parties	Yes
37. To manage the risks of living, working and visiting St Kilda and to comply with all statutory legislation on health and safety issues	No. The objective in itself is not likely to have environmental effects.
38. To ensure that all those working on St Kilda have the necessary induction and training	No. This objective relates to staff training and will not have an environmental effect.
39. To ensure adequate logistical support for those involved in the conservation management of the archipelago	No. This objective relates to management support and in itself will not have an environmental effect.
40. To ensure there are adequate financial resources available to manage St Kilda to World Heritage standards	No. This objective relates to resource management and in itself will not have an environment effect.

Draft management plan objective	Is this assessed?
41. To ensure the Trust has a plan in place in the event of the MOD and their agents leaving St Kilda entirely, scaling down their operations or withdrawing their personnel	Yes

## Annex E: Detailed Assessment of draft objectives

SEA Objectives	WHS Management Plan Objectives	Prevent damage and encourage favourable condition to designated sites and species	Manage access to the WHS appropriately to avoid damage to historic assets or habitats, and disturbance to wildlife, by heavy public use of sensitive areas	Prevent the introduction of invasive species into the archipelago	Contribute to effective adaptation to the predicted effects of climate change	Protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment	Protect and enhance the landscape value of St Kilda	Overall Score	Comments including proposed mitigation/recommendations
<i>To minimise the degradation of the archaeology of St Kilda</i>	O/x Potential for a minor negative effect for species utilising archaeological remains for nesting etc.	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓ Potential positive effect as works to minimise degradation may involve adaptation or mitigation measures.	✓✓ Potential significant positives due to ongoing works to minimise degradation. Could be more significant if “prevent” rather than minimise	✓✓ As the archaeology plays a significant role in the landscape character of the archipelago this objective has the potential for significant positive effects on the landscape	✓✓	Potential effects for nesting species likely to be mitigated by plan objectives relating to natural environment and careful practice when carrying out any works.	
<i>To minimise the degradation of certain structures (in use and ruinous) within the zone of intervention and those included in the Cleit Conservation Programme by undertaking planned monitoring and maintenance</i>	O/x Potential for a minor negative effect for species utilising archaeological remains for nesting etc.	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓ Potential positive effect as works to minimise degradation may involve adaptation or mitigation measures.	✓✓ Potential significant positives due to ongoing works to minimise degradation. Could be more significant if “prevent” rather than minimise and if objective was not just for the zone of intervention and CCP	✓✓ As the archaeology plays a significant role in the landscape character of the archipelago this objective has the potential for significant positive effects on the landscape	✓✓	Potential effects for nesting species likely to be mitigated by plan objectives relating to natural environment and careful practice when carrying out any works.	
<i>To gain a greater understanding of the wreck sites on and around the archipelago</i>	O/x Minor negative effects from increased activity if uncontrolled	O/x Minor negative effects from increased activity if uncontrolled	O/? Unclear links with invasive species although unlikely to be effects	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓ Understanding of wreck sites could lead to the protection of this element of the historic environment	O Unlikely to be effects for landscape features	O	Mitigation for potential negative effects through other objectives and appropriate practices	
<i>To maintain and enhance the landscape of St Kilda</i>	✓✓ Landscape of St Kilda is habitat for many species, notably the seabird population. This effect is made significant by the desire to enhance.	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓✓ Prescriptions of the objective include protecting the archaeology from impacts of new structures	✓✓ Objective to maintain and enhance the landscape fulfils the objective	✓✓	Overall this objective likely to have a significantly positive effect on the environment.	
<i>To ensure that there is no significant damage to the geological and geomorphological</i>	✓✓ Geological and Geomorphological features are included in the SSSI	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓ Prescriptions of the objective include developing a framework to guide	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓ Geological and Geomorphological features form an important part of the landscape therefore	✓✓	Overall this objective likely to have a significantly positive effect on the environment.	

<i>features, both on land and underwater</i>	designation therefore the effects are likely to be positive. These natural structures also form the habitat for a number of species on the archipelago		decision making on importing materials. Should lead to positive effects.			protection should be positive		
<i>To maintain the Natura plant communities in favourable condition</i>	✓✓ Significant positive effect by maintaining plant communities	✓ Prescriptions of the objective include monitoring effects of visitors on vegetation	✓ Objective may lead to the removal of invasive species through monitoring	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓/✗ The continuation of the current grazing regime of the unmanaged sheep outlined in the prescriptions of this objective has potential negatives in the form of damage to historic environment features. However this also has potential positive effects as the sheep manage the vegetation of the islands playing a part maintaining the cultural landscape	✓✓ The continuation of the current grazing regime of the unmanaged sheep outlined in the prescriptions of this objective plays a significant role in the landscape of the islands as the vegetation and the spread of bracken to the lower levels of the island is managed	✓✓	Minor negatives for historic environment however policy for minimal intervention means mitigation is not possible
<i>To gain a greater understanding of the important plant communities present on the archipelago, especially the bryophyte and lichen communities</i>	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	?/○	Overall the objective likely to have a neutral effect on the environmental parameters
<i>To gain a better understanding of the terrestrial animals and birds on the archipelago especially the indigenous species of wren and field mouse</i>	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	?/○ Effects uncertain as it is not clear how greater understanding would impact on management decisions. However, policy of minimum intervention may mean no effects.	?/○	Overall the objective likely to have a neutral effect on the environmental parameters
<i>To ensure the genetic conservation of the flocks of Soay sheep on Soay and Hirta, and of the Blackface sheep on Boreray</i>	✓✓ Significantly positive effect as protecting species, in particular the prescription relating to the potential for a new colony elsewhere to	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓ Potential positive impact as prescriptions include ensuring no importing of sheep or movement of existing species between islands	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓ The sheep of the islands are part of the cultural fabric of the islands and their conservation would benefit the historic environment	✓ The sheep of the islands play an integral role as a feature of the landscape as well as vegetation management	✓	Overall the objective scores positively against the environmental parameters.

<i>To continue to use the sheep flocks as a natural laboratory into Herbivore ecology and genetics</i>	preserve the gene pool.							
<i>To maintain all important intertidal and underwater habitats in favourable condition</i>	✓✓ Maintaining habitats will be positive	✓ Managing fishing activities to protect area should be positive	✓ Controlling number of boats and fishing activities will reduce risk of invasive species entering the marine environment.	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	○/✓ Potential positive for the historic environment as underwater caves previously above water line may contain archaeological information	✓ Underwater landscape would be maintained. Shoreline also important in terms of landscape quality of the archipelago	✓	Generally the objective scores positively against the environmental parameters.
<i>To ensure human activities focused around village bay do not pose undue threats to the marine environment nor seabirds</i>	✓ Control of human activities likely to be positive for the marine environment and seabirds	✓ Objective includes measures to control access and activities. Likely to be positive	✓ Prescriptions of objective include control of boats etc which may bring invasive species. Control of organic waste also in prescriptions	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓ Avoidance and control of oil and waste spillage likely to be beneficial to landscape quality of the islands	✓	Generally the objective scores positively against the environmental parameters.
<i>To maintain the populations of internationally important breeding seabirds in favourable condition, as indicated by total numbers and the proportion of the relevant biogeographical population</i>	✓✓ Significant positive effects through the protection of seabird colonies	✓✓ Objective prescriptions include control and protection from aircraft and promulgating maps to climbers showing areas to avoid	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	○/✓ Maintaining seabirds potential minor positive for historic environment as seabirds important to cultural heritage of islands	✓✓ The sheer number of seabirds adds to the landscape value of the archipelago. Seabirds are also an important part of the landscape of the archipelago due to the guano covered stacks. Prescriptions also call for the monitoring of marine litter	✓✓	Overall this objective likely to have a significantly positive effect on the environment.
<i>To protect the loafing and feeding areas of the internationally important populations of breeding seabirds in favourable conditions</i>	✓✓ Significant positive effects through the protection of seabird colonies	✓ Managing fishing activities to protect area should be positive	✓ Controlling number of boats and fishing activities will reduce risk of invasive species entering the marine environment.	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓✓ The sheer number of seabirds adds to the landscape value of the archipelago. Seabirds are also an important part of the landscape of the archipelago due to the guano covered stacks. Prescriptions also call for the monitoring of marine litter	✓✓	Overall this objective likely to have a significantly positive effect on the environment.
<i>To identify and implement a long term strategy for dealing with coastal erosion in</i>	? Uncertain as will depend on action to be taken as result of coastal erosion	? Uncertain as erosion of shoreline potentially linked to creating of access jetty and	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓✓ Objective should be positive as action likely to be for adapting/mitigating	✓✓/✗ Mitigation of coastal erosion would be beneficial for the historic environment	✓✓/✗ Objective may lead to significant positive in relation to the review of the present defences that have	✓✓/✗	Overall this objective likely to have a significantly positive effect on the village bay area. Potential negative effect are predicted although other objectives will

Village Bay		slipway. Effects of objective dependant on outcome of assessment		effects of climate change	features under threat in the Village Bay. Potential negative as this depends on the course of action taken in that effects of erosion may be moved to other sensitive points	an impact on the landscape of the bay. Potential negative depends on result of assessment		serve to mitigate these.
To undertake rescue excavation and recording of threatened archaeological sites only where no other form of management can effectively save them	O/x Minor negatives arising from excavation works and potential disturbance to species utilising sites	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	O Objective likely to have no effect on the prevention of introduction of invasive species	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓/x Positive for historic environment in terms of recording losses but not significant due to policy for minimum intervention. Loss of archaeological features would be detrimental to historic environment	O/x Loss of archaeological would be detrimental to landscape character	O	Potential negative to species/habitats mitigated by good practice.  No mitigation for negatives to historic environment and landscape due to minimum intervention policy
To keep the islands free of introduced species, in particular rodents, mustelids, cats and dogs	✓ Invasive species likely to damage ecosystem of archipelago	✓ Objective prescriptions include procedures for visitors to follow leading to positives for access management	✓✓ Would be significant as fulfils objective	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓ Introduction of invasive species could lead to damage to archaeological remains. e.g. Rabbits	✓ Introduction of invasive species could alter landscape through vegetation changes	✓✓	Overall this objective likely to have a significantly positive effect on the environment.
To gain a greater understanding of the key aspects of the archipelago's natural and cultural heritage  To enhance management of the WHS by drawing on the experience of others	✓✓ Potential significant positives through greater understanding of the value of the archipelago and partnership working with those responsible for managing the natural environment such as SNH.	✓ Minor positive effect from better understanding leading to good management decisions	✓ Minor positive effect from better understanding leading to good management decisions	✓ Minor positive effect from better understanding leading to good management decisions	✓✓ Significant positives likely through partnership working with those responsible for managing the historic environment such as HS.	✓✓ Significant positives likely through partnership working with other stakeholders such as SNH and HS	✓✓	Overall this objective likely to have a significantly positive effect on the environment.
To enable responsible access to St Kilda  To continue to provide limited visitor facilities	O/x Access to islands pose threat for biodiversity but not significant through prescriptions for responsible access	✓/x Positive for access management. However enabling access has potential for negative effects	O/x Although control of visitors should mean no invasive species the risk is higher than if no access was allowed	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	O/x Access to islands pose threat for fragile archaeological features but not significant through prescriptions for responsible access	O/x Access to islands pose threat for the landscape but not significant through prescriptions for responsible access	O/x	Only mitigation for potential negative effects would be to not allow access to the islands. This is not considered an option.
To make all working practices on Hirta and all supporting operations as	✓/? Uncertain as depends on nature of decisions coming out	✓/? Uncertain as depends on nature of decisions coming out of reviews	O No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓/? Uncertain as depends on nature of decisions	✓/? Uncertain as depends on nature of decisions coming out of reviews	✓/? Uncertain as depends on nature of decisions coming out of reviews but should	✓/?	While this objective is likely to score positively against the majority of environmental parameters this will be determined by the nature of decisions

<i>sustainable as possible</i>	of reviews but should be positive as it is an environmental objective	but should be positive as it is an environmental objective		coming out of reviews but should be positive as it is an environmental objective	but should be positive as it is an environmental objective	be positive as it is an environmental objective		coming out of reviews.
<i>To review the role of St Kilda Work Parties</i>	? Uncertain as will depend on outcome of the review	? Uncertain as will depend on outcome of the review	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	? Uncertain as will depend on outcome of the review	? Uncertain as will depend on outcome of the review	? ?	Uncertain effects predicted as effect will be determined by nature of decisions coming out of reviews.
<i>To ensure the Trust has a plan in place in the event of the MOD and their agents leaving St Kilda entirely, scaling down their operations or withdrawing their personnel</i>	✓✓ Withdrawal of MOD would mean that the archipelago biodiversity would be at risk without access management/security	✓✓ Withdrawal of MOD would result in lack of access management putting the site at risk	✓✓ Withdrawal of MOD would result in lack of access management which raises the risk of invasive species arriving	○ No clear link between the Plan and SEA Objectives	✓✓ Withdrawal of MOD would result in lack of access management/security which could lead to damage to the historic environment features of the archipelago	✓✓ Withdrawal of MOD would result in lack of access management/security which could lead to erosion of the landscape qualities of the archipelago	✓✓ ✓✓	Overall this objective likely to have a significantly positive effect on the environment.
<b>Overall Score</b>	✓✓	✓	✓	○/✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	All environmental parameters are predicted to see positive effects. Particularly significant effects are predicted for biodiversity, flora, fauna, cultural heritage and landscape
<b>Comments (including cumulative effects)</b>	Cumulatively the draft management plan objectives are likely to have a significant positive effect on Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	Cumulatively the draft management plan objectives are likely to have a positive effect on the appropriate management of access to the archipelago	Cumulatively the management plan objectives are likely to have a positive effect on the prevention of invasive species to the archipelago	Cumulatively the management plan objectives are likely to have a positive effect on adaptation against the predicted effects of climate change	Cumulatively the draft management plan objectives are likely to have a significant positive effect on Cultural Heritage	Cumulatively the draft management plan objectives are likely to have a significant positive effect on the landscape qualities the archipelago		