

Item: 16

Development and Infrastructure Committee: 15 February 2022.

Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan.

Report by Interim Executive Director of Finance, Regulatory, Marine and Transportation Services.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan for public consultation and the submission of expressions of interest for prioritised projects proposed in the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That, in April 2021, the Council applied to VisitScotland's pilot Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund for support to develop a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan for Orkney and was awarded the maximum grant of £35,000.

2.2.

That the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, was developed in collaboration with key stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors and island communities and, having been required by 14 January 2022, was submitted to VisitScotland on 12 January 2022.

2.3.

That the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan now requires to be made available for public consultation, and a revised draft Plan will be submitted to the Committee for consideration in June 2022.

2.4.

That the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan presents a broad strategy for development supported by a prioritised list of essential projects, some of which meet the criteria for funding through VisitScotland's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

2.5.

That expressions of interest for project funding through the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund are due to be submitted by 24 February 2022.

It is recommended:

2.6.

That the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan, referred to at paragraph 2.2 above, be approved for public consultation.

2.7.

That the Interim Executive Director of Finance, Regulatory, Marine and Transportation Services should submit a report, to the next meeting of the Committee, detailing the outcome of the consultation exercise, referred to at paragraph 2.6 above, together with a revised draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan for consideration.

2.8.

That the Interim Executive Director of Finance, Regulatory, Marine and Transportation Services should submit the expressions of interest for project funding from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund, detailed in Appendix 2 to this report, to Visit Scotland by the deadline of 24 February 2022.

The Committee is invited to note:

2.9.

That, due to the time constraints involved, the Chief Executive would be requested to exercise emergency powers to authorise submission of the expressions of interest, referred to at paragraph 2.8 above, prior to approval by Council.

3. Background

3.1.

On 24 March 2021, the Scottish Government announced a £25 million funding programme to support the tourism sector's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, funding was provided for a pilot Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund to support development of plans in priority rural areas which could evidence a need for the development of a plan for tourism infrastructure in their area.

3.2.

In April 2021, the Council submitted a successful application to the pilot Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund and was awarded the maximum grant of £35,000 which was matched with £15,000 from the Economic Development Strategies, Studies and Project Initiation budget, establishing a total project budget of £50,000.

3.3.

The pilot Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund is also supporting development plans by eight other organisations, including Comhairle nan Eilean

Siar, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Perth and Kinross Council, East Lothian Council, City of Edinburgh Council and the Highland Council as well as Cairngorms National Park Authority and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

4. Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan

4.1.

Led by consultants from Chris Blandford Associates, the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan was developed in collaboration with key stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors, and island communities.

4.2.

Development of the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan, underpinned by a comprehensive destination Asset Audit and an Interpretation Framework, is a vital step toward the responsible recovery of Orkney's tourism sector. It presents a set of clear aims and a broad strategy for sustainable development supported by a prioritised list of essential projects.

4.3.

Primary aims of the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan are as follows:

- Dispersal.
- Market focus.
- Sustainability.
- Conservation.

4.4.

A broad strategic approach has been identified to structure and support investment and activity across Orkney. It has six interrelated areas for investment which, if developed together, will create a more sustainable, viable and responsive tourism sector that reflects Orkney's culture and communities. These include:

- Area 1 – Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland.
- Area 2 – Drive regenerative tourism across the islands.
- Area 3 – Strengthen the attractions offer.
- Area 4 – Expand green and active travel/exploration.
- Area 5 – Diversify food and beverage and accommodation offer.
- Area 6 – Align marketing and information.

4.5.

It should be noted that Area 2 – Drive regenerative tourism across the islands, relates to a proposition specifically for the non-linked and linked isles in response to feedback received through consultation: community-led visioning workshops and

development of tourism masterplans (RTIF Project 6, further detailed in Appendix 2 to this report).

4.6.

Whilst emphasising that it had not yet been approved by Council, the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan was submitted to VisitScotland on 12 January 2022, just before the deadline on 14 January 2022.

5. Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund

5.1.

Managed by VisitScotland on behalf of the Scottish Government, the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund was created to improve the quality of the visitor experience in rural parts of Scotland that have faced pressure on their infrastructure due to an increase in visitor numbers.

5.2.

The Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund can provide a grant of up to 75% of approved project activity. A minimum of 25% match funding is required, although this can include in kind support in the form of labour or land value.

5.3.

In addition, up to £20,000 per approved project will be awarded to support further project development costs, including project management, legal, architectural/ structural engineering, quantity surveying, landscape design, technical surveys and planning fees.

5.4.

Some of the essential projects in the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan meet the criteria for the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund. Further details are set out in the RTIF Programme Recommendations document, attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

6. Next Steps

6.1.

Subject to approval, the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan will be posted online for a six-week public consultation period during March/April 2022, and an amended draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan will be submitted to the Development and Infrastructure Committee for consideration in June 2022.

6.2.

It is proposed that expressions of interest (one for each of the projects listed below) for funding through the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund will be prepared and

submitted by the deadline of 24 February 2022. Further details on the individual projects are contained in Appendix 2 to this report.

- RTIF Project 1 – Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections.
- RTIF Project 2 – St Margaret’s Hope Visitor Infrastructure.
- RTIF Project 3 – Dounby Visitor Infrastructure.
- RTIF Project 4 – Finstown Visitor Infrastructure.
- RTIF Project 5 – Stromness Visitor Infrastructure.
- RTIF Project 6 – Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure.
- RTIF Project 7 – Community-led Visioning Workshops and Masterplans.
- RTIF Project 8 – Active Travel Network.

6.3.

Successful submissions are expected to be notified during week commencing 7 March 2022, together with the amount of the development grant awarded (as described in paragraph 5.3 above) and invited to submit a stage 2 funding application. At the time of writing, the stage 2 application deadline has not been notified.

6.4.

Submission of expressions of interest does not confer any commitment upon the Council.

6.5.

Driven by an accelerated timetable set by VisitScotland in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Tourism Emergency Recovery Group, project development is expected to be completed during the 2022 fiscal year and delivery is expected to begin from 1 April 2023.

7. Human Resource Implications

Resource to progress project development and delivery has not been identified within the Council. Subject to the number of projects that are invited to progress to Stage 2 submission, it may be necessary for the Council to recruit or commission an additional resource, the costs of which it is anticipated would be funded by the development grant awarded by Visit Scotland. In the event of recruitment being necessary, due process will be followed.

8. Links to Council Plan

8.1.

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan strategic priority theme of Enterprising Communities.

8.2.

The proposals in this report relate directly to Priority 4.7 Implement and review the Orkney Volume Tourism Study Actions where applicable to the Council, including sourcing external funding for infrastructure, successful strategic management of Destination Orkney Partnership, and the improved integration of transport of the Council Delivery Plan.

9. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priority of Sustainable Recovery.

10. Financial Implications

10.1.

A total of £49,664 has been spent on work carried out by Chris Blandford Associates on the draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan funded as follows:

- £35,000 from the Scottish Government's Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund
- £15,000 from the Council's Economic Development Strategies, Studies and Project Initiation budget.

10.2.

At its special meeting held on 21 December 2021, when considering the allocation of one-off funding towards a series of projects considered to provide excellent recovery prospects from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended the allocation of funding to a series of recovery projects, which included a one-off allocation of £500,000 towards the Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

10.3.

The report to the Policy and Resources Committee included the following information in respect of the proposed allocation:

“Tourism Infrastructure Fund:

The Council has commissioned a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan which aims to guide the long-term sustainable development of tourism in the Islands. The Plan has been part-funded by VisitScotland as part of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF). The Plan is intended to provide a strategic approach to supporting the post-Covid recovery of Orkney's tourism industry, taking the opportunity afforded by the pandemic to reset and re-balance tourism on Orkney. Visitor numbers are predicted to gradually return to previous levels and there is a clear need for the responsible management and sustainable development of tourism.

The funding allocation would serve as match funding for applications to the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund for project/s that emerge in the Development Plan as creating the greatest recovery opportunities. It is anticipated that the Development Plan will require significantly greater sums to achieve all of the ambition.

This work would be reported through the Development and Infrastructure Committee and possibly the Policy and Resources Committee if the Development Plan ambitions are for capital projects to be undertaken”.

10.4.

Funding will be required to deliver the essential projects which do not meet the Rural Tourism infrastructure Fund criteria, and alternative external funding will be sought for these in the first instance.

10.5.

Revenue implications relating to the projects listed in the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan have not been considered at this stage but will be addressed during the Capital Project Appraisal process.

11. Legal Aspects

No legal implications arise at this stage from the recommendations.

12. Contact Officers

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13. Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan.

Appendix 2: RTIF Programme Recommendations.

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a landscape in the Orkney Islands. In the foreground, there are several large, circular stone structures, likely ancient tombs or huts, built from stacked stones and covered in moss and lichen. A gravel path winds through them. In the middle ground, there are rolling green hills and a stone wall. In the far distance, a large, multi-story stone building with several gables and windows is visible against a cloudy, grey sky.

STRATEGIC TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Orkney Islands Council

January 2022

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
2.0	CONTEXT AND CURRENT CHALLENGES	6
3.0	PRIMARY AIMS	12
4.0	STRATEGIC APPROACH	19
5.0	PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES	29
6.0	TIMETABLE AND DELIVERY	50
7.0	MONITORING AND EVALUATION	54
	APPENDIX 1 ESSENTIAL PROJECTS	55
	APPENDIX 2 DESIRABLE PROJECTS LONG LIST	56
	APPENDIX 3 TIMETABLE AND COSTS	57



1.0 INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background to Project

1.1.1 Orkney Islands Council (OIC) has developed this Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (STIDP or the Plan) to guide the long-term sustainable development of tourism across Orkney. The Plan has been funded by OIC and VisitScotland as part of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF).

1.1.2 The Plan was prepared by CBA and Fourth Street, as independent consultants, in consultation with a range of stakeholders.

1.2 Overview of the Plan

1.2.1 The Plan is intended to provide a strategic approach to supporting the post-Covid recovery of Orkney's tourism industry. Prior to the pandemic, Orkney had experienced a decade of significant growth in tourism which has delivered economic and social benefits. However, that growth has also adversely impacted Orkney's natural and historic environment, which attracts visitors and provides a much-loved part of the lives of local communities. Orkney's infrastructure capacity was stretched beyond its limits and communities were calling for the implementation of measures to manage growth in a responsible manner.

1.2.2 The post-Covid world offers an opportunity to reset and rebalance tourism in Orkney. Visitor numbers are predicted to gradually return to previous levels and there is a clear need for the responsible management and sustainable development of tourism. This Plan, underpinned by a comprehensive Asset Audit and an Interpretation Framework, is intended to be a critical step toward the responsible recovery of Orkney's tourism sector.

1.2.3 The Plan addresses visitors in the round including independent visitors, people visiting friends and family, and trade visitors (inc. cruise passengers). It is noted that some categories overlap, for example cruise passengers may undertake independent activities while onshore (i.e. not a pre-booked tour), while independent guests may use trade providers for elements of their visits.

- 1.2.4 The Plan provides a set of clear aims and a broad strategy for development, supported by a prioritised list of Essential Projects (physical and digital), some of which can be delivered over a 5-year period from 2022, while longer-term essential projects may be delivered in the following years. Further Desirable Projects are identified, which would support the delivery of the strategy and which can developed and delivered as funding emerges.
- 1.2.5 The Plan prioritises strategic tourism infrastructure projects that support a high value, regenerative approach, enhancing the well-being of local communities and improving the visitor experience; contributing to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage; and providing access for all, including vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and groups. Crucially, climate action, including climate change adaptation and mitigation and carbon absorption, is a key priority for the proposed projects in order to further Orkney's net zero transition.

1.3 Relationship with other partners and programmes

- 1.3.1 The Plan is intended to support the activities of partners and stakeholders, including (but not limited to):
- Orkney World Heritage Site (WHS) Gateway Programme – to deliver one of the wider Programme's key projects, i.e. a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan which identifies sustainable development complementary to the proposed WHS infrastructure projects to disperse visitors and socio-economic benefits across Orkney. Partners: OIC, Historic Environment Scotland (HES), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).
 - Destination Orkney Partnership's Destination Management Planning Group (DMPG) – to inform the destination management plan for Orkney which will be developed in accordance with Orkney's Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2020-2025. Partners: OIC, HES, HIE, VisitScotland, NatureScot, Destination Orkney Ltd (DOL).
 - Cruise Recovery Working Group – to inform development of a revitalised cruise offer that can safely co-exist alongside the rest of Orkney tourism in a post-COVID landscape while delivering benefits for local communities and businesses. Key stakeholders: OIC (Harbour Authority and Economic Development), VisitScotland, cruise shore excursion operators, in collaboration with DMPSG.

- Orkney Marketing Programme – to enhance the integrated approach to responsible tourism destination marketing and development, dispersing visitors across Orkney, developing sustainable tourism products and promoting destination stewardship. Partners: OIC, HIE, VisitScotland, DOL, Orkney Food & Drink, Creative Orkney, Orkney Renewable Energy Forum.
- OIC services (e.g. Economic Development; Development and Marine Planning; Waste Management; Arts, Museums and Heritage, etc.) – to inform areas for support, improvement, investment, and policy development.
- Ongoing private and public sector developments – to acknowledge their strategic significance within Orkney's tourism offer and provide support through an integrated approach to sustainable tourism.

1.4 Relationship to RTIF

- 1.4.1 Some of the projects and programmes set out in the Plan may meet the criteria for RTIF funding, however the scope and approach set out in the Plan is not bound by those criteria and the Plan is intended to operate as a wider strategic framework for tourism recovery in Orkney. As such, a number of projects will not be eligible for funding through the RTIF.

1.5 Structure of Plan

- Section 2.0 - Context and Current Challenges: This provides a summary of the key drivers / need for the Plan and the wider policy context.
- Section 3.0 - Primary Aims: Sets out a suite of Aims for the Plan which provide direction and enable the relevant projects to be prioritised
- Section 4.0 - Strategic Approach: sets out a high-level strategy for investment in tourism infrastructure across the islands
- Section 5.0 - Projects and Programmes: highlights and describes ongoing projects, the proposed Essential Projects and Desirable Projects (which further information on these in Appendices 1 and 2)
- Section 6.0 - Timetable and Delivery: Provides a high-level timetable for development and delivery of the priority projects, including required project management resources
- Section 7.0 - Monitoring and Evaluation: sets out the key measures for monitoring

- Appendix 1 – Essential Projects: sets out in more detail projects and programmes introduced in Section 5.3
- Appendix 2 – Desirable Projects: briefly describes, assesses and prioritises a long list of desirable projects introduced in section 5.4
- Appendix 3 – Timetable and Costs – provides outline costs and timetables for projects

1.6 Associated Documents

Asset Audit

- 1.6.1 To inform the development of the Plan, a Destination Asset Audit was prepared with the aim of providing a snapshot audit of the existing provision of tourism-specific infrastructure as well as facilities that support tourism including, but not limited to, accommodation, attractions, natural and cultural heritage sites, roads, transport, public conveniences, parking, waste disposal, paths and trails, camping and motorhome facilities, charging points, etc.
- 1.6.2 The audit also identified existing infrastructure (physical and digital), including wayfinding and interpretation, online materials, travel information and tours.

Interpretation Strategy Framework

- 1.6.3 Alongside the development of the Plan, an Interpretation Framework has also been prepared – this includes:
- A set of interpretive themes, together with descriptive statements, to illustrate key concepts reflecting Orkney's unique identity, connecting local stories and people.
 - Interpretive principles to provide visitors with a seamlessly integrated experience across the Islands, helping to provide richer experiences, meaningful encounters and safeguard sensitive sites.
 - Provision of the scope for a full interpretation strategy to be developed separately by OIC and its partners.

1.7 Next Steps

- 1.7.1 The draft Plan will be submitted to VisitScotland in January 2022. It will then be put forward for public consultation, with feedback informing the final Plan which will be considered for approval by the Council later in 2022.

- 1.7.2 RTIF funding will be sought for some key projects, and OIC will work with its partners to drive the delivery of the Strategy over the coming years. The Strategy will be used to guide investment in projects and programmes, including informing decisions on opportunities that arise after its publication.



2.0 CONTEXT AND CURRENT CHALLENGES

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2.1 The problem and the opportunity

- 2.1.1 Orkney's tourism industry has undergone rapid change over the last decade or so. There has been a dramatic growth in numbers of visitors and significant changes in the market profile of those visitors. Pre-2020 the islands were receiving an almost equal number of cruise / trade and independent guests. Cruise / trade visits were brief in nature (in and out in one day) with independent travellers staying longer and contributing more.
- 2.1.2 This growth had brought significant economic benefits to Orkney, both in terms of direct harbour fees and indirect jobs and revenue across the industry. But it also brought tension and problems including overcrowding on peak days, damage to sites, and increased pressure and focus on certain 'honeypot' attractions. Visitors tended to focus on a limited number of locations, with the economic benefits of tourism not being widely spread. This has led to the benefits of tourism not being evenly or equitably distributed.
- 2.1.3 It was clear, pre-Covid, that the underlying infrastructure necessary to sustainably and appropriately accommodate and maintain the tourism industry in Orkney was simply not there. Everything from accommodation, to attractions, to toilets (and beyond), needed review, and potentially investment, from the public and private sectors. Through the Orkney WHS Gateway project and other initiatives, OIC and its many partners began the process of tackling these issues and exploring options for investment and positive change.
- 2.1.4 The onset of Covid delayed this process and added to the challenges. Much uncertainty regarding the future of the tourism industry generally and more specifically - if and when (and to what extent) cruise may return and the prospects for inbound international travel - have created a difficult environment in which to plan the future of tourism on the islands. While current expectations are that cruise will want to return at similar levels and that there will be a strong bounce-back in the independent markets, there remains a degree of uncertainty.
- 2.1.5 But Covid has also created an opportunity; an opportunity for Orkney to decide what it wants from tourism and to choose the balance point between economics, community and environment. The decision about the balance point is becoming clearer. The ambitious

vision for a net zero Orkney, the drive for an integrated circular economy, the necessity of tackling and adapting to climate change, and the fundamental drive to ensure that the health and well-being of communities, all point to a new balance for tourism away from KPIs focussed on numbers of visits; and towards KPIs focused on the quality and reward from visits; for communities and guests. Marking a shift from "**volume to value**", enabling an ambition to enhance the offer generally and attract greater value through premium offers and focus but not at the expense of access for all.

2.2 Specific Issues

2.2.1 An Asset Audit (2021) has been undertaken as part of the project to help provide an understanding of current tourism assets, including understanding their strength and weaknesses, the gaps and the opportunities. The key issues and opportunities emerging from that included, amongst other elements:

Issues, gaps etc

- Limited, but not altogether absent, luxury accommodation: serviced and self-catering, niche / distinctive offers. Limited year-round accommodation and offerings for larger groups. Some limits to shorter stays (1-3 days) in terms of allowing for multi-centre holidays (i.e. short stays in multiple places)
- Inconsistencies between demand and opening times for retail, food and beverage offers, and attractions, particularly at weekends and in current low season
- Visits to outdoor attractions unappealing in poor / cold weather / low season, with a relatively limited year-round indoor offer
- Wider exploration restricted due to level of available information on walking and cycle routes, discouraging confident and safe exploration across the islands and between sites and attractions
- Lower quality of visit and conservation risks at key sites due to peak time overcrowding in high season
- Often poor cohesion between onsite interpretation / wayfinding e.g. duplicated signage, out of date signage and conflicting messaging.
- Limited cross promotion of sites and linkages between sites / stories to encourage further exploration

- Limited brown signs / signs too close usually requiring prior planning and therefore hindering impromptu exploration of more attractions
- Marketing material and storytelling themes historically over-focused on certain cultural and natural heritage such as prehistoric Orkney and the WHS
- Low number of circular walking and cycling routes, some via dangerous routes / high speed roads. Very little information at sites and key hubs
- Low provision of electric vehicle for hire, particularly hire cars, although an e-bike hire network is developing
- Quality of ferries on inter-island routes, the complexity of booking, availability of travel information and visitor hesitation with using ferry services
- Inadequate provision of waste disposal sites particularly for motorhome waste. Sites limited to Kirkwall and Sanday, resulting in disposal of waste outdoors across the islands

Opportunities

- Support further niche accommodation offers, the opening of high-end services and luxury self-catering accommodation to broaden the appeal of Orkney and encourage longer stays and return visits
- Offer accommodation bookings for shorter stays (1-3 days) enabling visitors to book multi-centre holidays across more locations
- Align opening times of retail, food and beverage and attractions with public transport links and weekend visits to encourage longer stays in more areas, encourage use of public transport and relieve key sites in high season
- Explore options for sheltered facilities at outdoor sites to encourage visitation in poorer weather / low season, and to encourage use of shelters as rest stops on walking and cycle journeys
- Create more keynote attractions and invest in key sites to maintain quality of visit and encourage visitation away from highly impacted sites
- Improve signage and information on walking / cycling routes, interpretation, marketing material to encourage wider exploration and more eco-friendly travel
- Promote / link multiple sites and stories through interpretation and marketing material to encourage exploration of more sites relieving current keynote sites suffering from high impact

- Explore options for delivery of additional brown signs and / or other forms of marking e.g. digital, for attractions and offers. Strategically position to encourage exploration of more sites relieving those highly impacted
- Include additional stories and themes e.g. wellbeing, crafts, literature and arts. Promote through marketing material and interpretation to broaden promote all Orkney has to offer and encourage visitation to multiple attractions
- Grow network of walking and cycling routes. Promote through marketing and signage to encourage wider exploration and travel between sites using eco-friendly methods
- Support electric vehicle hire and use, both car and bike, working towards the goal of net zero. Including improving awareness and access to existing schemes.
- Decarbonise and enhance bus travel to and from hubs and key attractions. Connect with active travel routes, ferry services and simplify / integrate ticketing to support the goal of net zero and dispersal across the islands
- Increase amount of waste disposal points across the islands.
- Promote settlements as service hubs creating bases for wider travel

2.2.2 In addition, the increased levels of tourism activity pre-Covid has had a significant impact on the road network, largely due to the number of cruise liners and associated tours, although camper vans and visiting tour coaches have also contributed. Should the volume of tourist traffic, particularly larger vehicles, continue at 2019 levels there would be further deterioration of the network.

2.2.3 OIC has identified the following sections of the network that may require consideration in terms of further investment:

- A964 St Ola, Orphir and Stenness
- A966 Evie, Costa and Birsay
- B9050 Deerness
- B9053 Scapa Bay St Ola
- B9055 Brodgar area
- B9056 Skail, Quoyloo, Marwick and Birsay
- B9057 Quoyloo to Maggie Garsons corner

2.2.4 As well as the potential for increased need for investment in the network (should volume tourism grow further), future developments may need to consider funding for ancillary

works to reconstruct, strengthen, improve drainage, provide new or upgrade existing passing places, improvements to existing turning heads to accommodate larger vehicles and the introduction of additional signage. In terms of signage, this could include upgrading direction signs, tourist signs and signs to discourage traffic from certain sections of the network.

2.3 Policy and Delivery context

2.3.1 The Plan will not be delivered by OIC alone and will require collaboration between OIC and its many partners including, but not limited to Historic Environment Scotland (HES), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), VisitScotland, NatureScot, Aspire Orkney, Destination Orkney Ltd, cruise shore excursion operators, industry representatives, Orkney Food & Drink, Creative Orkney and the Orkney Renewable Energy Forum.

2.3.2 Delivery of the Plan will also need to respond to other strategic priorities set out in a range of existing policy documents including:

- Culture Strategy for Scotland (2020)
- National Islands Plan (2019)
- OIC's Council Plan and Council Delivery Plan 2018-2023
- Orkney Community Plan 2019 to 2022
- Orkney Local Development Plan (2017)
- Orkney Sustainable Energy Strategy 2017-2025
- Orkney's Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2020-2025
- Orkney Core Paths Plan and Outdoor Access Strategy (2018)
- Scotland National Tourism Action Plan 2021
- Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible tourism for a sustainable future,
- Visitor Management Strategy for Scotland; and
- corporate plans and strategies of organisations such as HIE, HES and NatureScot.

2.4 Influence on the Plan

2.4.1 The shift in priorities for Orkney's tourism sector towards community and sustainability (but not forgetting the spreading of economic benefit) underpins the direction and focus of the Plan. It is fundamentally about prioritising investment in Orkney to create and deliver

a sustainable, viable and rewarding tourism sector that also supports and provides facilities for local communities. Ultimately, the Plan is about establishing what is required to create a firm footing for the future of tourism in Orkney; a future that must be equitable, sustainable and viable.



3.0 PRIMARY AIMS

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3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section sets out the primary aims for the project. These have been informed by consultation with a range of stakeholders, site visits, a review of the wider policy background and the Asset Audit.

3.1.2 The Aims are:

- **Aim 1: Dispersal:** Disperse, strengthen and reinforce the tourism offer across the mainland and islands to deepen the visitor offer, spread guests across the islands and lengthen the visitor season.
- **Aim 2: Market Focus:** Focus investment and promotion on clearly defined priority markets segments to drive visitation from groups that respond well to Orkney's culture and sense of place, want to stay longer and who would contribute to the strengthening of Orkney's tourism industry and the resilience of its host communities.
- **Aim 3: Sustainability:** Drive sustainable growth through responsible tourism that delivers benefits for communities, the environment, and the economy in a balanced and equitable manner; while positively contributing to Orkney's net zero transition.
- **Aim 4: Conservation:** Safeguard and celebrate Orkney's natural and cultural heritage through active visitor management, conservation works, landscape-scale activity and habitat restoration programmes; delivering improved conservation outcomes and positive effects for biodiversity.

3.2 Aim 1: Dispersal

Disperse, strengthen and reinforce the tourism offer across the mainland and islands to deepen the visitor offer, spread guests across the islands and lengthen the visitor season.

Rationale

- 3.2.1 OIC and its partners have identified that the socio-economic benefits of tourism are currently not well dispersed. Locations outside of Kirkwall and away from key attractions e.g. the World Heritage Site, Italian Chapel etc receive relatively small numbers of visitors and, consequently, lower levels of spend and engagement.
- 3.2.2 Additionally, the lack of dispersal creates a relatively narrow visitor offer, that leads to perceptions that Orkney is suitable for only a short-stay, or even that it “*can be done in a day*”. Many of the smaller, less well-known sites and attractions in Orkney are in themselves truly outstanding and interesting, something often missed by visitors. The lack of geographic and seasonal dispersal also creates peak time issues at key locations, particularly when trade and cruise visits are at their highest levels.
- 3.2.3 Dispersal can also lead to a deeper visitor engagement with place, enriching their experience and encouraging a greater appreciation and respect for the islands. It is vital however that visitors are encouraged to explore the right places, making sure they are aware of where they can and can’t go, so that their impact is dispersed but suitably controlled to avoid disrupting communities and harming the environment. An approach focused on dispersal can also support the management of trade visitor numbers at key locations by providing a wider offer of excursions for operators enabling them to meet their requirements for tours.
- 3.2.4 The sustainable dispersal of visitors across Orkney, including to its many islands, and through the year is therefore considered critical to spreading the benefits of tourism, creating a more resilient industry and to changing perceptions of Orkney's offer.

3.3 Aim 2: Market Focus

Focus investment and promotion on clearly defined priority markets segments to drive visitation from groups that respond well to Orkney's culture and sense of place, want to stay longer and who would contribute to the strengthening of Orkney's tourism industry and the resilience of its host communities.

Rationale

- 3.3.1 Clear identification of key markets will enable investors, operators and marketers to focus their efforts in a coordinated and clear manner. It will also enable Orkney to attract guests that respond well to its unique sense of place, its rich culture and traditions, and who would respect the needs and wishes of its communities. Through this investment can be driven towards markets that value a deeper engagement with place, a slower pace of life and a greater care and respect for people and planet (see Aims 3 and 4).
- 3.3.2 A market focus also enables us to place a greater value on independent longer stay guests over day-trip trade guests¹, which will improve economic outcomes and provide a more sustainable and resilient basis for year-round tourism (see Aim 1).
- 3.3.3 The current narrative regarding tourism in Orkney tends to be focussed on cruise and the wider trade offer; and although servicing these will remain important, they are not the focus for investment and marketing.
- 3.3.4 One of the key changes needed is a move from focussing on "*numbers of visitors to Orkney*" to "*number of visitor days / nights in Orkney*".
- 3.3.5 VisitScotland have provided a robust overview of target segments for Scotland². This has identified 5 target segments for Scottish Tourism, including Orkney. These are [in alphabetical order]:
- Adventure Seekers
 - Curious Travellers

¹ Day trip guests and cruise passengers are not excluded or unwelcome, but the focus of effort is on longer stay independent travellers.

² 2014. Visit Scotland. An Overview of our Target Segments.

- Engaged Sightseers
- Food-Loving Culturalists
- Natural Advocates

3.3.6 A review of these against the inherent characteristics of Orkney, and the other aims, has resulted in a prioritisation of the 5 segments as follows:

High Priority Segments – groups where investment has the potential to strongly support the aims of Plan and strengthen the wider tourism industry. These are key priority segments for development and promotion.

- **Natural Advocates** – *“are passionate about Scotland as it offers everything they want from a holiday; breathtaking scenery, a connection with nature and the chance to get away from it all. A holiday in Scotland will really help them to unwind, recharge and enjoy quiet time.”* They should be a “natural” fit with Orkney for this market – a focus on “getting away from it all” and a quieter life offers the opportunity for synergy between their values and Orkney. Potentially a key market for extending the shoulder season too.
- **Curious Travellers** – *“like to live life to the full and enjoy traveling as a hobby. They have an overwhelming desire to explore new destinations and discover new things. A holiday will often broaden their minds, educate and revitalise them.”* “...will relish lots of ideas on how they can get under the skin of the history of a local area and the local culture”. Willing to explore off the beaten track and try new things. Although tend towards short breaks, they do take more frequent holidays. Likely to be attracted to Orkney for both the bucket-list destinations and a wider more varied offer.

Medium Priority Segments – groups where investment would help maintain current benefits but is unlikely to transform the industry and its impact in Orkney. These are a lower priority for investment and promotion.

- **Engaged Sightseers** - *“A love of holidays drives Engaged Sightseers to plan numerous breaks in a year. They enjoy general sightseeing and touring, taking in historical places as well as scenery and nature. They relish engaging with friendly locals and seeking out an authentic experience.”* A relatively traditional market for Orkney with established

relationships. Considerable competition for their attention. Tend towards shorter breaks, but likely to see Orkney as a longer-stay destination given cost of travel.

Low Priority Segments - groups that will not inherently be attracted to Orkney and / or where investment is less likely to be successful or have a strong return. These are not considered current priority targets for investment or promotion at an Orkney-wide level.

- **Adventure Seekers** – *“want an active holiday where they can enjoy both outdoor and cultural activities. They will venture off the beaten track and will be engaged by trying new things and pushing their limits and experiences. Holidays will really energise them”*. Tend to prefer shorter breaks, with relatively easy access. Difficult to market to attract to Orkney due to the relatively quiet gentle nature of Orkney's landscapes and competition from established areas with a more inherently adventurous landscape and offer. Some potential to attract them to the more rugged and adventurous Hoy and aspects of more adventurous maritime activities e.g. diving. Targeted marketing and offer development for this segment may be appropriate.
- **Food-Loving Culturalists** – *“will seek out a relaxing holiday experience where they can enjoy great food and drink and engaging cultural activities. They enjoy short breaks in the UK and will recommend quality experiences when their host has gone the ‘extra mile.’”* High value, younger audience with focus towards urban environments. Would need a significant shift in Orkney offer to become inherently attractive to them. This is not to say that Orkney does not have a strong food and culture offer that can enrich a guest's stay and make Orkney an attractive place to visit – but this particular market segment is more focussed on short-break urban experiences.

3.4 Aim 3: Sustainability

Drive sustainable growth through responsible tourism that delivers benefits for communities, the environment, and the economy in a balanced and equitable manner; while positively contributing to Orkney's net zero transition.

Rationale

- 3.4.1 Sustainability and sustainable development are long established terms with a broad consensus on their general meaning and intent. It is clearly acknowledged that a sustainable approach is required to all forms of development and human activity, including tourism, if we are to create and maintain a viable future for the global population.
- 3.4.2 To support this, the UN has established 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs)³ that address social, environmental and economic factors. Additionally, Scottish Government has set out a pathway for addressing these goals⁴. OIC, along with many others, declared a Climate Emergency in 2019; with Orkney now being on an ambitious pathway to a carbon neutral (net zero) economy.
- 3.4.3 All tourism development in Orkney, whether physical or activity-led, therefore needs to contribute to this agenda. It needs to lead to sustainable growth, which may result in more limited short-term economic outcomes but increased long-term, health, wellbeing and environmental outcomes; and also contribute to Orkney's net zero transition. It is acknowledged that travel to Orkney can carry a significant environmental / carbon load; however addressing this lies outside of the scope of this Plan.

³ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-sustainable-development-goals-national-review-drive-action/pages/1/>

3.5 Aim 4: Conservation

Safeguard and celebrate Orkney's natural and cultural heritage through active visitor management, conservation works, landscape-scale activity and habitat restoration programmes; delivering improved conservation outcomes and positive effects for biodiversity.

Rationale

- 3.5.1 A fundamental aspect of Orkney and its offer is its cultural and natural heritage. Conserving and sustaining this is critical not just to the tourism offer, but also to the very fabric of the place and the identity of its communities. Tourism, whether managed or not, has the potential to degrade the conservation value of sensitive heritage sites, landscapes and natural habitats. Ensuring that sites and places are conserved as part of a tourism offer is vital to sustaining these sites.
- 3.5.2 This may require the addition of infrastructure e.g. paths to manage visitor footfall and direct visitors away from sensitive areas; or the addition of information and signage to encourage visitors to act in a responsible manner. Whatever approach is taken, a clear balance needs to be struck between access and conservation; with great weight placed on conservation. Orkney has the potential to act as an exemplar of conservation-driven tourism and to avoid *killing the goose that lays its golden egg*.



4.0 STRATEGIC APPROACH

4.0 STRATEGIC APPROACH

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The aims of the Plan set a clear direction of travel for the development of tourism of Orkney, towards dispersal of guests across the mainland and islands, and across the seasons, supported by a shift in emphasis from “volume to value” with a strong focus on targeted markets. There is a critical need to ensure that this is achieved in a sustainable manner that conserves Orkney’s culture and sense of place, while positively contributing to the net zero transition.

4.1.2 This re-focussing of priorities and investment does not mean that Orkney abandons cruise and trade operators and guests, or stops supporting existing visitor markets, or does not seize future opportunities for niche markets – but it does mean that these are not priorities for investment in terms of future sustainable growth.

4.1.3 There is however a well-established need to ensure that when trade tourism does return, which it is currently predicted to do, it is better managed and that perceived and real issues with communities and conservation needs are overcome and addressed. There is also an opportunity to offer new products, tours and excursions for returning markets to attract a broad range of guests and operators, while supporting dispersal.

4.1.4 In this context, and in response to the Challenges (see Section 2) and the Primary Aims (Section 3) a broad strategic approach has been identified to structure and support investment and activity across Orkney. This approach has 6 interrelated areas for investment which, if developed together, will create a more sustainable, viable and responsive tourism sector that reflects Orkney’s culture and communities:

- **Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland**
- **Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands**
- **Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer**
- **Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration**
- **Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer**
- **Area 6: Align marketing and information**

4.1.5 The following describes these areas, providing background and detail. Section 5 highlights a suite of Essential Projects required to deliver the Strategy, with a further longer list of Desirable Projects all of which would contribute to the delivery of the Strategy, but are not individually fundamental to it, many of which will be delivered over the coming years as funding and opportunity arises.

4.2 Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland

4.2.1 Dispersal of visitors is a key aim for Orkney's tourism sector. However, visitors need services and facilities, and this requires investment and physical change. Critically, this change needs occur in a way that supports community wellbeing, conserves the natural and cultural heritage of the islands, and reflects Orkney's strong sense of place (see Aims).

4.2.2 Ill-managed dispersal with new facilities and support services scattered and inappropriately placed carries the risk of harming Orkney's communities and sense of place. To help avoid this, the Strategy focuses on concentrating supporting visitor infrastructure in identified settlements across the mainland and linked isles (see Area 2 for the approach to other islands). This approach will also help establish economic critical mass in the identified locations which can support communities and businesses. Interventions will be planned and developed in consultation with communities.

4.2.3 These settlements will become hubs for visitor activity. Three different forms of hubs have been identified in terms of scale and function – as follows:

- **Major Hubs** – key locations for retail, accommodation, attractions, support services and connections; urban in nature and able to accommodate and support larger numbers of visitors
- **Destination Hubs** – settlements that are inherently attractive to visitors and of a size that means they are able to support and accommodate increased visitor numbers and additional facilities
- **Service Hubs** – well-located settlements with existing facilities that can be further expanded to provide services and support for visitors

4.2.4 In broad terms the hubs would accommodate the following visitor infrastructure (much of which would also support local communities):

	Accom, Retail, F&B ⁵	Attractions	Parking, Toilets, EV charging, recycling	Bus connectivity (year round)	Camper van waste facilities
Major Hubs	Very significant year-round offer	Strong offer	Yes	Yes	Yes
Destination Hubs	Year-round offer, but not primary focus	Strong offer	Yes, but at a smaller scale	Yes	No
Service Hubs	Year-round offer	Not a factor, but connects visitors to attractions	Yes	Yes	Yes

4.2.5 Importantly, this approach does not exclude investment in non-hub locations e.g. smaller settlements in the east mainland or linked isles, but the scale of facilities would generally be more limited. For example, the smaller ports provide obvious locations for tertiary support facilities such as toilets, bus stops and parking.

4.2.6 Identified hubs are as follows:

- Major Hubs – Kirkwall and Stromness:** these are the primary settlements on the mainland and are capable of accommodating significant levels of visitation, and they already act as hubs for economic, social / cultural and transport activity. The majority of facilities are already in place, but there will be a need for some investment in both locations to strengthen them further (see Section 5)
- Destination Hubs - St Margaret’s Hope and Birsay:** St Margret’s Hope's charming and attractive townscape and waterside location make it an ideal draw for visitors. Infrastructure exists in terms of EV charging, parking, retail, F&B, toilet, separate ferry port etc but some upgrades are required, and additional parking may be needed in the future. Birsay is set within a stunning landscape and seascape but lacks key infrastructure and considerable investment will be required to support visitation.

⁵ Food and Beverage

- **Service Hubs - Dounby and Finstown:** These two settlements are well placed on the road and public transport network and already have a range of facilities including parking, toilets, shops etc. Further targeted investment is required in both (focussed on different needs) to provide the full range of support services including campervan waste disposal, EV charging etc.



4.3 Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands

- 4.3.1 Orkney's many islands have a multitude of diverse stories to tell. These islands reflect Orkney's charismatic past and the diverse characteristics of today - from seaweed eating sheep on North Ronaldsay to military heritage around Burray to the dramatic landscapes of Hoy, vast numbers of stories spread across its 70 islands ranging back thousands of years.
- 4.3.2 The variety of these islands, the idea that there are many "Orkneys", is potentially a strong differentiator for Orkney in a crowded tourism market. The islands are likely to be very attractive destinations to the key identified independent markets but also to small vessel cruise operators too. There is scope to bring more of the islands into the overall tourism offer of Orkney raising their profile to visitors.
- 4.3.3 Consultation has uncovered that, on some islands, whilst there may be a need for the economic benefits that tourism can bring, there are also concerns that if they do become a large part of the tourism offer, the very qualities that make them unique such as their remoteness and tranquillity, will disappear. Openness to tourism and the safeguarding of the island's character need to be carefully balanced.
- 4.3.4 Therefore, any future intervention must be community-led. Working together, but with a focus on their individual wants and needs, communities across the islands can begin to develop ideas and plans for growth with the opportunity to invite tourism to their islands in an appropriate and sustainable way; in a manner that is truly regenerative for the health, well-being and economies of the islands, and their rich natural and cultural landscapes.
- 4.3.5 In this approach, it will be the island communities themselves that define and establish the nature of their tourism offer and how they wish to encourage and welcome visitors. Many of the islands have started this process but support and funding is needed from organisations such as OIC, HIE and VisitScotland.
- 4.3.6 To guide future change and help attract external investment, it is suggested that islands are supported to develop a clear but concise vision and plan for their approach to tourism.

This could start with partners supporting Islands Development Officers / Representatives in creating community-led workshops to establish a vision for tourism growth on the islands, define each island's identity and begin to develop guiding principles. Following this the island communities would develop short masterplans for tourism development, identifying interventions, programmes, sites for development etc that meet their needs as a community. These might include, for example:

- Reinforcing and investing in established attractions and the creation of new attractions
- Development of walking and cycling offers including signage, guides etc
- Developing opportunities for retail, food and beverage and accommodation offers
- Improved marketing and promotional material
- Training and support for operators

4.3.7 However, there are structural issues facing the islands that are limiting their ability to attract tourists and sustain businesses, these include:

- Limited internet connectivity
- Quality of ferries on inter-island routes, the complexity of booking, availability of travel information and visitor hesitation with using ferry services
- Costs of travel
- Access to professional resources to support development
- Size of some communities in terms of being able to leverage financial support for investment

4.3.8 These structural issues will need to be overcome through external investment and through new channels of resource and support for the islands.

4.3.9 The projects set out in Section 5 provide a starting point for the required changes.

4.4 Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer

4.4.1 Orkney has an existing trove of attractions for visitors encompassing historic sites, landscapes, coastlands, nature reserves, beaches, museums, craft offers etc. These vary in scale, form, quality and market focus.

4.4.2 Scope clearly exists to strengthen existing attractions and to create new attractions to support dispersal, interest target markets and help conserve the cultural and natural heritage of the islands. Key priorities for investment include:

- Reinforcing and investing in established keynote attractions that can currently define a visitor's experience to maintain quality and Orkney's reputation in the market e.g. Italian Chapel, the World Heritage Site, St Magnus Cathedral and Pier Arts Centre.
- Creation of one or more new keynote attractions to expand the breadth of internationally known attractions, making Orkney inherently more attractive to target markets, e.g. the Museum of the Islands.
- Developing new attractions / offers at a variety of scales to focus on defined areas of offer including Orkney's military heritage, its maritime story (inc. underwater heritage), its landscape and costal scenery, and its artistic traditions and offer
- Improving and supporting existing cultural and heritage attractions to ensure their viability, market focus and long-term conservation and enabling visitors to plan longer stays, confident that there is a good range of attractions
- Opening-up and safeguarding natural heritage areas and landscapes to better engage key markets, provide longer dwell times and deepen visitor engagement
- Supporting 'novel' and 'niche' offers, often private sector-led, that add character and flavour to the visitor offer and encourage people to plan a longer stay, or return again e.g. scuba diving and snorkelling, food and craft activities, spiritual tourism etc.

4.4.3 The projects set out in Section 5 address these priorities and further opportunities will undoubtedly emerge over the coming years.

4.5 Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration

4.5.1 Orkney's ambition to achieve net zero will require transformation in many areas of life, including transport and travel. Sustainable means of travel for both residents and visitors is vital to achieving this goal.

4.5.2 Additionally, providing these solutions will be attractive to and resonate with key target markets (see Aims) who seek a more involved, slower paced and ultimately sustainable

experience that reflects the aspirations and needs of host communities. It would also position Orkney in a growing international niche of sustainable tourism destinations.

4.5.3 To deliver this change investment will be required in public transport, non-motorised transport and private vehicle transport options. Key priorities include:

- Growing and improving the network of paths across the islands, including routes to promote connectivity and leisure
- Enhancing cycle networks across the islands and providing supporting facilities
- Enabling and encouraging users of walking and cycling routes through signage and information
- Develop shelter facilities at outdoor sites to support visitation in poorer weather / low season, and provide rest stops for walkers and cyclists (and other users)
- Supporting electric bike usage
- Continuing support for and potential enhancement of public bus travel to and from hubs and key attractions
- Connecting bus transport with active travel routes (primarily pedestrian routes)
- Integrating bus and ferry transport for visitors
- Simplifying and integrating visitor ticketing for bus and ferry
- Supporting electric car usage including support for “at home” charging for B&Bs, self-catering cottages and other accommodation offers
- Continuing efforts to decarbonise public bus and ferry transport
- Continuing to explore options for electric planes between islands

4.5.4 The projects set out in Section 5 address these priorities.

4.6 Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer

4.6.1 The Asset Audit identified approximately 300 accommodation providers on the islands, the majority of which are relatively traditional forms of self-catering, camping, home stay, hotel and B&B accommodation. The following key areas, aligned with the key market segments targeted, have been identified where opportunities exist for further growth and investment:

- 4* / 5* Star⁶ serviced accommodation (Hotels)
- Luxury self-catering accommodation⁷
- Niche / distinctive offers – particularly those with strong environmental or heritage credentials, such as glamping, eco-lodges, net zero accommodation, or conversion of niche heritage sites.

4.6.2 Food and beverage (F&B) provision on the islands is mixed in terms of type, quality and availability which reflects the highly seasonal nature of the offer, the small resident population and a focus on more traditional markets. The majority of the offer is located in Kirkwall, reflecting the year-round population and draw on the town. Clear opportunities exist to improve the quantity, quality and diversity of F&B offers on the islands, particularly in terms of using and promoting local produce, and through providing training support and opportunities for the sector.

4.6.3 While the opportunity for direct public sector investment is limited, investment can still be made to improve the commercial environment for operators and investors and to encourage growth in line with the Plan. Projects / programmes set out in Section 5 seek to achieve this.

4.7 Area 6: Align marketing and information

4.7.1 The content, style, and consistency of communication and information available to visitors before, during and after a visit is critical to establishing and maintaining interest of target audiences. It can also help to encourage and control deeper exploration, aid dispersal, and provide a richer experience for guests.

4.7.2 Importantly, this information must be readily available and accessible to all visitors. This needs to be focussed in key locations, both physically and digitally, to ensure it is easy to find and not fragmented – at the very least all sources of information must be interlinked and cross-referenced. It must also be consistent across these locations, to avoid confusion.

4.7.3 Key priorities include:

⁶ Using the AA (<https://www.theaa.com/hotel-services/ratings-and-awards>) or Hotel Stars (<https://www.hotelstars.eu/>) grading systems
⁷ i.e. equivalent to 5* Visit Scotland standards (<https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/visitor-experience/quality-assurance-ratings/industry-guidance/self-catering/qa-criteria>)

- Focussing marketing, branding and key messages on identified target markets
- Consolidate Orkney.com and Kirkwall iCentre as the primary digital and physical locations for visitor information respectively. Avoid proliferation of mobile applications and secondary websites.
- Establish a marketing and information framework that is consistently adhered to across OIC and partner locations. This will incorporate improved physical signage and maps (old, conflicting signage to be removed), digital information and mobile apps, print media (guide books, leaflets) and messaging provided in-person by guides and staff.
- Ensuring that messages around responsible and sustainable tourism are embedded in communications
- Interconnecting interpretation and orientation information across the islands to encourage and enable dispersal and promote a cohesive approach to telling the many stories of the islands

4.7.4 Projects / programmes set out in Section 5 seek to support this.



5.0 PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

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5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section provides an overview of the Essential projects (see Section 5.3 and Appendix 1) that are central to the short, medium and long-term development of the Strategy. Without the implementation of these projects, there is a significant risk that the strategy will underperform. The projects respond to the key areas for investment and reflect the aims of the Strategy. They have been identified by the client, consultant team and stakeholders and were included in a draft Long List of projects provided to stakeholders during the development of the plan.

5.1.2 The Projects have not been identified in isolation, and take into account a number of ongoing projects, programmes and initiatives, see Section 5.2 below for further information.

5.1.3 Alongside the Essential Projects, the Plan has identified a long-list of Desirable projects which, if implemented, would support the delivery of the Plan and its aims. These include a significant number of proposals from key stakeholders that contribute to the Strategy and meet the key aims. Appendix 2 outlines these projects and Section 5.4 below provides a brief summary.

5.2 Ongoing projects

5.2.1 There are a number of ongoing projects across Orkney that have been taken into account with the development of the Strategy. These are at various stages of development and delivery, with some awaiting funding and others moving towards opening – these are listed below under the 6 areas of investment:

Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland

- None identified

Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands

- North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme – ‘support life in Orkney’s North Isles, while conserving and raising awareness of their distinctive identities, heritage and culture.

Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer

- Orkney WHS Gateway Programme – major programme to improve access, visitor experience and conservation across the WHS. Currently awaiting funding through Islands Deal
- Hall of Clestrain – fundraising for major restoration and activation project
- HMS Tern – clearing of site and opening / conversion of building to rooms for visitors. Further proposals in development with programmed delivery.
- Bringing Heritage Home – initial feasibility work being undertaken, delivery to commence once funding identified
- Orkney project – digital storytelling platform being developed by Robert Gordon University and University of Highlands and Islands
- Pier Arts Centre Post Office expansion in Stromness – delivery work ongoing
- Linkshouse, Birsay - recently opened Piers Arts Centre facility
- Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum – currently re-opening with further phases planned

Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration

- Hydrogen Ferry – pilot scheme in development, pending funding

Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer

- Point of Ness Campsite Upgrade – led by OIC
- Birsay Campsite Upgrade – led by OIC

Area 6: Align marketing and information

- None identified

Ongoing project locations



- ① Linkshouse - Pier Arts Centre
- ② Birsay Campsite Upgrade
- ③ WHS Gateway Programme
- ④ Pier Arts Centre expansion

- ⑤ Point of Ness Campsite Upgrade
- ⑥ Hall of Clestrain
- ⑦ Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum

5.2.2 While some of these projects are essentially complete or fully funded and in the delivery phase, many are not. These ongoing and nascent projects all have the ability to support the delivery of the Strategy and drive change in the tourism industry in Orkney. As such many of them are wholly or partially captured within the Essential and Desirable Projects set out below.

5.3 Essential Projects

5.3.1 A series of key projects have been identified by OIC, stakeholders and the consultant team to provide a foundation for the Strategy, these are detailed in Appendix 1. The following provides a summary of the projects and a rationale for them in relation to the Strategy:

Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland

5.3.2 A key plank of the strategy is focussed on reinforcing the visitor infrastructure in a number of key locations across the mainland – these projects deliver that:

- **Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections** – there is a major opportunity to address existing visitor pressures in Birsay, while creating a high-quality destination that will be attractive to key markets. Key elements of the project would include improved parking, new information, new interactive digital display, new active travel routes and walks, new toilets and facilities. All of this will be preceded by a community and place-led design and development process to develop ideas and proposals to ensure any change reflects aspirations and requirements of communities. This is the most intensive of the Area 1 investment projects.
- **St Margaret's Hope Visitor Infrastructure** - enhancements including provision of additional local walks, improved orientation and interpretation, new interactive digital display, E-bike charging, and the identification of potential locations for additional visitor parking / drop-offs. Campervan waste disposal may be incorporated at St Margaret's Hope Ferry Terminal, or other suitable location away from the historic centre of St Margaret's Hope.
- **Dounby Visitor Infrastructure** – significant improvements to current car parking, new toilets, new camper van waste disposal facilities, improved EV / E-bike charging, new

interactive digital display, and enhanced orientation linking Dounby to the wider landscape and surrounding offers. All of this will be preceded by a community and place-led design and development process based on the existing “Dounby Plan”.

- **Finstown Visitor Infrastructure** – limited improvements focussed on the existing shore-side car park including updating of public conveniences, new camper van waste disposal facilities, new interactive digital display, E-bike charging and enhanced orientation linking Finstown to wider landscape and surrounding offers.
- **Stromness Visitor Infrastructure** - limited improvements focussed on including new camper van waste disposal facilities, new interactive digital display, E-bike charging and enhanced orientation / interpretation across the town and out to the wider area.
- **Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure** – minimal upgrade focussed on new camper van waste disposal facilities near the cruise terminal – these would also support coaches and encourage use of onboard toilet facilities. It is considered that Kirkwall already has the core infrastructure necessary to serve as a key destination and hub.

5.3.3 As indicated above and in Appendix 1, the majority of the improvements are relatively small-scale (but still critical), with significant investment / activity focussed on Birsay and, to a degree Dounby. These interventions would strengthen key locations on the mainland enabling the dispersal of guests and help strengthen the appeal of Stromness, Birsay and St Margaret’s Hope.

5.3.4 Additional to physical infrastructure, there is also a need to address **coach management and access** across the mainland to manage peak-time loading at key locations and attractions. The ongoing Orkney WHS Gateway Programme (see below) includes the development of a coach permit / management system to help control peak-time visitor numbers at Brodgar and the Stones of Stenness. That project will fund the initial development of the system and the opportunity exists to expand and develop the system for other locations across the mainland. The roll-out of the system can be integrated within other projects, but investment in back-of-house infrastructure is required.

Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands

- 5.3.5 Creating a balanced, community-led approach to tourism on the many islands is a key plank for the Strategy. These places are a unique asset for tourism in Orkney, offering a host of experiences and provide differentiator in the market. They are also home to many different communities with different aspirations and requirements.
- 5.3.6 The proposed project focusses on developing a series of pilot projects for **Community-led Tourism Plans** for each island. These would not be developed by external consultants in consultation with community, but rather by the community with support from external partners / consultants. Through a process of workshops, discussion and constructive debate each island would be enabled to develop a clear view of what they want to achieve through tourism and how they can go about it, including a definition of their tourism offer / marketing position and a clear action plan with proposals for fund raising and delivery.
- 5.3.7 At this stage, it is proposed to develop 5 Pilot Projects for islands of differing scales, needs and proximity to the mainland. The islands will be selected in consultation with Community Councils and Development Trusts. Following the pilots, the methodology would be refined and, if successful, the programme would be rolled out to other islands.

Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer

- 5.3.8 The Desirable Project list contains a range of potential projects for existing and new attractions / offers. While these will strengthen the offer the following are considered essential by virtue of their importance in terms of defining and structuring the current visitor experience, or in terms of their role in helping create a new visitor offer that will be attractive to a range of markets; particularly when seen along the significant proposed expansion to outdoor and active travel opportunities (see Area 4 below). These selected projects will help redefine the quality and breadth of Orkney's offer
- 5.3.9 The essential projects have been structured around Iconic / brand defining interventions; Natural heritage / landscape offers; art and cultural offers; and non-prehistoric heritage offers.

Iconic / brand defining interventions

5.3.10 Two key projects have been identified, both of which are in the process of being developed and delivered by OIC and its partners:

- **WHS Gateway Project:** major £7.5m+ project to enhance the WHS, improve conservation, provide active travel, improve interpretation and ultimately deliver a world-class experience benefiting the WHS. This project is critical to Orkney's future tourism offer given that so many visitors include a trip to the WHS as part of their stay and the WHS is a major draw in terms of people visiting Orkney. Project is currently proceeding through Islands Deal funding process and should be implemented on a phased basis between 2022 and 2028.
- **Museum of the Islands:** major project to develop a new world class attraction in Orkney to celebrate its varied history and the many natural and cultural assets it possesses. Museum would be most likely sited in Kirkwall and would include free-to-view and special paid exhibitions on a permanent and temporary basis. It would offer access to the collections held by the museums service and its partners, would tell the wider stories of Orkney and would signpost sites across the islands. It would also offer community spaces and events. The museum would act as a shop window for cultural and heritage partners across Orkney encouraging exploration and discovery of the full breadth of Orkney's rich and vibrant cultural heritage. The project is critical to Orkney's future tourism offer given that there is currently nowhere on the islands that incorporates all of Orkney's heritage themes. Funding is currently being sort by OIC to advance the proposal.

Natural heritage / landscape offers

5.3.11 Both of the following projects would offer refreshed and improved outdoor experiences in Orkney's dramatic coastline. Both involve existing sites that attract significant numbers of guests but which currently underperform in terms of the quality of the experience. They also encourage dispersal to the west and east of the mainland.

- **Yesnaby Reserve:** currently the visitor experience is hampered by poor management, informal car parking, damaged habitats, limited interpretation and conflicting site uses (motorbikes etc). This is a dramatic landscape / natural environment destination that

warrants intervention to raise its quality and safeguard the natural environment. Project would see car parking formalised at a distance from the cliff, new paths and interpretation installed, temporary 'popup' uses for the WWII blockhouses and a major programme of habitat restoration.

- **Mull Head:** a dramatic setting but relatively detached from other offers on the mainland, the area lends itself to drawing nature and wildlife enthusiasts to explore this area of the east mainland. The project would include a refresh of the existing interpretation centre building and structural repairs as required. The path would be improved with potential expansion as part of the Loop Path Network (IDXX) with integrated interpretation and orientation material. It also includes improvements to viewing platforms of The Gloup.
- **Beach Access and Enhancement:** environmental clean-up and maintenance projects with additional infrastructure as required e.g. paths, steps, toilets. It may include funding and support for equipment, marketing and management to create an exceptional offer at keynote beaches across the mainland, and potentially based on the outcomes of projects under Area 2, across the islands too. Initial set of beaches to focus on include Inganess Beach, Skail Beach, Sands O' Wright and Sands of Evie, however, more detail on interventions, plus additional locations would be developed based on the need of communities and existing infrastructure; these may include non-linked isles depending on the outcomes of the work proposed under Area 2 above.

Art and cultural offers

5.3.12 Orkney has a stupendously rich art and cultural heritage and traditions linked to people and place. The Pier Arts Centre is an institution of international standing with a world class collection of modern, contemporary and local art.

- **Pier Arts Centre: Gallery, Post Office and Linkshouse:** The existing Pier Arts Centre is a unique attraction in Orkney. An ongoing project is being undertaken to revitalise the old Stromness Post Office as a participation and learning centre, as well as the development of an arts facility in the Linkshouse in Birsay, benefitting communities and helping to continue art practices in Orkney. The expansion of the arts offer, presents an exciting cultural offer, complimenting but also contrasting the more heritage-focused

activities and sites in Orkney, presenting it as a place of artistic experience and exchange. The project commenced in 2021 and is ongoing. It is an Islands Growth Deal project for delivery within the next decade.

Non-prehistoric heritage offers

5.3.13 Orkney is rightly known for its outstanding prehistoric heritage, but it has a richer offer too including Viking sites and stories, renewable energy stories, a truly unique military history, a rich rural history and people focussed stories. These projects below projects work with existing sites / themes to begin to unlock and enrich this wider heritage offer. The below are considered as essential due to their importance in terms of defining and structuring the current experience, or in terms of their role in helping create a new visitor offer that will be attractive to a range of markets, and in their immediate ability to communicate these important and somewhat overlooked themes. They are supported by desirable projects found below and in Appendix 2, which explore further themes. All projects have much to offer with targeted investment and development:

- **Kirbister Farm Museum:** an already enchanting asset in the heart of the mainland, the museum showcases the more recent history of traditional farming life. It is currently overlooked in marketing and promotional material, which doesn't do justice to this important and people centred theme which is close to the hearts of many Orcadians. Project includes the repositioning and promotion of the site as the main farm museum in Orkney and includes improved signage and potentially the expansion of the onsite offer to include conservation / restoration of currently unused outbuildings and surrounding areas of land with the potential extension of the car park. Planning and listed building consent will be required, and all works will be designed sensitively.
- **Viking Orkney:** The story of Viking Orkney, whilst being a prominent one, isn't given enough of a spotlight across both physical sites and in marketing and promotion. The project includes improved promotion of Viking Orkney at various sites across the islands, particularly at the Orkneyinga Saga Centre and through associated trails. The revitalisation and refit of the existing Orkneyinga Saga Centre and re-presentation of the Earls Bu and Church would be central, with new streamlined and integrated interpretation. Interpretation would signpost to other sites, including other churches and ruins and well as key sites linked to Viking Orkney and the Orkneyinga Saga. Design and feasibility work is required in the short term to develop concepts and ideas for what

the centre and trail should be. Limited construction / landscaping is required due to the nature of the site, already with sufficient parking and easily accessible from the road.

Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration

5.3.14 Bringing together low / zero carbon active travel opportunities with an enriched leisure offer for guests (and communities) is a win-win for Orkney and its visitors. The mainland, and islands, have a generally gentle but elemental landscape, well suited for exploration by foot and bike; even for the less adventurous. With this in mind, a key focus for investment relates to the expansion of footpaths and cycle routes / facilities. Initial feasibility / audits of the existing and potential coastal paths are required to determine where investment is required to improve existing paths. For physical interventions, landowner negotiation is required, and all interventions would be fully assessed against environmental priorities and would be designed sensitively, with wildlife and habitats a priority.

- **Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path:** Orkney has 570 miles of coastline, only some of which is accessible to walkers and cyclists. A high proportion of this is on the mainland and attached islands. Whilst there may be more areas of land accessible through local knowledge, the majority of routes aren't well promoted. Project includes the development of a full coastal path network joining up various existing paths including linking to some non-coastal, partially coastal and inland routes (see Loop Paths Network below). The relatively gentle terrain lends itself to explorers of all ages and abilities and projects creates a strong new offer. Routes would be supported by signage, orientation and interpretation.
- **Loop Paths Network:** Whilst the relatively gentle walking and cycling that Orkney's landscape offers should be an asset in itself, it is hindered by the disjointed and disconnected routes with many incorporating dangerous or unappealing sections i.e. fast roads. Project seeks to connect existing paths creating a network of loops both coastal and inland integrated with the Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path above. Routes would be supported by signage and wayfinding. Routes could incorporate a variety of landscapes including Upland walks, round loch routes, themed routes e.g. Cairn-to-Cairn, and the expansion of nature reserve walk across all islands. There is also the potential to create an Orkney wide 'peak challenge' potentially linking and promoting: Ward Hill, Hoy (481m), Mid Hill, Mainland (275m), Blotchnie Fiold, Rousay (250m) and Fitty Hill, Westray (1 69m).

- **Expand Cycle Network:** project to expand the cycle network linking up more settlements and hubs, taking a cyclist through various landscapes and linking up more attractions, encouraging dispersal. It would be supported by signage, route information, cycle racks, covered cycle storage and electric bike charging points.
- **Electric Cycle Hire:** project supporting the active travel ambitions by establishing a pool of electric bikes to complement existing supply. For hire on a daily, weekend or weekly basis to enable visitors to tour the islands by bike without needing to transport their bike to the islands; as well as enabling guests to have a day out on a bike when on holiday. Whilst electric bikes are likely to be more attractive to occasional cyclists, they have higher upfront purchase costs. Initial feasibility and business planning work required to identify suitable public / private sector approaches to developing and delivering the service.

5.3.15 Active travel is however only part of the equation. Independent guests are often reliant on private car-based transport when visiting Orkney, which limits efforts to move towards net zero. Additionally travel to islands can require visitors to navigate a complicated bundle of timetables and tickets. To encourage greater use of public transport, and to support dispersal to the islands, it is recommended that further study is undertaken to develop an **“Orkney Ticket”** enabling people to book a single ticket using a range of public transport offers⁸. Additionally, this coupled with access to bikes, shuttles, car shares etc on the islands can help promote non-car-based travel to and from the islands, hence lessening pressures on ferry services.

5.3.16 **Camper van waste disposal facilities** have been consistently flagged as an issue for Orkney and these have been incorporated into the Area 1 investment opportunities at Stromness, Kirkwall, Dounby, Finstown and near to St Margaret’s Hope.

Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer

5.3.17 The accommodation and F&B offer in Orkney is a critical element of its tourism offer and infrastructure. Part of the strategy focusses on reinforcing the network and broadening the offer:

⁸ Although it is noted that this has been explored in the past, the need for simplified, integrated ticketing has been highlighted by many stakeholders as a key requirement for unlocking public transport, particularly to the islands.

- **Accommodation and Food and Beverage support programme:** to provide support, guidance and peer network opportunities for accommodation and food and beverage (F&B) providers and investors enabling them to develop further. Supporting businesses through local plan policy and process to support with new / refreshed accommodation and F&B and access to support networks and free business, marketing, sustainable tourism, energy efficiency and green energy advice including EV charging. Also includes targeted marketing and promotion to niche and mainstream hotel operators to identify potential investors for 5* accommodation on the islands. Appointment of a single point of contact officer to engage partners, develop funding proposals, coordinate networking and support change in the sector with HIE or OIC as host. Needs of the sector should be addressed in the ongoing review by OIC of the Local Development Plan.

Area 6: Align marketing and information

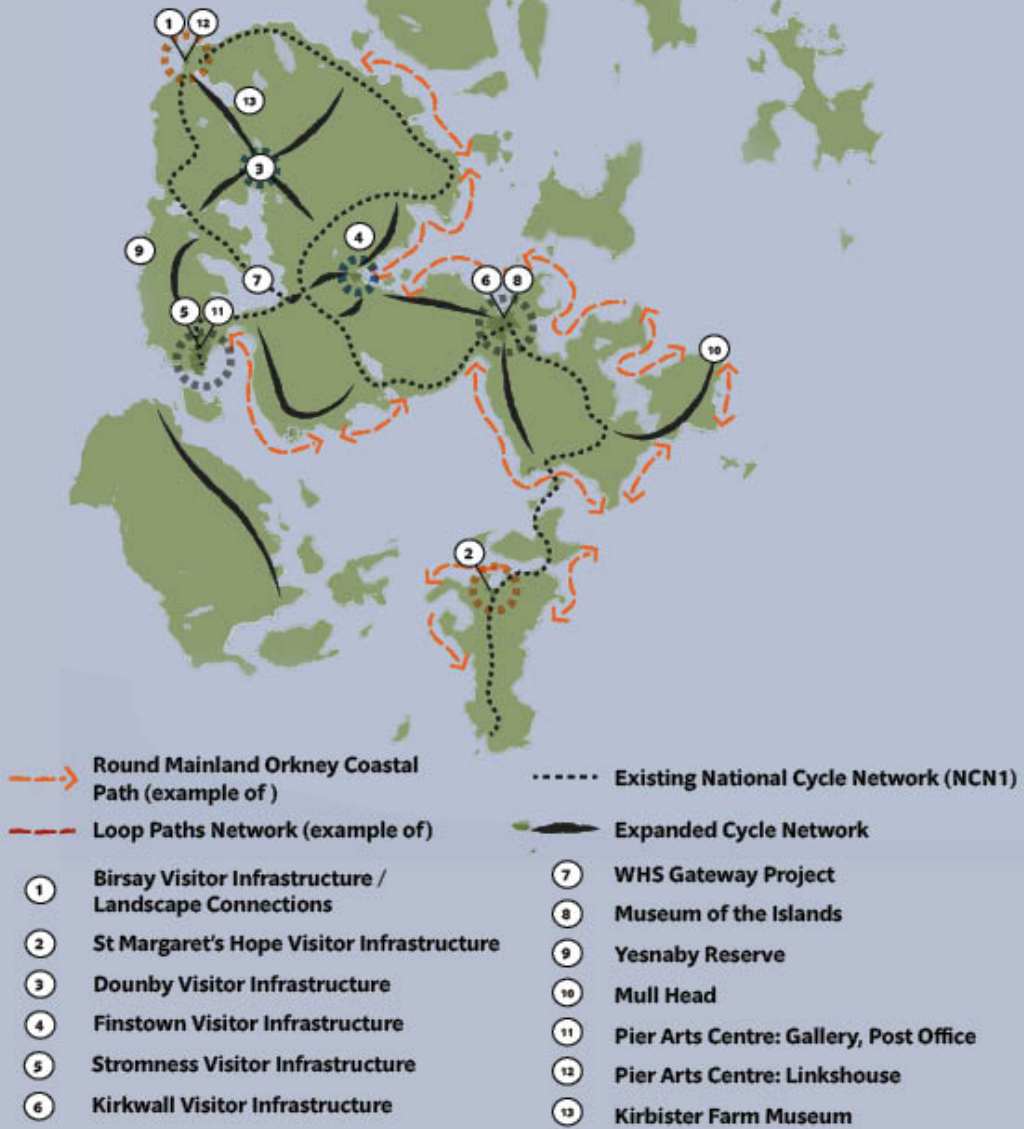
5.3.18 The content, style, and consistency of communication and information available to visitors to Orkney and its individual sites and is critical in establishing and maintaining the interest of target audiences. Information should be readily available, cohesive and interlinked. Effective content can help to disperse guests across the islands, and promote the full range of Orkney's stories. The essential project that contributes to this is as follows:

- **Interpretative Strategy:** Building on the Interpretation Framework established alongside the Plan, the Islands'-wide Interpretative Strategy would support partners with the creation of high-quality and integrated interpretive offers cross the island. It would expand and deepen the themes and stories, refine key principles and provide design guidance (parameters for design and content, rather than visually language) and inspiration. It would create a concept for islands-wide network of material whilst allowing the individuality of sites to shine through. Given the nature of the Strategy and its role in shaping and informing the development of a range of Essential and Desirable projects in the Plan it is recommended that the Interpretative Strategy is developed as a matter of priority in 2022.
- **Promotion and Development of Military Heritage:** project to promote military heritage as a main branch of marketing to support investment in key sites and routes

across the islands. It would link sites and stories, and strengthen a currently under-promoted theme, increasing the tourist draw, particularly of specialist markets. As desirable projects are developed and delivered (Appendix 2) and as military history grows, further sites may be incorporated in promotions and trails. Potential partnerships include organisations such as Museum of the Royal Navy, Imperial War Museum, National Museum of Scotland, Royal Museums Greenwich.

Essential project locations

Projects to be developed across the islands through a programme of Community-led Tourism Plans



5.4 Desirable Projects

Introduction

5.4.1 Appendix 2 contains a long list of desirable projects. These have been identified by stakeholders and the consultant / client team.

5.4.2 Each project is identified and very briefly described. The projects are grouped by the strategic theme they primarily support, however, they often support multiple themes.

5.4.3 Each project is also scored in terms of how it supports the four Aims of the strategy using a standardised scale – as follows:

+++ Very Strongly Supports i.e. very clear and definite alignment with the aim, strongly supports it and will make a significant contribution to the outcome.

++ Strongly Supports i.e. aligns well with the aim and will support its delivery and makes a contribution to the outcome

+ Supports i.e. makes a limited contribution to the outcome and is not contrary to it

0 Neutral i.e. neither supports or contradicts the aim.

5.4.4 Additionally, the timeframe for delivery of the project has been estimated using the following broad categories:

- Short Term – should be deliverable in the period 2022-24
- Medium Term – should be deliverable within the 2022-27 timeframe
- Long Term – likely to be delivered after 2027, but may still require initial works to commence in the short term

Overview of projects

5.4.5 The partners have identified 32 projects that would support the delivery of the Strategy to varying degrees, these include the following.

Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland

- **Burwick Visitor Infrastructure:** improve Burwick as a place of arrival, including limited infrastructure to site, general improvements to quality of ferry landing and welcome / orientation information.

Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands

- **Wellbeing and Heritage Hub North Ronaldsay:** development of a new hub in the newly acquired building at Trebb, as an orientation point when visiting the islands.
- **North Ronaldsay Dark Sky:** develop and promote North Ronaldsay's recently acquired Dark Sky status (no air pollution), to encourage tourism to the island, including signage, interpretation, viewpoints, small observatory stations. Potentially employ ranger on a part time basis to promote Dark Sky tourism and act as main contact for tours.
- **Scapa Flow Museum: further development:** delivery of further developments at the site, including: Phase Two - Repair and re-open the Romney Hut; Phase Three – repair and recondition the Oil Tank.
- **Island Exploration walks / rides:** akin to the mainland loop walk, individual islands could build on existing routes and create complementary offers that extend the Orkney challenge, while also offering an on-island experience that stands alone. (also relevant to Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration)

Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer

- **Ness Battery, Stromness:** conservation and maintenance works, new interpretation, a form of access hub and improved signage and access.
- **Corrigall Farm Museum:** re-purposing and re-focusing of the Corrigall site away from an open access farm museum to a new heritage craft hub to celebrate the traditional crafts of Orkney and drive economic benefits for craftspeople and tourism.
- **Royal Oak Memorial and Bay:** remodelling of the Memorial Garden, car parking and local area along with an enhancement of the memorial building and display. Aim to

create a high quality and cohesive space (outside an inside) that explores the Royal Oak story.

- **Eastern Scapa Flow: Burray and the Barriers:** refresh and upgrade of interpretative story of the eastern side of Scapa Flow running from St Mary's to Brough with a focus on the Churchill Barriers, Italian Chapel and surviving battery and ancillary structures e.g. the battery east of Graemeshall.
- **Conservation and reuse of military structures:** explore options for the various military structures to be converted into not just heritage attractions but potentially unique, specialist themed short term accommodation offers (may also be relevant to Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands).
- **Orkney Views:** identify the top 12 Orkney views (one for each month). Sites to be selected based on quality of view, interpretative themes, diversity of landscapes and key aim of dispersing guests (also relevant to Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands).
- **Clowally Viewpoint:** creation of a layby / photo stop area along the Scapa Flow Road to reduce the hazard of coaches and cars stopping on the road to see the Royal Oak marker buoy and the Houton Bay area where the German High Seas Fleet was interned.
- **Renewable Energy Centre:** new visitor centre focussed on the story of renewable energy in Orkney.
- **Hall of Clestrain:** major project to rehabilitate and re-activate the Hall of Clestrain helping tell the story of John Rae, maritime heritage of the islands and exploration.
- **Tomb of the Eagles:** rehabilitate and re-activate the Tomb of Eagles including the main tomb, burnt mound and museum by representing the site as a "live archaeology" experience
- **Birsay – Earls Palace:** improvement in interpretation and access to Earls Palace as part of wider changes in Birsay.
- **HMS Tern:** preservation, re-activation and interpretation of the air station as a memorial to those in service namely exhibition space in the listed Control Tower's rooms and chambers.

- **Broch of Gurness:** limited upgrades and formalisation of car park to improve capacity (without expansion). Some localised widening / additional passing places to support access. Increased promotion.
- **Click Mill access and activation:** improvements to access through formalisation of parking layby, provision of adequate signage to the Mill and creation of path. Potential partnership with Kirbister farm Museum.
- **Rib rides / maritime explorations:** work with local communities at key harbours to develop seasonal maritime attractions e.g. boat tours, yachting tours, around the island, electric boat fishing excursions, rib rides etc (also relevant to Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands).
- **Cuween Cairn access:** limited improvements to parking and access routes to Cuween Cairn, including formalisation of lower parking space and reinforcement and improvement of path to site and connectivity to wider landscape.
- **–Mine Howe:** feasibility study to engage with landowner and interested parties to understand and explore the potential for public access supported by necessary facilities.
- **Happy Valley:** limited improvements to site and access including, formalisation of parking, signage to site, onsite vegetation management and works, wireless donation point, links with loop walks, exploration of restoration of house.
- **Ring of Bookan:** opening up access to the Ring and connecting it to the WHS to the south via an active travel network (extension of the WHS Gateway Project).
- **Orkney Creative Arts Festival:** annual or biennial festival on the Islands with strong digital element celebrating and showcasing arts and crafts of local artisans and artists (also relevant to Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands).

Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration

- **Themed walks:** creation of a series of themed walks using the expanded network of paths and loop trails (also relevant to Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands).

- **Electric hire cars:** support for adoption of electric hire cars, particularly on the islands to encourage visitation without requiring greater vehicle capacity on the ferry services (also relevant to Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands).

Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer

- **“UberBothy” / “Orkney Heims”:** project would identify a selected sample of historic farmsteads, bothy's, crofts etc for conversion to a network of simple but highly distinctive bothy / pod accommodation (also relevant to Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands).
- **Birsay Campsite Upgrade:** upgrade of facilities including toilet upgrade, electricity provision / hook ups and hardstanding to allow for expansion of current capacity.
- **Point of Ness Campsite Upgrade:** explore the redevelopment of the boatyard adjacent to the current campervan site, to allow for expansion of current capacity.

Area 6: Align marketing and information

- **Digital information / App hub:** scoping study to explore whether multiple platforms / services can be streamlined and conglomerated into a single App, or whether a clear hub required to signpost and support guests with choosing Apps / Data Sources.
- **Historic Towns of Orkney:** commissioning of visual artists to celebrate the architectural and townscape heritage of Orkney and then present this in a published book, online resource and series of exhibitions to raise awareness and attract media and market interest.
- **The Orkney Project (storytelling):** ongoing project to establish a new Digital Storytelling Platform which will showcase the history, culture and heritage of Orkney.



6.0 TIMETABLE AND DELIVERY

6.0 TIMETABLE AND DELIVERY

6.1 Timetable

6.1.1 Appendix 3 sets out an integrated outline timetable for the delivery of the Essential Projects. This timetable is predicated on a relatively swift commencement in early / mid 2022, but there are options for projects to start later in the process and for delivery to be staged, as needed, to meet funding and other requirements. It will be the responsibility of the Programme Manager (see Section 6.2) to refine, maintain and update the overall delivery programme.

6.2 Delivery

6.2.1 Individual delivery requirements for the identified projects are set out in Appendix 1. These include requirements for:

- External design, business planning and environmental consultancy support on a project-by-project basis; and
- Dedicated officer posts for the development and delivery of the round island walk, loop walks and cycle network.

6.2.2 In addition, a broader **Programme Manager** is required to support the further development and delivery of the Essential Projects and to support partners with developing and driving forward the Desirable Projects. This role would be situated within OIC to ensure coordination between key parties. The role would be required for at least 3 years (from early / mid-2022) and will require dedicated external funding. It is suggested that c. £175,000 of revenue funding is identified to support this post. Funding for part of this post will be sought through the RTIF .

6.2.3 A key factor for delivery will be funding. Although some potential funding sources have been identified, including seed funding from OIC and potential funding through the RTIF, there will still be a significant gap. This will need to be addressed through a structured programme of fundraising. Key potential partners in this include:

- Scottish Government and UK Government through a range of funding programmes
- Sustrans, in relation to active travel
- National Lottery (various funds) in relation to community, heritage and natural environment projects at a variety of scales
- Various other independent trusts and funders, often linked to particular forms of activity and project
- Crowdfunding, philanthropic and private sector support

6.2.4 Approaches to fundraising will need to be coordinated and creative to ensure that appropriate options are identified and followed through by the Programme Manager and individual projects. To support this, a Fundraising Strategy will be prepared by OIC, with external support, to identify key target funders and approaches. The strategy will then be used to develop partnerships with potential funders and to attract them to provide support for a diverse range of projects.

6.3 Overview of Costs

6.3.1 The following presents a summary over of the costs associated with the proposed essential projects

	Cost estimate	Notes
Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland		
Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections	£677,063 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
St Margaret's Hope Visitor Infrastructure	£189,750 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Dounby Visitor Infrastructure	£405,375 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Finstown Visitor Infrastructure	£107,813 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Stromness Visitor Infrastructure	£116,438 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure	£103,500 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation

	Cost estimate	Notes
Coach management and access	£86,250 exc VAT	Based on expansion of system design for WHS Gateway Project Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands		
Pilot projects for Community-led Tourism Plans	£56,700 exc VAT	Consultancy stage only Includes fees and contingency
Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer		
WHS Gateway Project	£7.5m +	Project being delivered through other channels
Museum of the Islands	No budget	Project being delivered through other channels
Yesnaby Reserve	£1,897,500 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation, excludes land purchase
Mull Head	£306,188 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Beach Access and Enhancement	£345,000 exc VAT	Budget line estimate only for 4 pilot projects
Pier Arts Centre: Gallery, Post Office and Linkhouse	No budget	Project being delivered through other channels
Kirbister Farm Museum	£586,500 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Viking Orkney	£405,385 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration		
Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path	£300,000 staff costs £250,000 exc VAT works	Includes for 2 officers for 3 years, plus initial cap ex allowance Officers also lead Loop Path and Cycle network projects
Loop Paths Network:	£staff inc. above £100,000 exc VAT works	initial cap ex allowance
Expand Cycle Network	£staff inc. above £75,000 exc VAT works	initial cap ex allowance
Electric Cycle Hire	£50,000 exc VAT	Cycle purchase
"Orkney Ticket" Feasibility Study	£75,000 exc VAT	Feasibility study only

	Cost estimate	Notes
Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer		
Accommodation and Food and Beverage support programme	£150,000 staff costs	Includes for 1 officer for 3 years
Area 6: Align marketing and information		
Interpretative Strategy	£45,000 exc VAT	Consultancy study only
Promotion and Development of Military Heritage	£285,000 exc VAT	Budget line estimate only

A close-up, high-resolution photograph of a rabbit's face, focusing on its eyes and whiskers. The rabbit has light brown fur with darker patches around its eyes. The text "7.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION" is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The background is dark and out of focus.

7.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

7.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring project delivery

- 7.1.1 Each project will identify and define project timetable and key stages at inception. For larger projects with a significant design element this will be developed by the external design team and the project manager. For smaller projects, and those being developed in-house by OIC, the relevant lead officer and the Programme Manager will develop and agree the timetable and stages.
- 7.1.2 The Programme Manager will be responsible for monitoring delivery of all projects against the agreed timeframes and stages. They will report progress to the internal Programme Board, including the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) and to the relevant funding partners. Reporting will be undertaken on a quarterly basis.

Evaluating project outcomes

- 7.1.3 Individual projects will be evaluated, as well as the wider programme. The evaluation will focus on two key aspects: Delivery and Outcomes.

	Delivery	Outcomes
Project level	Measures and records whether intended activities and physical developments were delivered against original project targets e.g. number of engagement sessions, key elements of development etc	Establishes quantitative and qualitative outcomes from the project e.g. increase in visitor / user numbers, increase in visitor satisfaction, areas of land protected etc Measures will reflect nature and scope of individual projects and will be established at inception. They will be proportionate to the scale of the project
Programme level	Measures and records whether intended projects were delivered and whether they met their delivery outcomes	Identified strategic quantitative and qualitative outcomes from the programme as whole e.g. changes in visitor profiles to Orkney, visitor and community satisfaction, changes to travel behaviours etc.

- 7.1.4 The Programme level outcomes will be developed by the Programme Manager in consultation with the wider stakeholder community and the OIC Programme Board.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1 ESSENTIAL PROJECTS

APPENDIX 1: ESSENTIAL PROJECTS

This appendix provides more detailed descriptions of the Essential projects. A series of 24 projects have been identified to provide a foundation for the Strategy. They are structured on a thematic basis by their Investment Area as follows:

Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland

Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections

St Margaret's Hope Visitor Infrastructure

Dounby Visitor Infrastructure

Finstown Visitor Infrastructure

Stromness Visitor Infrastructure

Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure

Coach management and access

Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands

Community-led Tourism Plans

Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer

WHS Gateway Project

Museum of the Islands

Yesnaby Reserve

Mull Head

Beach Access and Enhancement

Kirbister Farm Museum

Promotion and Development of Military Heritage

Viking Orkney

Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration

Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path

Loop Paths Network

Expand Cycle Network

Electric Cycle Hire

Orkney Ticket

Camper van waste disposal

Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer

Accommodation and Food and Beverage support programme

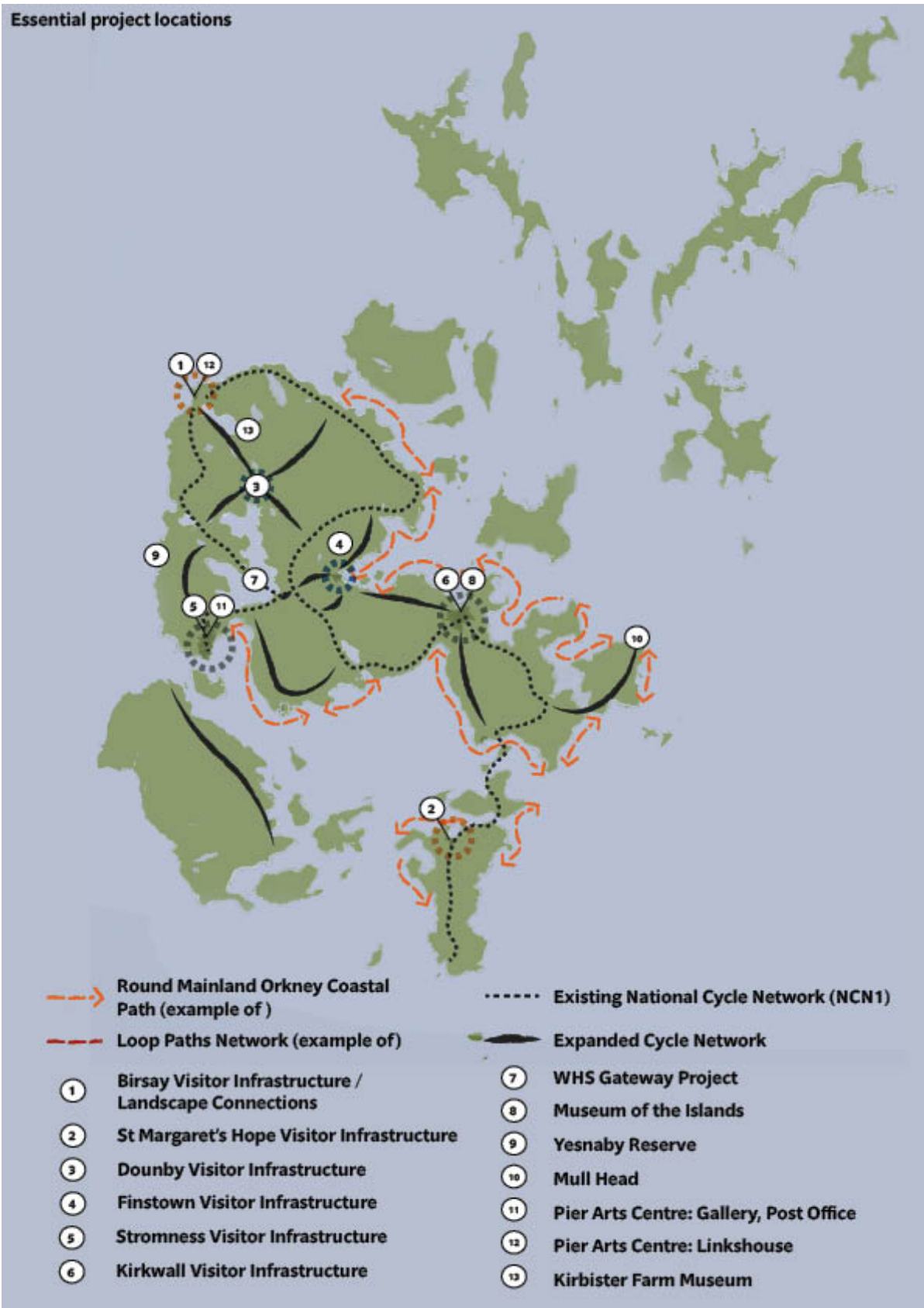
Area 6: Align marketing and information

Interpretative Strategy

Promotion and Integration of Military Heritage Offer

Appendix 3 includes an outline timetable for all the essential projects and estimated costs.

Essential project locations



AREA 1: REINFORCE VISITOR INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE MAINLAND

Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections

Overview and Description

Birsay is already established as a significant place to visit in Orkney. The Brough of Birsay, Earl's Palace, St Magnus Chapel, Skiba Geo fisherman's hut as well as tearoom and convenience store make it an attractive destination, including for those in motorhomes who use the Brough of Birsay car park. Its dramatic scenery and seascape also make it an ideal hub for local exploration.

In order to support current, and potentially, higher levels of visitation and reduce the potential for disruption of local communities, additional infrastructure is needed in and around the settlement. The vision isn't to fundamentally change Birsay, but to implement enhancements to make both visitor and resident communities experiences better. This includes:

- Additional parking c. 20 spaces, plus coach space to ensure that visitors use parking facilities rather than roadsides. These may be located in a number of discrete locations, depending on land availability and community wishes
- Upgraded public conveniences to adequately service visitors
- Electric vehicle charging for bicycles and cars, as well as cycle parking and shelter, to support the use of environmentally friendly transport
- Improved bus stop, with potentially improved seasonal service (feasibility to be assessed), to encourage public transport use for residents and visitors and to encourage workers to travel from other areas in Orkney for work, supporting the economy of Birsay
- Orientation / interpretation to encourage exploration within and around Birsay, and promoting it as base for wider travel including one interactive display with information on local attractions, public transport, walking and cycling routes and interpretation
- New active travel routes and walks in the landscape around Birsay including improvements to links along the coast, new loop walks connecting inland from coastal routes avoiding main roads, improved orientation and signage, improved coastal route from Fisherman's Huts, Hampshire Memorial and the Whalebone, and improved connection to Point of Buckquoy and Brough Head (tide allowing) (all linked to the coastal path and loop path projects below)
- Possible improved campervan parking at Marwick Head

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £670,000 exc VAT have been estimated for the works (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates and exclude any land purchase costs.

Depending on land ownership for any locations selected for car parking, the scheme may be eligible for submission to the RTIF.

Timetable and delivery process

The project will be developed through a community and place-led design and development process. Engagement with the local community is essential in development and delivery to ensure support and to harness local knowledge and experience. The exact nature and form of the project will be guided and led by the local community and consequently may evolve significantly from that described above.

Negotiation with landowners will be required for the path network and may be required for the additional car parking. Planning consents would also be required, and sensitive designs developed that align with community aspirations and infrastructure needs.

In terms of timetable a c. 2 year programme is predicted including design and delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable).

St Margaret's Hope Visitor Infrastructure

Overview and Description

As with Birsay, St Margaret's Hope is an already established place to visit. The seaside village already has pubs restaurants and shops, and ferry terminal connecting the Gill's Bay on the Scottish mainland it could act as a first port of call on trips to Orkney. It may also act as a base for exploring the nearby Hoxa Head military area and island of Burray, also with many military assets.

As there is already a substantial amount of infrastructure, only limited enhancement is required.

This includes:

- Electric vehicle charging for bicycles, as well as cycle parking and shelter, to support the use of environmentally friendly transport
- Orientation / interpretation to encourage exploration within and around St Margaret's Hope, and promoting it as base for wider travel including one interactive display with information on local attractions, public transport, walking and cycling routes and interpretation
- Possible future expansion of car parking may be required to support substantial growth in numbers of private cars; however, this is subject to a future study.
- Campervan waste disposal at St Margaret's Hope Ferry Terminal, or other suitable location away from the historic centre of St Margaret's Hope.

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £189,750 exc VAT have been estimated for the works (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates and exclude any land purchase costs.

The scheme may be eligible for submission to the RTIF, but requires further design development.

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 18 month year programme is predicted for design and delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given small scale of proposed works.

Dounby Visitor Infrastructure

Overview and Description

Dounby is ideally located in the centre of the west mainland, between the western corner at Birsay and Kirkwall towards the east. Already having certain services, the small village has shops, a pub with accommodation, a church and community centre. Whilst it may not act as a destination, like St Margaret's Hope and Birsay, it can act as an enhanced service hub, allowing passers-by to stock up on essentials, or use it as a base for exploring nearby attractions, with increased visitation and spending supporting local businesses. Promoted as a small village with all the services, travellers can confidently travel explore from Dounby. Skara Brae, Click Mill, Birsay and the Ring of Brodgar are within a 35 minute cycle, and Broch of Gurness is within a 45 minute cycle.

Key improvements, whilst retaining the character of a rural village, include:

- Formalised and signed car parking area with electric vehicle charging points for cycles and cars, encouraging low carbon transport and active travel
- Improved and enlarged public conveniences for increased number of visitation
- Waste disposal facilities for motorhomes reducing the impact of inappropriate disposal outdoors
- Orientation and interpretation to connect local attractions and local area to the village supporting dispersal and safe sustainable eco-friendly travel including one interactive display with information on local attractions, public transport, walking and cycling routes

These options will be preceded by a community and place-led design and development process based on the existing "Dounby Plan"

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £400,000 exc VAT have been estimated for the works (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates and exclude any land purchase costs.

The scheme may be eligible for submission to the RTIF, but requires further design development.

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 15 month programme is predicted for design and delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given current land-uses and context.

Finstown Service Hub

Overview and Description

Finstown will fulfil a similar role. Located halfway between Kirkwall and Dounby, Finstown can also help to service the west mainland. It already hosts a formalised and signed car parking area with electric vehicle charging points for cars and public conveniences. The St Magnus Way passes through the settlement. Key improvements at the existing parking site include:

- E-bike charging
- Updating of public conveniences
- Waste disposal facilities for motorhomes reducing the impact of inappropriate disposal outdoors
- Orientation and interpretation to connect local attractions and local area to the village supporting dispersal and safe sustainable eco-friendly travel including one interactive display with information on local attractions, public transport, walking and cycling routes and interpretation

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £105,000 exc VAT have been estimated for the works (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates and exclude any land purchase costs.

The scheme may be eligible for submission to the RTIF, but requires further design development

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 9 month programme is predicted for delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given current land-uses and context.

Stromness Visitor Infrastructure

Overview and Description

Stromness is currently well served as a location but there is need for some improvements including:

- E-bike charging
- Waste disposal facilities for motorhomes reducing the impact of inappropriate disposal outdoors (located adjacent to existing toilet facilities near the harbour area)
- One interactive display with information on local attractions, public transport, walking and cycling routes and interpretation

Additionally, there is need to improve information, orientation and interpretation across the town to better connect people to local attractions and the wider. Working with the local community it is proposed to install a digital interactive touch screen to provide information and to partial address the closure of the Tourist information Centre in 2017. It is expected that by giving people access to reliable, up to date information, they will be able to plan their time in Stromness and the local area more efficiently. Finding local attractions, like the Museum and Arts Centre, shops, restaurants and other services will become easier by providing accessible user-friendly digital information.

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £115,000 exc VAT have been estimated for the works (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates.

The scheme may be eligible for submission to the RTIF

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 12 month programme is predicted for delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given current land-uses and context.

Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure

Overview and Description

Kirkwall required minimal investment in new visitor infrastructure at this stage but there is a need for:

- E-bike charging and shelters, 2 separate locations (tbc)
- Waste disposal facilities for motorhomes and also to serve coaches, hence proposed location adjacent to the toilets at the Hatston Terminal
- Two interactive displays with information on local attractions, public transport, walking and cycling routes and interpretation

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £105,000 exc VAT have been estimated for the works (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates.

The scheme may eligible for submission to the RTIF

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 12 month programme is predicted for delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given current land-uses and context.

Hub locations



Coach management and access

Overview and Description

To manage the surge of coach visitors to the WHS, the Orkney WHS Gateway Project includes an allowance of the development of a timed permit-based system to limit the use of overuse of the coach bays and the subsequent crowding at the sites. This system would see individual coach tours purchase, or be provided, with a timed permit for the use of parking bays. The registration number would be picked up by number plate recognition cameras at the entrance to the car park would then record coaches arriving. Coaches without permits could then be subject to a fine.

This system has the potential to be rolled out further across other locations and it is proposed to identify suitable sites, test the efficacy of the WHS system (following its roll out in 2024) before procuring and installing the system.

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £120,000 exc VAT have been estimated in the Business Case for the WHS Gateway Project for the establishment of the system (including back of house functions). A further c. £85,000 exc VAT has been included in the Plan to enable expansion of the physical system on the back of the establishment of the back of house functions. This is an initial budget line estimate.

The scheme may be eligible for submission to the RTIF, but timescales may preclude that

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable the system is unlikely to be in place until at least late 2024 / early 2025 (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated.

AREA 2: DRIVE REGENERATIVE TOURISM ACROSS THE ISLANDS

Community-led Visioning Workshops and Masterplans

Overview and Description

The variety of the islands and the idea that there are many “Orkneys”, is potentially a strong differentiator for Orkney in a crowded tourism market. The islands are likely to be very attractive destinations to the key identified markets. These places are a unique asset for tourism on Orkney, offering a host of experiences and provide differentiator in the market. They are also home to many different communities with different aspirations and requirements. Creating a balanced, community-led approach to tourism on the many islands is a key plank for the Strategy.

There is scope to bring more of the islands into the overall tourism offer of Orkney raising their profile to visitors, whilst conserving and protecting the islands and their identity. Opportunities include, amongst others:

- Creation of further attractions to expand the breadth of attractions and draw to the islands
- Improving and supporting existing attractions
- Development of tourism infrastructure on the islands such as accommodation and F+B provision to enable overnight stays and deeper connections with the islands
- Expanding access to the landscape and shoreline through provision of new paths and active travel routes
- Improved marketing and communications to attract appropriate visitors
- Identifying resources and funding and improvements in transport / ferries

While some islands have begun to prepare ideas and concepts for the development of tourism others are still early in that process. This project focusses on developing a series of pilot projects for Community-led Tourism Plans for each island. These would not be developed by external consultants in consultation with community, but rather by the community with support from external partners / consultants. Through a process of workshops, discussion and constructive debate each island would be enabled to develop a clear view of what they want to achieve through tourism and how they can go about it, including a definition of their tourism offer / marketing position and a clear action plan with proposals for fund raising and delivery.

At this stage, it is proposed to develop 5 Pilot Projects for islands of differing scales, needs and proximity to the mainland. The islands will be selected in consultation with Community Councils and Development Trusts. Following the pilots, the methodology would be refined and, if successful, the programme would be rolled out to other islands.

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £57,000 exc VAT (inc. contingency) have been estimated for the pilots (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates.

The scheme may be eligible for submission to the RTIF

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 12 month programme is predicted for delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led and procured by OIC.

AREA 3: STRENGTHEN THE ATTRACTIONS OFFER

WHS Gateway Project

Overview and Description

This project is subject to separate development by HES, OIC and HIE and not described here in detail.

£7.5m+ project to enhance the WHS, improve conservation, provide active travel, improve interpretation and ultimately deliver a world-class experience benefiting the WHS. The overhaul of the visitor experience included extensive new interpretation, active travel connectivity, visitor orientation and visitor management elements. Also includes a new coach management system for key locations in the WHS.

Project is considered to be critical to Orkney's future tourism offer given fact that so many visitors include a trip to the WHS as part of their stay and the WHS is a major draw in term's of people visiting Orkney.

Costs, Funding and Delivery

Project is currently proceeding through Islands Deal funding process and should be implemented on a phased basis between 2022 and 2028

Museum of the Islands

Overview and Description

Although there are many natural and cultural assets in Orkney, including its many museum and visitor centres, it lacks a European standard establishment that celebrates all the stories of Orkney and safeguards and displays its rich artefactual collections.

OIC has recognised this gap and has been exploring ways of addressing it. The current proposals would see the development of a world class museum celebrating the prehistory, history, heritage of all aspects of Orkney, telling stories of the Islands' people, from the earliest farmers and hunter gatherers to the wind farm and tidal power engineers of today and as a whole.

It will most likely be sited in Kirkwall and have space to exhibit and interpret a range of objects, collections and stories on a temporary and permanent basis. It would also provide a high-quality special exhibition space to attract and deliver new paid exhibitions, alongside a core of free-to-view public collections. It strongly supports the aims of focusing the visitor market and conservation of not only collections but stories too, ensuring the diverse history of Orkney is honoured. It would provide a focal point for visitors and signpost other attractions across the islands. It would also benefit local communities being an educational and cultural hub. The museum would act as a shop window for cultural and heritage partners across Orkney encouraging exploration and discovery of the full breadth of Orkney's rich and vibrant cultural heritage.

As a museum, the building would offer visitors access to the rich collections held by the museum service and its partners, including space for a unique paid immersive offer. In essence, it provides the collections held by OIC with a facility and building worthy of their world-class status and provides the people of Orkney with a place to celebrate that heritage. It would also provide a much-needed indoor attraction and would enable Tankerness House, the current museum, to be redeveloped and redisplayed; once again expanding the attractions offer.

Costs and Funding Options

The project is still in the early stages of development and costs are not available. Funding is currently being sort by OIC to advance the proposal

Timetable and delivery process

Extensive feasibility, design and business planning work is required to develop the proposals and to identify potential sites for the museum. Although the project is sited as a long term project, with completion likely to be after 2027, the initial works will need to begin in the short term, from 2022 onwards. Political and stakeholder support will be needed for any such investment prior to its further development and ultimate delivery.

Yesnaby Reserve

Overview and Description

Yesnaby is a dramatic and spectacular stretch of coastline along the west of mainland Orkney. It offers wide sea views, dramatic cliffs and sea stacks often hit by thrilling wild weather, crashing waves and strong winds, but on calmer days is a nature-lovers paradise with its wildflowers and seabirds. The sea stack Castle of Yesnaby, the Broch of Borwick and Yesnaby gun battery can be accessed by Yesnaby coastal path.

The area is currently accessed via long road and car park on top of the cliff, through degraded landscape areas. Improvements at Yesnaby would promote nature-based tourism, expanding the cliffs experience to encompass a wider agenda relating to landscape change and ecology on Orkney. These include:

- Localised rewilding of surrounding degraded landscape areas to create a natural landscape that reflects and expands the Stromness Heaths and Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and SSSI.
- New small visitor services hub building beside the car park to provide information, interpretation, toilets and a small refreshment offer. This is likely to utilise the existing blockhouse c. 350m east of the current ad-hoc parking area. Any toilets and associated waste-water drainage would be located outside of the SSSI/SAC.
- New parking area away the cliff, and closure of road to cliff for safety, except for disabled and emergency service access.
- Covered bicycle parking and electric bike charging
- New signage and interpretation including signposting routes and nearby attractions
- Conservation works to assets such as historic military building to use as shelter and for interpretation and wildlife spotting or even contemporary art displays e.g. in partnership with Pier Arts Centre

This approach would declutter the cliff edge, improve habitats, and offer a longer dwell time and richer experience.

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £1.9m exc VAT (inc. fees, contingency and inflation) have been estimated for the project (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates based on previous costing from other projects. Costs exclude land acquisition.

The scheme is unlikely to be eligible for submission to the RTIF under the current programme. Other funding partners including the Lottery Fund, future iterations of the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund, and smaller trusts and funds may be able to support the works.

Elements of the project e.g. the coastal path restoration works may be fundable through wider projects relating to active travel

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 24 month programme may be achievable for delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable), however this will be dependant on funding, consents and environmental constraints. Key issues to be addressed include:

- siting and design of paths and car park to ensure key habitats are conserved
- Electric and sewage connections
- Timing of environmental surveys particularly for protected species
- Timing of planning concepts and any environmental reports

None of these issues are insurmountable or unusual and delivery should be a relatively standard process, led and procured by OIC with external support. All rewilding and construction projects would be developed in consultation with NatureScot and would undergo a Habitats Regulations Appraisal.

Viking Orkney

Overview and Description

The Orkneyinga Saga, written in the 12th century, is a huge part of Orkney's history, as are its early Earls and its relationship with Norway. The story of Viking Orkney, whilst being a prominent one, isn't given enough of a spotlight across both physical sites and in marketing and promotion. Tangible remnants of this period include the Earls Bu and Church, adjacent to the current Orkneyinga Saga Centre building at Orphir whilst the Viking Story can be told across the islands. Whilst the Orkneyinga Saga is currently closed, the location and nearby assets merits reopening on the same site. Located on the south coast of the mainland, it offers views of Flotta and Hoy across Scapa Flow.

The project includes improved promotion of Viking Orkney at various sites across the islands, particularly at the Orkneyinga Saga Centre and through the associated trail. The revitalisation and refit of the existing Orkneyinga Saga Centre and re-presentation of the Earls Bu and Church would be central, with new streamlined and integrated interpretation. Interpretation would signpost to other sites, including other churches and ruins and well as key sites linked to Viking Orkney and the Orkneyinga Saga.

The reopening of the centre and associated trail strongly supports the aim of dispersal and market focus by bringing more people to Orphir by offering a dedicated to the story of Viking Orkney.

There are also opportunities through the trail and associated interpretation to promote themes around the landscape, views, wildlife and military activity on Scapa Flow. Promotion of the wider landscape along these themes could include a coastal walk to the scenic Waulkmill Bay.

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £405,000k exc VAT (inc. fees, contingency and inflation) have been estimated for the project (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates.

Timetable and delivery process

Design and feasibility work is required in the short term to develop concepts and ideas for what the centre and trail should be. Limited construction / landscaping is required due to the nature of the site, already with sufficient parking and easily accessible from the road. The project is considered medium term, with initial works in the short term to develop concepts and ideas.

Pier Arts Centre: Gallery, Post Office and Linkshouse

Overview and Description

The Pier Arts Centre in Stromness is a unique attraction, with galleries of British fine artworks including those of Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson, Olafur Eliasson and Orkney's own Sylvia Wishart. It is also partner of Tate and is involved in exchange programmes with the Plus Tate network of visual arts organisations across the UK.

To expand this offer to wider Orkney, an ongoing project is being undertaken to revitalise the old Stromness Post Office as a participation and learning centre, and also establish a new offer in the Linkshouse in Birsay as a place of artistic experience and exchange (the Linkshouse has recently opened).

The currently Pier Arts Centre, and the new expansion, strongly supports the aims of market focus by attracting art lovers to Orkney, to experience the impact the landscape and its history has had on the art world. It gives people the chance to experience the elemental weather outdoors, alongside dramatic depictions through art. It also supports dispersal, encouraging visits to Birsay, and importantly, will support communities with its new participation and learning centre at Stromness Post Office.

Costs, Funding and Delivery

The project commenced in 2020 and is ongoing. It is an Islands Growth Deal project for delivery within the next decade. No costs are included here. Project is considered ongoing, but may require further financial, political and reputational support.

Kirbister Farm Museum

Overview and Description

Kirbister Farm Museum is an enchanting asset located in the heart of the west mainland, showcasing the more recent history of traditional island farm life during the 19th and 20th centuries (although the buildings date from the 17th century onwards). The set of stone buildings in their rural setting has been a museum since 1986 and is run by OIC.

The site being so unique and important in reflecting Orkney's agricultural history, it isn't given enough of a spotlight within the wider Orkney offer. The repositioning and promotion of the site as the main farm museum on Orkney, with strong advertisement, campaigns and better signage will increase visitor numbers and give the site, and island agricultural heritage, the focus it deserves.

Alongside enhanced promotion and marketing, the project includes expansion of the onsite offer to include conservation / restoration of the currently unused historic outbuildings and surrounding areas of land, with potential extension to the car park, if required. This will enable a broader story to be told and for growth in visitor numbers at the site.

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £600,000 exc VAT (inc. fees, contingency and inflation) have been estimated for the project (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates.

The scheme is unlikely to be eligible for submission to the RTIF under the current programme. Other funding partners including the Lottery Fund, and a swathe of smaller trusts and funds may be able to support the works.

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 21 month programme may be achievable for delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable), however this will be dependent on funding and consents. It also needs to be integrated into the seasonality of the attraction, with building works occurring in Q4 and Q1.

Planning and listed building consent will be required for all works but with a sensitively designed scheme, the developments should be achievable. No issues are considered particularly challenging or unusual and delivery should be a relatively standard process, led and procured by OIC with external support.

Mull Head

Overview and Description

Located on the eastern coast of the east mainland, The Gloup and Mull Head Nature Reserve are one of the most interesting natural locations in Orkney. The collapsed sea cave of The Gloup is a dramatic and intriguing asset of the natural landscape, and the Mull Head Nature Reserve is a beautiful part of Orkney's coastline with its heaths and sea cliffs. There is an extensive path network enabling the area to become a base for exploration of wider landscapes such as the Brough of Deerness.

The interpretation centre is currently closed and in need to structural repairs. The project consists of a general refresh of the area including:

- Post-covid refresh of the interpretation centre including structural repairs, as required
- Improvements to the path and expansion of the loop path network
- New e-bike charging and bike shelter (adjacent to centre)
- Refresh and improvement of the viewing platforms of The Gloup
- Improved interpretation and orientation with links and routes to local areas such as Dingieshowe and Newark Bay

The location of Mull Head being on the far east on the east mainland lends itself to supporting the aim of dispersal, providing a draw to this side of the mainland. It would also provide a draw for markets interested in wildlife and landscapes and exploration on foot.

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £300,000 exc VAT (inc. fees, contingency and inflation) have been estimated for the project (see Appendix 3 for a breakdown). These are initial budget line estimates. The scheme is unlikely to be eligible for submission to the RTIF under the current programme. Other funding partners including the Lottery Fund, and smaller trusts and funds may be able to support the works.

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 18 month programme may be achievable for delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable), however this will be dependant on funding and consents. The scale of the works are relatively limited and environmental issues are not considered particularly challenging or

unusual; and delivery should be a relatively standard process, led and procured by OIC with external support. Planning consent may be required for all works but this remains to be confirmed.

Beach Access and Enhancement

Overview and Description

Orkney has an attractive coastline and many beaches that are a draw for visitors and asset for local communities. Facilities at these beaches vary in appropriateness and quality and some beaches are currently difficult to access for all users. There is, in many cases, limited infrastructure to support visitation and community needs.

There are opportunities to improve facilities, access and the experience of beaches across the mainland and islands. These opportunities will need to be realised sensitively, taking into account community aspirations, environmental requirements and the need to safeguard Orkney's landscape and seascape. Interventions could include improved paths, steps, vehicle parking, toilets, washing facilities etc.

Each beach will need to be reviewed and project proposals developed and delivered in a bespoke manner. A suite of four pilot beaches have been identified for the first phase of development, as follows:

- Inganess Beach
- Skaili Beach
- Sands O' Wright
- Sands of Evie

More detail on interventions, plus additional locations would be developed based on the need of communities and existing infrastructure.

Alongside this process there will be further exploration and development of environmental clean-up and maintenance projects Based on the 'Bag the Bruck' scheme run by OIC in the past, with a more structured and robust oversight, it would include enhanced marketing and community involvement, and adequate resources for waste disposal

Costs and Funding Options

At this stage the 4 pilot beaches have not been fully audited and designs have not been developed. Costs have therefore not been developed in detail. Initial capital budgets of £50,000 per beach are suggested. With Fees, Contingency and Inflation, this would equate to c. £86,000 per beach for the pilot beaches – the outcome of these works would then inform future projects.

The scheme may be eligible for submission to the RTIF under the current programme. Other funding partners may also be able to support the works

Timetable and delivery process

In terms of timetable a c. 21 month programme may be achievable for delivery (see Appendix 3 for the overall timetable), however this will be dependant on funding and consents. The scale of the works are relatively limited and environmental issues are not considered particularly challenging or unusual; and delivery should be a relatively standard process, led and procured by OIC with external support. Planning and other consents may be required for the works but this remains to be confirmed.

AREA 4: EXPAND GREEN & ACTIVE TRAVEL / EXPLORATION

Camper van waste disposal facilities

Overview and Description

Camper van touring on the mainland and the Islands is a growing phenomenon and one that is likely to continue to grow off the back of the North Coast 500, and could be further accelerated if changes to ferry pricing structures (Road Equivalent Tariff) are implemented. This form of tourism offers an opportunity to disperse guests across the mainland and islands but does require supporting infrastructure, in particular overnight facilities and waste disposal facilities.

In terms of camper van waste disposal facilities, the Asset Audit (2021) has identified 3 existing facilities, including at existing camping locations or other establishments (e.g. at the Kirkwall Bay Touring Park and 59 Degrees North motorhome aire on Sanday). However, consultation with stakeholders during development of the strategy identified concerns with current levels of provision and issues with current camper van users depositing their waste in unsuitable toilet facilities causing blockages etc. As well as being an expensive business for communities, it is also an unpleasant situation for guests.

In this context it is therefore recommended that additional public facilities are developed in the short term. In terms of the mainland, it is suggested that these are located in the key locations (see Area 1 Investments) as follows:

- Finstown – facility provided in main parking area in town adjacent to the existing public toilet facilities and making use of the existing sewage connection.
- Dounby – facility provided as part of the proposed refurbishment of the toilet facilities and making use of the existing sewage connection.
- Stromness – facility provided alongside existing public toilet facilities and making use of the existing sewage connection.
- St Margaret's Hope – near to ferry terminal or other location away from historic centre
- Kirkwall / Hatston Pier – facility provided near to the cruise terminal which could also serve coaches enabling them to empty onboard toilets.

Costs, Funding, Timetable and Delivery

These facilities are incorporated into the projects under Investment Area 1.

Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path

Overview and Description

Orkney has 570 miles of coastline, only some of which is accessible to walkers and cyclists. The Asset Audit revealed that there are 18 advertised walking routes, including the 58-mile St Magnus Way, plus a number of key paths shown on OIC GIS data (see Asset Audit Figure 24: Advertised Walks). Whilst this data shows disjointed path routes, there are some large areas of coastline that already established paths, for example, Birsay to Stromness on the west coast of the mainland, much of South Ronaldsay, long stretches of the St Magnus Way, plus various routes on the wider islands.

Whilst there may be more areas of land accessible through local knowledge, the majority of routes aren't well promoted. Other than GIS data and site visits, most of the available information online was sourced from Walkinghighlands.co.uk and Orkney.com, a low number of which are coastal routes.

There is considerable potential to attract key target markets and to expand access to the countryside by lining up the gaps and creating a full coastal walk for Orkney. This would initially focus on the mainland and linked isles, with other islands potentially following incrementally, if appropriate to their island and the desires of their communities. The initial route would therefore be less than 570 miles

The development of a full coastal path network would join up the various existing paths including non-coastal, partially coastal routes and inland routes creating a strong new offer for Orkney as a place to explore safely and confidently of foot, whilst dispersing visitors across the land to take in the changing landscapes and seasons. It would be supported by signage, orientation and interpretation, highlighting routes, key stories and signposting attractions and assets.

It will enable walkers to experience the various landscapes, seascapes and views of Orkney. Potentially promoted as the 'Orkney 570' with a 'collect them all' offer, much as keen walkers aspire to collect the Munros, climbing as many peaks as possible, walkers could complete the coastal walks. Orkney doesn't offer large mountainous landscapes (aside from Hoy), but it does offer a gentler, undulating landscape, and at times a wild and elemental experience, adorned by attractions dotted along the way, suitable for many ages and abilities.

All routes and interventions would be fully assessed against environmental priorities and would be designed sensitively, with wildlife and habitats a priority. The routes would need to meet appropriate standards and there would need to be a cohesion in terms of the design of signage and furniture along the routes.

Landowner negotiation will be required to establish new paths / improve existing paths. Delivery and design works would then need to be implemented over an agreed period. This process would need to be led by an OIC team – the costs for this are included below

Timetable and delivery process

The development of the route would be delivered by two dedicated project officers in OIC (also responsible for the Loop Path and Cycle way projects). These additional roles would need to be externally funded. It is initially proposed that these roles would be hosted for three years to enable audit of additional routes and planning and implementation of the 1st phase of the project.

It is expected that the full path will take longer to deliver, and that further funding will be required in future years. This additional funding will need to be sought and obtained in the 1st three years.

Costs and Funding Options

Two Project officer costs for 3 years are estimated at £300,000 inc overheads.

In addition, it is recommended that an initial £250,000 exc VAT capital funding is allocated (as a budget allowance) to support the installation of footpath reinforcement, signage, styles etc. This budget allowance will need to be reviewed over the initial 3-year phase of the project to identify need for, and scale of further funding.

The project may eligible for RTIF funding and other funding partners including NatureScot, Sustrans and independent parties (plus potentially crowdfunding) will probably be needed for the project.

Existing and proposed path network



Loop Paths Network

Overview and Description

As stated above the Asset Audit revealed 18 advertised walking routes across the islands along with many additional paths (see Asset Audit Figure 24: Advertised Walks). Whilst the relatively gentle walking and cycling that Orkney's landscape offers should be an asset in itself, it is hindered by the disjointed and disconnected routes. Many of the paths are either a route from A to B, requiring walkers to turn back and return along the same route, or they feature dangerous or unappealing section including fast roads without pavements.

The lack of signage and wayfinding along the paths, discourages exploration of the wider landscape for fear of getting lost or not returning in good time. This is also compounded by the condition and / or visibility of routes i.e. they may not be well defined enough to encourage a walker to use them.

The creation of shorter, inland loop routes, some adjoining coastal routes too, will combine existing routes with new routes, encouraging safe and confident exploration and supporting dispersal.

Examples of new routes could include:

Expanding nature reserve walks across the islands to create additional wildlife focussed loops

- Carin-to-Cairn loop (between Cuween Cairn and Wideford Cairn)
- Happy Valley Loop around the wider landscape
- Upland walks in northeast mainland
- Loop walks in the wider landscapes around Lochs using the lochs as a centrepiece with occasional access to the shore where environmental constraints allow

There is also the potential to create an Orkney wide 'peak challenge' potentially linking and promoting: Ward Hill, Hoy (481m), Mid Hill, Mainland (275m), Blotchnie Field, Rousay (250m) and Fitty Hill, Westray (169m).

As with the Mainland Orkney Coastal Path, the expansion of the loop path network would be supported by signage, orientation and interpretation and would be fully assessed against environmental priorities with wildlife and habitats a priority. It would also require landowner negotiation. Proposed access projects within these sites or involving lochs in general would be developed in consultation with NaturScot and would undergo a Habitats Regulations Appraisal.

Timetable, delivery, costs and funding

The delivery of the project would be undertaken by the two project officers identified above for the Orkney Coastal Path and would operate over an initial three year timeframe.

In addition, it is recommended that an initial £100,000 exc VAT capital funding is allocated (as a budget allowance) to support the installation of footpath reinforcement, signage, styles etc. This budget allowance will need to be reviewed over the initial 3-year phase of the project to identify need for, and scale of further funding.

Expand Cycle Network

Overview and Description

Most cycle routes revealed in the Asset Audit are promoted by Northlink Ferries and range from 38km to 140km across the mainland and Hoy. Sustrans also advertises a Burwick to Kirkwall to Stromness route (NCN1) of 126km cutting through the mainland and South Ronaldsay with additions proposed by OIC linking up more settlements.

There is scope to expand the network still, linking up more settlements, destination hubs and service hubs taking a cyclist through various landscape and to more attractions. It would be supported by signage, route information, cycle racks, covered cycle storage and electric bike charging points. Below shows these potential routes, all subject to further development.

An enhanced network will encourage dispersal and is environmentally sustainable, encouraging visitors to take this zero-carbon form of transport spending more time outdoors and at more attractions.

Costs, Funding, Timetable and Delivery

The delivery of the project would be undertaken by the two project officers identified above for the Orkney Coastal Path and would operate over an initial three-year timeframe.

In addition, it is recommended that an initial £75,000 exc VAT capital funding is allocated (as a budget allowance) to support the installation of signage and shelters. Many of the other essential projects, including the hubs and attractions, include shelter provision and e-bike charging which would support the delivery of this project. This budget allowance will need to be reviewed over the initial 3-year phase of the project to identify need for, and scale of further funding

The project may be eligible for RTIF funding, as well as support from other funding channels.

Existing and proposed cycle network



Electric Cycle Hire

Overview and Description

Whilst there is limited provision of electric bikes in Orkney, there is scope to expand the offer to supports aims of sustainability and dispersal. The project would support the active travel ambitions by establishing a pool of electric bikes to complement existing supply. For hire on a daily, weekend or weekly basis would enable visitors to tour the islands by bike without needing to transport their own by ferry and would enable guests to have a day out on a bike when on holiday.

It allows people to go further and for longer and opens up the option of cycling to people of various ages and abilities. Electric bike hire would be supported by e-bike charging provision and shelters at the visitor infrastructure points at Birsay, St Margaret's Hope, Finstown, Dounby, Stromness and Kirkwall as well as other key sites such as Yesnaby and Mull Head.

Whilst electric bikes are likely to be more attractive to occasional cyclists, they have higher upfront purchase costs. Initial feasibility and business planning work required to identify suitable public / private sector approaches to developing and delivering the service.

Costs and Funding Options

Costs in the order of £50,000 exc VAT (inc. fees, contingency and inflation) have been estimated from the purchase of between 50 and 60 e-biked. This is an initial budget line estimates.

Timetable and delivery process

Initial feasibility and business planning work required to identify suitable public / private sector approaches to developing and delivering the service. Electric bikes are likely to be more attractive to occasional cyclists but have higher upfront purchase costs.

'Orkney Ticket'

Overview and Description

Car travel is currently the easiest and most convenient way to get around Orkney. Independent travel using public transport (bus and ferry) is hindered by service timetables, information and ticketing being spread across multiple sources (i.e. Orkney.gov.uk, Orkneyferries.com, Northlinkferries.co.uk, Orkney.com, Stagecoach.com) making ticketing complex and difficult to find, view and buy. Another factor is limited travel to wider islands (via ferry) being limited by concerns around visitor confidence in taking day trips and making it back. This is also compounded by the misalignment, at times, of the public transport timetables.

The development of an integrated bus and ferry ticket and information system for the islands would encourage and support visitors (and communities) to use public transport and overcome any reluctance of exploring the wider islands, and any concern of becoming stranded after missing the last ferry. The system would help to instil confidence that exploring the wider islands will be supported by an adequate transport network and information. It also has the potential to expand to cycle and vehicle hire.

The Orkney Ticket unlocks various transport options. Either a single ticket for all transport methods and all routes can be bought or the more traditional single, return or multiple journeys. Tickets will range from one trip to one week of unlimited trips. An easy purchase experience (via smartphone, online, in person) can encourage public transport use, and therefore encourage dispersal and sustainability aims.

Costs and Funding Options

At this stage costs have not been identified for the delivery for the project.

An initial cost of c. £75,000 exc VAT for a feasibility study to identify a viable method of delivering integrated ticketing has been identified

Timetable and delivery process

The initial feasibility study with business planning and engagement will take c. 9 months.

AREA 5: DIVERSIFY FOOD & BEVERAGE AND ACCOMMODATION OFFER

Accommodation and Food and Beverage support programme

Overview and Description

Providing support, guidance and peer network opportunities for accommodation and food and beverage (F&B) providers and investors will be important to helping them grow and develop further. The Strategy and Audit has identified areas where growth could be very beneficial in terms of meeting target market aspirations; and the Aims of the Strategy have highlighted areas where change in the accommodation and F&B sectors could make a notable contribution e.g. sustainability.

In this context, it is considered important to support accommodation and F&B businesses through a range of measures, including:

- Support for new or refreshed accommodation and F&B offers through local plan policy and planning process
- Access to free business and marketing advice
- Provision of sustainable tourism, energy efficiency and green energy advice for businesses
- Access to support networks and other businesses to encourage collaboration and cross-selling of goods and services
- Continued support for "Orkney Food and Drink" and similar programmes
- Targeted marketing and promotion to niche and mainstream hotel operators to identify potential investor for a 5* hotel on the islands.

To enable this to occur in a coordinated manner that can advocate for the needs of accommodation and F&B businesses it is recommended that a single point of contact officer is appointed to engage partners, develop funding proposals, coordinate networking and drive forward support and change for the sector. This could commence as a time limited post of say 3 years.

Costs and Funding Options

The Officer costs would be in the region of £150k for the three years, depending on level of appointment, host organisations etc. These costs would require funding and do not qualify for RTIF funding.

The cost associated with the various strands are outlined below, for the most part no additional costs are expected:

- Support for new or refreshed accommodation and F&B offers through local plan policy and planning process
 - No cost. Policy change and support through planning process required.
- Access to free business and marketing advice
 - Potentially no costs, assuming that business and marketing advice provided by organisations such as HIE and VisitScotland remains free to access and can be shaped by Orkney's needs.
- Provision of sustainable tourism, energy efficiency and green energy advice for businesses
 - Potentially no costs, assuming that energy efficiency and green energy advice can be sought through the Island Centre [TBC] as part of the wider Island's Deal, although there may be a need for some support and funding to develop sector focussed material.
- Access to support networks and other businesses to encourage collaboration and cross-selling of goods and services
 - No cost, assuming that Destination Orkney provides the primary route for this.
- Continued support for "Orkney Food and Drink" and similar programmes
 - Cost to be determined.
- Targeted marketing and promotion to niche and mainstream hotel operators to identify potential investor for a 5* hotel on the islands
 - Cost to be determined. It is recommended that a budget for marketing and development is identified.

Timetable and delivery process

The accommodation and F&B offer on Orkney is a critical element of its tourism offer and infrastructure. Consequently, it is recommended that the officer is appointed in 2022 [funding dependant] and that key elements of the programme are implemented and developed early after appointment.

It is also critical that the needs of the sector are addressed in the ongoing review by OIC of the Local Development Plan and support is given within that for development (at a variety of scales) that reflects the strategy. In terms of a host organisation, it is suggested that HIE or OIC would provide the most suitable location.

AREA 6: ALIGN MARKETING AND INFORMATION

Interpretative Strategy

Overview and Description

Building on the Interpretation Framework established alongside the Plan, the Islands'-wide Interpretative Strategy would be developed to support partners with the creation of a high-quality and integrated interpretive offer across the Islands. The Strategy would:

- Expand and deepen the themes and stories
- Establish key principles for interpretation
- Provide design guidance and inspiration
- Create a concept for an Islands-wide network of interpretation and orientation

It will support the dispersal of guests across the Islands, provide a richer visitor experience, help safeguard sensitive sites and contribute to the long-term repositioning of Orkney's Tourism Economy; all in a sustainable and viable manner. The strategy will enable organisations and partners to work toward the same goal of bettering the experience for residents and visitors by developing an approach to cohesive island-wide interpretation, whilst enabling the individuality of the sites and stories to shine through.

The initial work on the Key Themes in the Framework would be enriched and expanded with more detail on narrative content for the stories and themes, connections between different stories (through time and space), linkages between stories and places across all the Islands, and connection to living traditions and practices.

The Strategy would also develop and agree a set of key principles to guide interpretive design and content. These would address a number of areas including, amongst other, consistency of tone and style, cross-promotion and linkages between places, accuracy and robustness in information communicated, accessibility and inclusiveness, and sustainability

The proposed design guide will help create a family of related interpretative materials across the Islands. The aim is not to create "identikit" offers but to provide parameters for design and content creation that give guests a sense of continuity between places and stories; while also letting local flavour, stories and context shine through. It will also provide information on best practice

processes in terms of content development and delivery to reflect the fact that not all partners and communities are experienced in interpretation, and many have limited resources.

The concept for an “Islands-wide network of interpretation and orientation” would identify initial proposals for developing a range of interpretative / orientation materials across the Islands that create a geographic and thematic network of information for guests to access (also linked to a digital resource). It would create an integrated network of information that stitches the visitor experience together – linking people to places, encouraging dispersal and highlighting key messages. Interpretative / orientation material would be installed at key attractions / sites / trails etc, but the “Islands-wide network” would stitch it all together, and would predominantly be delivered on publicly owned land.

Costs and Funding Options

It is anticipated that the Strategy will cost c. £40,000 to £50,000 exc VAT in consultancy fees and expenses.

The Strategy would not be eligible for RTIF funding.

Timetable and delivery process

Given the nature of the Strategy and its role in shaping and informing the development of a range of Essential and Desirable projects in the Plan it is recommended that the Interpretative Strategy is developed as a matter of priority in 2022.

The Strategy will take a number of months to prepare and will need to be developed in consultation with key stakeholders on the Islands including, but not limited to OIC, HES, RSPB, heritage trusts and organisations, and Island Trusts / Communities.

Promotion and Integration of Military Heritage Offer

Overview and Description

Orkney has an abundance of tangible military assets. From batteries to barriers to shipwrecks, Orkney possesses a varied and relatively unique set of structures that tell the stories of its wartime past. Although the stories and themes are strong, there is rather little content that tells these stories, nor are the assets well used. A number of the Desirable projects (see Appendix 2) are seeking to unlock this heritage, including:

- Ness Battery
- HMS Tern
- Royal Oak Memorial and Bay
- Eastern Scapa Flow: Burray and the Barriers
- Clowally Viewpoint
- Scapa Flow Museum: further development

There are also further related sites which include, amongst others:

- Hackness Martello Tower and Battery
- The Italian Chapel
- Stromness Museum
- Marwick Head
- Rerwick Head
- Lyness Royal Navy Cemetery
- Hoxa Head
- Orkney Heritage & Fossil Centre

This project would seek to support and strengthen these locations and the wider tourism offer through a combination of integrated marketing at an Orkney-wide level and improved interpretation at current “free to access” sites (aligned with the interpretation strategy).

The additional physical and digital interventions could range from simple updates to existing boards and material through to detailed digital AR recreations and fly-throughs etc.

Further phases (outside of the scope considered here) could involve localised investments at tertiary sites to improve access and deepen the scale of the offer alongside the development of the Desirable Projects. The elements are likely to include:

- Building conservation and restoration works
- Conversion for new uses (activities, events, short term accommodation, new heritage offer)
- New interpretation at sites
- Establishment and refresh of paths and routes
- Improved access arrangements e.g. public transport links, parking, cycle parking, e-bike charging

Costs and Funding Options

At this stage detailed proposals for site specific interventions and for marketing development have not been prepared. The following are initial budget line estimates to guide the likely scale of the project

- Review of free to access sites and identification of priorities for enhanced access and interpretation - £10,000 exc VAT (fees only – assuming external support)
- Budget for initial improvements at free to access sites - £250,000 exc VAT inc fees, contingency and inflation
- Budget for development of integrated marketing offer for military heritage across Orkney - £25,000 exc VAT (fees only)

The scheme is unlikely to be eligible for submission to the RTIF under the current programme. Other funding partners including the Lottery Fund, plus other trusts and funds. Funding for any pathways and routes may be available through other initiatives such as the active travel projects.

Timetable and delivery process

Extensive feasibility, design and business planning work is required to develop the proposals and to identify potential sites and routes.

Partnerships may develop as part of the project with organisations such as Museum of the Royal Navy, Imperial War Museum, National Museum of Scotland, Royal Museums Greenwich.

APPENDIX 2 DESIRABLE PROJECTS LONG LIST

APPENDIX 2 – DESIRABLE PROJECTS LONG LIST

INTRODUCTION

This appendix briefly describes and assesses ‘desirable’ projects identified during the development of the Plan, as opposed to ‘essential’ projects outlined in section 5.3 of the STIDP and in more detail in Appendix 1.

The following sets out the structure and methodology used for the assessment. This is then followed by the list of assessed projects.

STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSMENT

All long-listed projects are described and assessed using the following tabular format:

ID	Project Name	Project Overview	Key Strategic Theme	Aim 1: Dispersal	Aim 2: Market Focus	Aim 3: Sustainability	Aim 4: Conservation	Timeframe	RTIF	Risks, assumptions, clarifications
		Short overview – paragraph or two of text	Primary Theme for project	+++ to 0	+++ to 0	+++ to 0	+++ to 0	Short Term Medium Term Long Term	Yes No Partial	Explanatory notes

ID, Project Name and Overview

Clearly identifiable name for project with short explanatory text, sufficient to describe the project and its key components / tasks and actions. Accompanied by a unique numerical ID for ease of referencing.

Strategy Area(s)

Identifies the Primary area for investment that the project is aligned with (see section 5.4 of the STIDP). Some projects will also align with other areas for investment. Projects are organised by each area and are not in order of priority.

For reference, the areas are:

- Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland
- Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands
- Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer
- Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration
- Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer
- Area 6: Align marketing and information

Support for Aims

This provides a headline analysis of how the project aligns with, and support, the 4 Primary Aims of the Plan. It uses a standardised scale – as follows:

- +++ Very Strongly Supports i.e. very clear and definite alignment with the aim, strongly supports it and will make a significant contribution to the outcome
- ++ Strongly Supports i.e. aligns well with the aim and will support its delivery and makes a contribution to the outcome
- + Supports i.e. makes a limited contribution to the outcome and is not contrary to it
- 0 Neutral i.e. neither supports or contradicts the aim.

For reference the four aims are:

- **Aim 1: Dispersal:** Disperse, strengthen and reinforce the tourism offer across the mainland and Islands, through a series of hubs (of differing scales) supported by stand-alone attractions and offers. This will deepen the visitor offer, spreading guests across the Islands and lengthening the seasonal offer
- **Aim 2: Market Focus:** Focus investment and promotion on clearly defined markets segments to drive visitation from groups that share Orkney's values, want to stay longer and who would contribute to the strengthening of Orkney's tourism industry and the resilience of its host communities.
- **Aim 3: Sustainability:** Drive sustainable growth through responsible tourism that delivers benefits for communities, the environment, and the economy in a balanced and equitable manner; while positively contributing to Orkney's carbon zero transition.
- **Aim 4: Conservation:** Improve conservation outcomes at heritage sites, landscapes and natural habitats through active visitor management, conservation works and habitat restoration programmes to better safeguard and celebrate Orkney's natural and cultural heritage.

Timeframe

The timeframe for delivery of the project has been estimated using the following broad terms:

Short Term – should be deliverable in the period 2022-24

Medium Term – should be deliverable within the 2022-27 timeframe

Long Term – likely to be delivered after 2027, but may still require initial works to commence in the short term

RTIF

In terms of compliance with RTIF criteria for funding, each project is recorded as follows:

Yes – meets criteria

No – does not meet criteria

Partial – elements of the project or some stages of work may meet criteria

Risks, assumptions, clarifications

Free text box to describe and key risks, assumptions or clarifications

ID	Project Name	Project Overview	Key Strategic Area	Aim 1: Dispersal	Aim 2: Market Focus	Aim 3: Sustainability	Aim 4: Conservation	Timeframe	RTIF	Risks, assumptions, clarifications
0	Burwick Visitor Infrastructure	Improvements to Burwick as a place of arrival, including limited infrastructure to site, general improvements to quality of ferry landing and welcome / orientation information.	Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland	++	0	0	0	Long Term	No	Initial feasibility and concept development work required to establish approach to scheme and cost
1	Ness Battery, Stromness	The Battery is current open on a limited basis with guided tours, opportunity exists to create a more significant attraction. This would require conservation and maintenance works, new interpretation, a form of access hub and improved signage and access	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	++	+	++	Medium Term	No	Scope for improved access and interpretation requires detailed feasibility analysis and concept design work. This can be achieved in the short term, but delivery is likely to be medium term
2	Corrigall Farm Museum	Re-purposing and re-focusing of the Corrigall site away from an open access farm museum to a new heritage craft hub to celebrate the traditional crafts of Orkney and drive economic benefits for craftspeople and tourism, as well as offer a deeper experience and connection with craft for visitors (locals and tourists). The hub would provide training and workshop space, with potential F+B offer and/or retail outlets. Units could be rented out to artists, crafts people, brewers and foodies, open for classes and public visits.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	+++	+++	+	++	Short Term	Partial	Business planning and concept development are key 1 st steps to test viability of proposed approach Design and feasibility work required in short term to develop concepts and ideas Planning and listed building consent will be required, but assume that they will be achievable for a sensitively designed scheme
3	Royal Oak Memorial and Bay	Remodelling of the Memorial Garden, car parking and local area along with an enhancement of the memorial building and display. Aim to create a high quality and cohesive space (outside an inside) that explores the Royal Oak story through new interpretation. Provides a high quality space for contemplation and commemoration. Additional loop walk also developed building off existing advertised walk. Plus enhanced signposted route into Kirkwall.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	+++	+	+	Short Term	Yes	Design and feasibility work required in short term to develop concepts and ideas Sufficient parking already in place, good bus links Need to engage key stakeholders

ID	Project Name	Project Overview	Key Strategic Area	Aim 1: Dispersal	Aim 2: Market Focus	Aim 3: Sustainability	Aim 4: Conservation	Timeframe	RTIF	Risks, assumptions, clarifications
4	Eastern Scapa Flow: Burray and the Barriers	Refresh and upgrade of interpretative story of the eastern side of Scapa Flow running from St Mary's to Brough with a focus on the Churchill Barriers, Italian Chapel and surviving battery and ancillary structures e.g. the battery east of Graemeshall. Works to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new interpretation • establishment and refresh of paths ad routes (linked to wider Coastal path initiative and Loop Walks – see essential projects) • Targeted promotion • Cycle parking and charging at key points Orientation and digital links to Scapa Flow Museum (to encourage visitation) plus promotion of water tours, rib rides, marine explorations	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	+++	++	+	++	Medium Term	Partial	Initial feasibility and concept development work required to establish approach to scheme and cost and programme key elements Land access and ownership will be important for new routes and access to some assets Military heritage partners may include Museum of the Royal Navy, Imperial War Museum, National Museum of Scotland, Royal Museums Greenwich.
5	Conservation and reuse of military structures	Explore options for the various military structures to be converted into not just heritage attractions but potentially unique, specialist themed short term accommodation offers. Some sites may be large enough to accommodate heritage attraction, accommodation, commercial and food and beverage offers. Other structures may be converted or promoted for such activities as bird watching, photography and arts	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	+++	++	+	++	Medium Term	No	Extensive initial feasibility and planning work required to identify suitable locations and approaches to projects
6	Orkney Views	Identify the top 12 Orkney views (one for each month). Sites to be selected based on quality of view, interpretative themes, diversity of landscapes and key aim of dispersing guests. Factors such as safe access and conservation would also need to be factored in. Where necessary access / laybys / rest areas may need to be established / improved to support visitation. Market and promote the views, ideally with a seasonal element	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	+++	++	+	+	Medium Term	Partial	Initial scoping study needed to identify potential candidates, followed by feasibility and concept development Would need to be woven into the Interpretative Strategy, expansion of path networks, and other emerging initiatives
7	Clowally Viewpoint	Creation of a layby / photo stop area along the Scapa Flow Road to reduce the hazard of coaches and cars stopping on the road to see the Royal Oak marker buoy and the Houton Bay area where the German High Seas Fleet was interned.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	+	0	0	Short Term	TBC	Orphir Community Council owns the property at Clowally overlooking Houton Bay and have an interest in developing it as a viewpoint. Planning and highways constraints will need to be explored prior to proposals being developed
8	Renewable Energy Centre	New visitor centre focussed on the story of renewable energy on Orkney.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	0	++	+	0	Medium Term	No	Project is being delivered through Islands Deal, with expected announcement on funding in early 2022

ID	Project Name	Project Overview	Key Strategic Area	Aim 1: Dispersal	Aim 2: Market Focus	Aim 3: Sustainability	Aim 4: Conservation	Timeframe	RTIF	Risks, assumptions, clarifications
9	Hall of Clestrain	Major project to rehabilitate and re-activate the Hall of Clestrain helping tell the story of John Rae, maritime heritage of the islands and exploration and connections with Canada, providing new educational and research facilities, training opportunities and community engagement.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	+++	+	++	Medium Term	No	Key risks associated with funding and delivery Project led by independent trust
10	Tomb of the Eagles	Rehabilitate and re-activate the Tomb of Eagles including the main tomb, burnt mound and museum by representing the site as a "live archaeology" experience, building on the very hands-on experience of the current centre to offer an experimental, event-based experience wrapped around a day-to-day attraction. Key elements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh of the museum building (to at least the standard of the Mesolithic Space) • Establishment of a series of experimental archaeology events throughout the seasons to provide a different offer to similar sites on the Islands • Conservation works at the Tomb and Burnt Mound • Enhanced interpretation and orientation 	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	+++	++	+	++	Short Term	No	Risks associated with required conservation works at the monuments Existing building will require significant works to bring it up to standard Current visitor numbers need to be very substantially increased to achieve viability
11	Birsay - Earls Palace	Improvement in interpretation and access to Earls Palace as part of wider changes in Birsay. Includes event-based activation of the spaces, perhaps in collaboration with the Piers Head centre, recently opened in Birsay.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	+++	+	++	Medium Term	Yes	Planning and other consents would be needed, but should be achievable given limited scale of proposals Event based activation could only occur once wider infrastructure in Birsay has been delivered
12	HMS Tern	Preservation, re-activation and interpretation of the air station as a memorial to those in service namely exhibition space in the listed Control Tower's rooms and chambers. Reschedule guided tours post-covid and promote the site as part of the wider military heritage of the islands as a west mainland hub to compliment the concentration of military assets on Burray and the Churchill Barriers. Explore opportunity for overnight stays with development of campervan spaces and electric vehicle charging	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	+	+	++	Medium Term	No	Key risk associated with funding and delivery, some potential issues with market demand and long term viability need to be addressed through project Current plans include campervan parking, glamping facilities, electric vehicle charging
13	Broch of Gurness	Limited upgrades and formalisation of car park to improve capacity (without expansion). Some localised widening / additional passing places to support access. Increased promotion of set as a key attraction with links to local landscape, Evie and beach to encourage independent visitors to explore more locally.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	++	+	+	Short Term	Yes	Design and feasibility work required

ID	Project Name	Project Overview	Key Strategic Area	Aim 1: Dispersal	Aim 2: Market Focus	Aim 3: Sustainability	Aim 4: Conservation	Timeframe	RTIF	Risks, assumptions, clarifications
14	Click Mill access and activation	Improvements to access through formalisation of parking layby, provision of adequate signage to the Mill and creation of path. Explore potential for activation in partnership with Kirbister Farm Museum through a series of seasonal events that showcase the working mill	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	++	+	+	Short Term	Yes	Access and provision of suitable conditions of access to the site from the roadside may require permission from landowners.
14	Rib rides / maritime explorations	Work with local communities at key harbours to develop seasonal maritime attractions e.g. boat tours, yachting tours, around the island, electric boat fishing excursions, rib rides etc. This may include exploring electric boat usage and installation of electric boat charging points at harbours. Explore options for a circular boat tour around Scapa Flow to showcase heritage from afloat, combined with hop on-off service to islands bordering Scapa Flow enabling dispersal to other islands. It would include informed commentary of stories of Scapa Flow and bordering coastlines. Additional under water offers can also be explored including scuba and snorkel.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	++	0	+	Medium Term	Partial	Will require initial feasibility and business planning work
15	Cuween Cairn access	Limited improvements to parking and access routes to Cuween Cairn, including formalisation of lower parking space and reinforcement and improvement of path to site and connectivity to wider landscape (also see Loop Walks)	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	++	+	++	Short Term	Yes	May require permission from landowners.
16	Scapa Flow Museum: further development	Delivery of further developments at the site, including: Phase Two - Repair and re-open the Romney Hut originally built as a boat store in 1944 and which will eventually house some of the larger objects in the collection, post-conservation. Phase Three – repair and recondition the Oil Tank, one of sixteen which once held 12,000 tons of fuel oil for the Royal Navy. It is a part of the only steam-powered naval oil fuel installation still surviving and so of unique local, national and international significance.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	+++	++	+	++	Long Term	No	Further development for the schemes required, supported by clear route for funding
17	Mine Howe	The attraction is now closed but offers potential for reopening. However, the particular nature of attraction with an underground element potentially poses some limitations and risks for public access Project is therefore for a feasibility study to engage with landowner and interested parties to understand and explore the potential for public access supported by necessary facilities.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	+++	++	+	++	Medium Term	Yes	Initial works only to explore feasibility for re-opening site and required works to do so

ID	Project Name	Project Overview	Key Strategic Area	Aim 1: Dispersal	Aim 2: Market Focus	Aim 3: Sustainability	Aim 4: Conservation	Timeframe	RTIF	Risks, assumptions, clarifications
18	Happy Valley	Limited improvements to site and access including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalisation of parking • Signage to site • Onsite vegetation management and works • Wireless donation point <p>Potential exists to link the site to a local loop walk (see essential projects)</p> <p>Explore options to restore the house within Happy Valley for a sustainable future use.</p>	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	++	+	+	Short Term	Yes	Works are limited in scope and achievable in short term given existing ownership and uses. Friends of Happy Valley are in discussion with OIC on renovation and sustainable reuse of house.
19	Ring of Bookan	Opening up access to the Ring and connecting it to the WHS to the south via an active travel network (extension of the WHS Gateway Project)	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	+	++	++	++	Long Term	No	Early engagement with the landowner required Aspirational at this stage
20	Orkney Creative Arts Festival	Annual or biennial festival on the Islands with strong digital element celebrating and showcasing arts and crafts of local artisans and artists. Develop and promote in partnership with Islands Development Officers and residents of all islands	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	+++	+	0	Long term	No	Early concept needs development by and with relevant representative groups
21	Wellbeing and Heritage Hub North Ronaldsay	Development of a new hub in the newly acquired building at Trebb, as an orientation point when visiting the islands. To include information, heritage and retail offer of local products.	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	++	+	0	0	Long term	Partial	Will require initial feasibility and business planning work. North Ronaldsay Trust have submitted a Regeneration Capital Grant Fund to enable development however match funding is still required for some elements
22	North Ronaldsay Dark Sky	Develop and promote North Ronaldsay's recently acquired Dark Sky status (no air pollution), to encourage tourism to the island, including signage, interpretation, viewpoints, small observatory stations. Potentially employ ranger on a part time basis to promote Dark Sky tourism and act as main contact for tours. Promote alongside other themes including astronomy, craft workshops, bird observatory, sheep dyke restoration	Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer	+++	++	0	0	Short Term	No	Employment of a ranger/guide is aspirational. Promotion to feed into wider Orkney marketing, and events aligned with travel from mainland.
23	Island Exploration walks / rides	Akin to the mainland loop walk, individual Islands could build on existing routes and create complementary offers that extend the Orkney challenge, while also offering an on-island experience that stands alone. This could encompass physical trails and digital apps, and light touch signage / interpretation exploring a variety of themes and linking sites and islands.	Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration	++	+++	++	+	Long Term	Partial	Improved access and additional paths require a detailed path audit and environmental studies to ensure the additional paths are sensitive and suitable for landscape and wildlife. Long process of landowner engagement, route planning and delivery Will require dedicated officer posts (externally funded)

ID	Project Name	Project Overview	Key Strategic Area	Aim 1: Dispersal	Aim 2: Market Focus	Aim 3: Sustainability	Aim 4: Conservation	Timeframe	RTIF	Risks, assumptions, clarifications
24	Themed walks	<p>Creation of a series of themed walks using the expanded network of paths and loop trails, could possibly include (amongst many other):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orkney military trail, • Orkney energy trail, • Orkney seal trail, • Orkney whale trail, • Orkney bird trail • Orkney wide “peaks challenge” e.g. linking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ward Hill, Hoy (481m) - Mid Hill, Mainland (275m) - Blotchnie Fiold, Rousay (250m) <p>Fitty Hill, Westray (169m)</p>	Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration	+++	+++	++	+	Long Term	No	<p>Can be developed alongside and as part of essential projects Expand Cycle Network, Loop Paths Network, Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path</p> <p>An Orkney-wide ‘Energy Trail’ is an OREF ambition with some progress already made</p>
25	Electric hire cars	Support for adoption of electric hire cars on the Islands. The relatively short journey distances coupled with the strong public charging infrastructure and the prevalence of self-catering accommodation (which makes overnight charging easier) make electric cars a solid choice for hiring. High purchase costs and seasonal nature of tourism is however a barrier to their adoption. The development of a support scheme may therefore be appropriate.	Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration	0	+++	++	0	Medium Term	No	Initial feasibility and business planning work required to identify suitable public / private sector approaches to supporting this transition
26	“UberBothy” / “Orkney Heims”	<p>Orkney’s landscape contains numerous dilapidated and often isolated historic farmsteads, bothy’s, crofts etc.</p> <p>This project would identify a selected sample of these for conversion to a network of simple but highly distinctive bothy / pod accommodation using off-site construction techniques to create contemporary well-insulated, sustainably serviced short-stay accommodation. Essentially the approach would be to insert accommodation into a consolidated historic shell.</p> <p>The accommodation would be simple in nature, easy to maintain and with very limited services e.g. water and 12v off-grid electricity only. Sites would generally use compost toilets unless mains sewage was close by.</p> <p>The sites would be booked and managed through a digital platform with a focus on one to three-night stays. Some would be accessible wholly on foot, others would be closer to car parks or perhaps even boat only access. Opportunity exists to create unique offers in a range of locations.</p>	Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer	+++	++	+	++	Long Term	No	<p>Initial business planning and feasibility work required to explore viability and deliverability of concept, including market demand testing</p> <p>Ownership, access and servicing will be critical to site selection.</p> <p>Would be delivered in partnership with a range of private sector organisations and individuals.</p>
27	Birsay Campsite Upgrade	Enhancement of site including toilet upgrade, electricity provision / hook ups and hardstanding	Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer	++	+	+	0	Short Term	No	OIC to advise

ID	Project Name	Project Overview	Key Strategic Area	Aim 1: Dispersal	Aim 2: Market Focus	Aim 3: Sustainability	Aim 4: Conservation	Timeframe	RTIF	Risks, assumptions, clarifications
28	Point of Ness Campsite Upgrade	Explore the redevelopment of the boatyard adjacent to the current campervan site, to allow for expansion of current capacity.	Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer	++	+	+	0	Short Term	No	Currently plans include the renewal of hardstanding and toilet upgrade, due to begin in winter 2021.
29	Digital information / App hub	<p>The piecemeal manner in which digital content has developed on Orkney is leading to a risk of platform proliferation. For example, there are currently the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kirkwall Heritage App - St Magnus Way App - Walks accessible through izi.TRAVEL Audio Travel guide App (e.g. Mull Head Walk) - Orkney Islander App (produced by the Orcadian) - HES Maeshowe App - Numerus websites - The proposed Visitor Management App (as part of Orkney WHS Gateway project) <p>Proposal is for a scoping study to explore whether these platforms can be streamlined and conglomerated into a single App, or whether a clear hub required to signpost and support guests with choosing Apps / Data Sources</p>	Area 6: Align marketing and information	+	+++	0	0	Short Term	No	Initial action required to provide clarity and structure for future development and align communications
30	Historic Towns of Orkney	<p>Orkney's rich urban heritage and architecture is an under-appreciated and under-marketed element of Orkney's heritage that has the potential to shift perceptions of the Islands and attract visitors.</p> <p>Project would involve the commissioning of visual artists to celebrate the architectural and townscape heritage of Orkney and then present this in a published book, online resource and series of exhibitions. The aim being to raise the profile and attract media and market interest - as well as being a truly worthwhile celebration in its own right.</p>	Area 6: Align marketing and information	++	++	+	+	Medium Term	No	<p>Opportunity to deliver in partnership with on-island groups and organisations including Pier Arts centre.</p> <p>Also, opportunity to bring internationally renowned creatives to the project</p>
31	The Orkney Project (storytelling)	<p>An ongoing project to establish a new Digital Storytelling Platform which will showcase the history, culture and heritage of Orkney.</p> <p>The project seeks to identify and explore the challenges and opportunities posed in the development of digital platforms, and the curation and presentation of stories.</p>	Area 6: Align marketing and information	0	+	0	0	Short Term	No	Project is ongoing and led by external partners

APPENDIX 3 TIMETABLE AND COSTS

		Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4			
		2022				2023				2024				2025			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
AREA 1: REINFORCE VISITOR INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE MAINLAND																	
Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections	Community-led planning and engagement process																
	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3)																
	Land owner negotiation																
	Planning and consents																
	Detailed design and Delivery																
St Margaret's Hope Visitor Infrastructure	Parking review and engagement with community																
	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3) for paths and E-Bike																
	Planning and consents																
	Detailed design and Delivery																
Dounby Visitor Infrastructure	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3)																
	Planning and consents																
	Detailed design and Delivery																
Finstown Visitor Infrastructure	Feasibility and Design																
	Planning and procurement																
	Delivery																
Stromness Visitor Infrastructure	Feasibility and Design																
	Planning and procurement																
	Delivery																
Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure	Feasibility and Design																
	Planning and procurement																
	Delivery																
Coach Management Infrastructure	Identification of suitable sites																
	Review of efficacy of WHS System																
	Procurement and installation																
AREA 2: DRIVE REGENERATIVE TOURISM ACROSS THE ISLANDS																	
Community-led Visioning Workshops and Masterplans	Brief preparation and procurement																
	Delivery of 5 pilots																
	Refinement of methodology																
AREA 3: STRENGTHEN THE ATTRACTIONS OFFER																	
Yesnaby	Project mobilisation																
	Initial Environmental Surveys																
	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3)																
	Land owner negotiation																
	Planning and consents																
	Detailed design and Delivery																
Kirbister Farm Museum	Condition surveys																
	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3)																
	Planning and consents																
	Detailed design and Delivery																
Mull Head	Condition and environmental surveys																
	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3)																
	Planning and consents																
	Detailed design and Delivery																
Beach Access and Enhancement	Audit and environmental surveys																
	Community engagement																
	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3)																
	Planning and consents																
	Detailed design and Delivery																
Viking Orkney	Engagement with centre, HES and OIC																
	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3)																
	Planning and consents																
	Detailed design and Delivery																

Cost Estimate

Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections

Key Components	Est Cost	
Community-led planning and engagement process	£30,000	
Additional car parking c. 20 spaces	£220,000	Car park – approx. 30 spaces and associated landscape works. C. 800m ² at 275€/m ²
Upgraded toilet facilities	£50,000	Budget line allowance only
EV charging & bike shelters	£32,500	Budget line allowance only, one fast charger, 2 bike charger and shelter
Additional Orientation / Interpretation	£45,000	Budget line allowance only includes c. 10k for interactive display
Walks and routes	£15,000	Allowance for styles, signposting, pinch point reinforcement etc - budget line estimate only
sub-total	£392,500	
Fees @ 25%	£98,125	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£98,125	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£88,313	
total	£677,063	

COST EXCLUDE LAND PURCHASE, IF REQUIRED

St Margaret's Hope Infrastructure

Key Components	Est Cost	
Parking review and engagement with community	£10,000	Study only, not implementation
EV charging & bike shelters	£25,000	Budget line allowance only
Additional Orientation / Interpretation	£35,000	Budget line allowance only, includes 10k allowance for one interactive display
Installation of camper van waste disposal point	£30,000	Budget line allowance only, assumes waste disposal facility attached to an existing WC building with sewage connection
Walks and routes	£10,000	Allowance for styles, signposting, pinch point reinforcement etc - budget line estimate only
sub-total	£110,000	
Fees @ 25%	£27,500	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£27,500	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£24,750	
total	£189,750	

COST EXCLUDE DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF ANY PARKING, IF REQUIRED

Dounby Visitor Infrastructure

Key Components	Est Cost	
Parking area upgrading landscaping and zebra crossing	£85,000	Budget line allowance only, includes improved seating near car park and zebra crossing to toilets
Car and e-bike EV fast charging & bike shelters	£45,000	Budget line allowance only. One fast charger, pair of bike chargers, one bike shelter
Additional Orientation / Interpretation	£20,000	Budget line allowance only, includes 10k allowance for one interactive display
New Public WCs plus caper van waste disposal point	£85,000	Assumed on same site as current and using sewage connection
sub-total	£235,000	
Fees @ 25%	£58,750	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£58,750	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£52,875	
total	£405,375	

Finstown Visitor Infrastructure

Key Components	Est Cost	
Updating of WCs and installation of camper van waste disposal point	£35,000	Budget line allowance only, assumes waste disposal facility attached to existing WC building
e-bike charging & bike shelter	£7,500	Budget line allowance only. Pair of bike chargers, one bike shelter
Additional Orientation / Interpretation	£20,000	Budget line allowance only, includes 10k allowance for one interactive display
sub-total	£62,500	
Fees @ 25%	£15,625	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£15,625	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£14,063	
total	£107,813	

Stromness Visitor Infrastructure

Key Components	Est Cost	
Updating of WCs and installation of camper van waste disposal point	£35,000	Budget line allowance only, assumes waste disposal facility attached to existing WC building
e-bike charging & bike shelter	£7,500	Budget line allowance only. Pair of bike chargers, one bike shelter
Digital information panel, plus orientation, interpretation and wayfinding	£25,000	Budget line allowance only, includes 10k allowance for one interactive display
sub-total	£67,500	
Fees @ 25%	£16,875	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£16,875	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£15,188	
total	£116,438	

Kirwall Visitor Infrastructure

Key Components	Est Cost	
Updating of WCs and installation of camper van waste disposal point	£25,000	Budget line allowance only, assumes waste disposal facility attached to existing WC building
e-bike charging & bike shelter	£15,000	Budget line allowance only. Four bike chargers, two shelters
Digital information panels	£20,000	Budget line allowance only for two panels
sub-total	£60,000	
Fees @ 25%	£15,000	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£15,000	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£13,500	
total	£103,500	

Coach Management Infrastructure

Key Components	Est Cost	
Expansion of system	£50,000	Budget line allowance only
sub-total	£50,000	
Fees @ 25%	£12,500	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£12,500	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£11,250	
total	£86,250	

Community-led Visioning Workshops and Masterplans

Key Components	Est Cost	
Brief preparation and procurement	£2,500	Budget line estimate, assumed in-kind support
Delivery of 5 pilots	£40,000	Consultancy support fees
Refinement of methodology	£2,500	Budget line estimate, assumed in-kind support
sub-total	£45,000	
Contingency @ 20%	£9,000	
Inflation - allowance of 5%	£2,700	Reduced inflation as non-construction sector and short-term delivery
total	£56,700	

Yesnaby

Key Components	Est Cost	
Car parking c. 30 spaces	£300,000	Car park – approx. 30 spaces and associated landscape works. C. 1080m ² at 275£/m ²
EV and e-bike charging & bike shelter	£15,000	Budget line allowance only, one basic EV charger (not 50kw), 2 bike charger and shelter
Orientation / Interpretation	£40,000	Budget line allowance only
1km of accessible loop path	£100,000	2m wide path at 50£/m ²
Repair and upgrade of existing cliff paths	£50,000	Budget line allowance only
Consolidation of blockhouse and expansion to form hub	£300,000	150m ² and 2000£/m ²
Conservation works to WWII structures	£100,000	Budget line allowance only
Landscape restoration works	£100,000	Budget line estimate - scope to be defined
Electric and Sewage connections	£65,000	Budget line allowance only
Environmental surveys	£30,000	Budget line allowance only
sub-total	£1,100,000	
Fees @ 25%	£275,000	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£275,000	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£247,500	
total	£1,897,500	

COST EXCLUDE LAND PURCHASE

Kirbister

Key Components	Est Cost	
Condition surveys and repair schedules	£10,000	Allowance for pre-commencement surveys
EV and e-bike charging & bike shelter	£15,000	Budget line allowance only, one basic EV charger (not 50kw), 2 bike charger and shelter
Orientation / Interpretation	£65,000	Budget line allowance only
Conservation and conversion works to outbuildings	£200,000	Budget line allowance only
Landscape works	£50,000	Budget line allowance only
sub-total	£340,000	
Fees @ 25%	£85,000	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£85,000	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£76,500	
total	£586,500	

Mull Head

Key Components	Est Cost	
Condition and environmental surveys	£17,500	Allowance for pre-commencement surveys
e-bike charging & bike shelter	£5,000	Budget line allowance only, 2 bike charger and shelter
Orientation / Interpretation	£30,000	Budget line allowance only
Building works	£75,000	Budget line allowance only
Landscape and access works	£50,000	Budget line allowance only
sub-total	£177,500	
Fees @ 25%	£44,375	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£44,375	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£39,938	
total	£306,188	

Viking Orkney

Key Components	Est Cost	
Refresh of Orkneyinga Saga Centre and new interpretation across site	£175,000	Budget line allowance only for complete refit and reinterpretation of centre, plus associated access works
e-bike charging & bike shelter at Centre car park	£5,000	Budget line allowance only, 2 bike charger and shelter
Interpretation for Trail, and at associated sites, including digital material	£55,000	Budget line allowance only
sub-total	£235,000	
Fees @ 25%	£58,750	
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£58,750	
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£52,875	
total	£405,375	



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RTIF PROGRAMME RECOMMENDATIONS

Orkney Islands Council

Strategic Tourism Infrastructure
Development Plan

January 2022

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	Overview of selected projects	1
2.0	PROPOSED PROJECTS	4
2.1	Introduction	4
2.2	Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections (RTIF Project 1)	4
2.3	St Margaret’s Hope Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 2)	5
2.4	Dounby Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 3)	6
2.5	Finstown Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 4)	7
2.6	Stromness Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 5)	8
2.7	Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 6)	8
2.8	Community-led Visioning Workshops and Masterplans (RTIF Project 7)	9
2.9	Active Travel Network (RTIF Project 8)	10
2.10	Overall Project Delivery	15
2.11	Summary of Costs	15
	APPENDIX A – TIMETABLE	17

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Orkney Islands Council (OIC) has developed a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (STIDP / the Plan) to guide the long-term sustainable development of tourism across Orkney. The Plan has been funded by OIC and VisitScotland as part of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF).

1.1.2 Section 5.3 of the Plan identified a suite of Essential Projects that focus on key areas for investment and reflect the aims of the Strategy. These projects have been identified by the client, consultant team and stakeholders and were included in a draft Long List of projects provided to stakeholders during the development of the Plan.

1.1.3 Delivering these projects requires funding over a sustained period of time. This document outlines the projects that are recommended for submission to the RTIF for funding. These projects have been selected to reflect the criteria for RTIF funding and the need to deliver change on Orkney in a cohesive and integrated manner.

1.1.4 This document should be read in conjunction with the Orkney Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (2022).

1.2 Overview of selected projects

1.2.1 The Plan identified six key areas for investment (see Section 4 of the Plan):

- **Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland**
- **Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands**
- **Area 3: Strengthen the attractions offer**
- **Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration**
- **Area 5: Diversify food & beverage and accommodation offer**
- **Area 6: Align marketing and information**

1.2.2 Essential Projects in three of these areas have been identified as meeting RTIF criteria for potential funding, acknowledging that the RTIF process is competitive and that some, all or none of the projects (or elements of the projects) will be selected for funding.

Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland

1.2.3 Dispersal of visitors is a key aim for the Strategy. However, visitors need services and facilities, and this requires investment and physical change. Critically, this change needs occur in a way that addresses current gaps in provision, supports community wellbeing, conserves the natural and cultural heritage of the islands, and reflects Orkney’s strong sense of place. To achieve this, the Strategy concentrates supporting visitor infrastructure in identified settlements across the mainland and linked isles. The following 6 locations have been identified for varying degrees of visitor infrastructure improvement and upgrade:

- Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections (RTIF Project 1)
- St Margaret’s Hope Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 2)
- Dounby Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 3)
- Finstown Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 4)
- Stromness Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 5)
- Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 6)

Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands

1.2.4 Orkney’s many islands have a multitude of diverse stories to tell. The variety of these islands, the idea that that are many “Orkneys”, is potentially a strong differentiator in a crowded tourism market and they are likely to be attractive destinations to key independent markets and small vessel cruise operators. There is scope to bring more of the islands into the overall tourism offer of Orkney. Consultation has identified that whilst there may be a need on the islands for the economic benefits that tourism can bring, there are also concerns that tourism could undermine the very qualities that make them unique such as their remoteness and tranquillity.

1.2.5 Developing tourism on the islands must therefore be community-led, with communities being supported to define and establish the nature of their tourism offer and how they wish to encourage and welcome visitors. To enable this, and to provide support for future

funding applications a programme of pilot studies is proposed to define a process and outputs for community-led tourism plans for the islands.

- Community-led Visioning Workshops and Masterplans (RTIF Project 7)

Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration

1.2.6 Bringing together low / zero carbon active travel opportunities with an enriched leisure offer for guests (and communities) is a win-win for Orkney and its visitors. The mainland, and islands, have a generally gentle but elemental landscape, well suited for exploration by foot and bike. Expansion of footpaths and cycle routes / facilities is therefore a key focus for investment. Three projects have been identified in the Plan to support this.

- Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path (RTIF Project 8)
- Loop Paths Network (RTIF Project 8)
- Expand Cycle Network (RTIF Project 8)

1.2.7 These have been grouped together into a single project for the RTIF given the need to share officer resources and deliver an integrated active travel and leisure network.

Conclusion

1.2.8 These proposed projects, taken together would form a cohesive foundation for the reinforcement of the mainland's visitor infrastructure, the development of a regenerative and sustainable tourism offer on the islands and the creation of a robust and attractive active travel network for communities and visitors.

2.0 PROPOSED PROJECTS

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following provides more detail on the selected projects, this material is extracted and summarised from the Plan, further details on these projects can be found in Appendix 1 of the Plan.

2.2 Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections (RTIF Project 1)

2.2.1 Birsay is an established place to visit in Orkney with a number of key attractions as well as dramatic scenery and seascape. In order to support current, and potentially, higher levels of visitation and reduce the potential for disruption of local communities, additional infrastructure is needed in and around the settlement. This includes:

- Additional parking c. 20 spaces, plus coach space to ensure that visitors use parking facilities rather than roadsides.
- Upgraded public conveniences to adequately service visitors
- Electric vehicle charging for bicycles and cars, as well as cycle parking and shelter
- Improved bus stop
- Orientation / interpretation to encourage exploration within and around Birsay
- New active travel routes and walks in the landscape around Birsay
- Possible improved campervan parking at Marwick Head

2.2.2 The project will be developed through a community and place-led design and development process. Engagement with the local community is essential to ensure support and to harness local knowledge and experience. The exact nature and form of the project may evolve from that described above.

2.2.3 The following potential costs have been identified:

Key Components	Est Cost
Community-led planning and engagement process	£30,000
Additional car parking c. 20 spaces	£220,000
Upgraded toilet facilities	£50,000

Key Components	Est Cost
EV charging & bike shelters	£32,500
Additional Orientation / Interpretation	£45,000
Walks and routes	£15,000
sub-total	£392,500
Fees @ 25%	£98,125
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£98,125
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£88,313
total	£677,063

2.2.4 These exclude any land purchase costs.

2.2.5 In terms of timetable a c. 2 year programme is predicted including design and delivery (see Appendix A of this document). Negotiation with landowners will be required for the path network and may be required for the additional car parking. Planning consents would also be required, and sensitive designs developed that align with community aspirations and infrastructure needs.

2.3 St Margaret's Hope Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 2)

2.3.1 St Margaret's Hope is an established place to visit with existing infrastructure, some limited enhancement is required, including:

- Electric vehicle charging for bicycles, as well as cycle parking and shelter
- Orientation / interpretation to encourage exploration within and around St Margaret's Hope
- Campervan waste disposal at St Margaret's Hope Ferry Terminal, or other suitable location away from the historic centre of St Margaret's Hope.

2.3.2 The following potential costs have been identified:

Key Components	Est Cost
Parking review and engagement with community	£10,000
EV charging & bike shelters	£25,000
Additional Orientation / Interpretation	£35,000
Installation of camper van waste disposal point	£30,000
Walks and routes	£10,000
sub-total	£110,000
Fees @ 25%	£27,500

Key Components	Est Cost
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£27,500
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£24,750
total	£189,750

2.3.3 These exclude any land purchase costs.

2.3.4 A c. 18 month year programme is predicted for design and delivery (see Appendix A). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given small scale of proposed works.

2.4 Dounby Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 3)

2.4.1 Dounby is ideally located in the centre of the west mainland, between the western corner at Birsay and Kirkwall towards the east. Already having certain services, the small village has shops, a pub with accommodation, a church and community centre. Whilst it may not act as a destination, it can act as an enhanced service hub, with increased visitation and spending supporting local businesses. Key interventions include:

- Formalised and signed car parking area with electric vehicle charging points for cycles and cars
- Improved and enlarged public conveniences
- Waste disposal facilities for motorhomes
- Orientation and interpretation to connect local attractions and local area to the village

2.4.2 The project will be developed through a community and place-led design and development process based on the existing “Dounby Plan”. Engagement with the local community is essential to ensure support and to harness local knowledge and experience. The exact nature and form of the project may evolve from that described above.

2.4.3 The following potential costs have been identified:

Key Components	Est Cost
Parking area upgrading landscaping and zebra crossing	£85,000
Car and e-bike EV fast charging & bike shelters	£45,000

Key Components	Est Cost
Additional Orientation / Interpretation	£20,000
New Public WCs plus camper van waste disposal point	£85,000
sub-total	£235,000
Fees @ 25%	£58,750
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£58,750
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£52,875
total	£405,375

2.4.4 These exclude any land purchase costs.

2.4.5 In terms of timetable a c. 15 month programme is predicted for design and delivery (see Appendix A). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given current land-uses and context.

2.5 Finstown Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 4)

2.5.1 Finstown is located halfway between Kirkwall and Dounby, and can help to service the west mainland. It already hosts a formalised and signed car parking area with electric vehicle charging points for cars and public conveniences. The St Magnus Way passes through the settlement. Proposed improvements at the existing parking site include:

- E-bike charging
- Updating of public conveniences
- Waste disposal facilities for motorhomes
- Orientation and interpretation to connect local attractions and local area to the village

2.5.2 The following potential costs have been identified:

Key Components	Est Cost
Updating of WCs and installation of camper van waste disposal point	£35,000
e-bike charging & bike shelter	£7,500
Additional Orientation / Interpretation	£20,000
sub-total	£62,500
Fees @ 25%	£15,625
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£15,625
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£14,063
total	£107,813

2.5.3 A c. 9 month programme is predicted for delivery (see Appendix A). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given current land-uses and context.

2.6 Stromness Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 5)

2.6.1 Stromness is currently well served as a location but there is need for some improvements including:

- E-bike charging
- Waste disposal facilities for motorhomes (located adjacent to existing toilet facilities near the harbour area)
- One interactive display with information on local attractions, public transport, walking and cycling routes and interpretation

2.6.2 The following potential costs have been identified:

Key Components	Est Cost
Updating of WCs and installation of camper van waste disposal point	£35,000
e-bike charging & bike shelter	£7,500
Digital information panel, plus orientation, interpretation and wayfinding	£25,000
sub-total	£67,500
Fees @ 25%	£16,875
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£16,875
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£15,188
total	£116,438

2.6.3 A c. 12 month programme is predicted for delivery (see Appendix A). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given current land-uses and context.

2.7 Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure (RTIF Project 6)

2.7.1 Kirkwall requires limited investment in new visitor infrastructure at this stage but there is a need for:

- E-bike charging and shelters, 2 separate locations
- Waste disposal facilities for motorhomes and also to serve coaches, hence proposed location adjacent to the toilets at the Hatston Terminal
- Two interactive displays with information on local attractions, public transport, walking and cycling routes and interpretation

2.7.2 The following potential costs have been identified:

Key Components	Est Cost
Updating of WCs and installation of camper van waste disposal point	£25,000
e-bike charging & bike shelter	£15,000
Digital information panels	£20,000
sub-total	£60,000
Fees @ 25%	£15,000
Contingency @ 20% (Inc. on fees)	£15,000
Inflation - allowance of 15%	£13,500
total	£103,500

2.7.3 In terms of timetable a c. 12 month programme is predicted for delivery (see Appendix A). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led by OIC with, if required, external design support. Minimal planning issues are anticipated given current land-uses and context.

2.8 Community-led Visioning Workshops and Masterplans (RTIF Project 7)

2.8.1 While some islands have begun to prepare ideas and concepts for the development of tourism others are still early in that process. This project focusses on developing a series of pilot projects for Community-led Tourism Plans for each island. These would not be developed by external consultants in consultation with community, but rather by the community with support from external partners / consultants. Through a process of workshops, discussion and constructive debate each island would be enabled to develop a clear view of what they want to achieve through tourism and how they can go about it, including a definition of their tourism offer / marketing position and a clear action plan with proposals for fund raising and delivery.

2.8.2 At this stage, it is proposed to develop 5 Pilot Projects for islands of differing scales, needs and proximity to the mainland. The islands will be selected in consultation with Community

Councils and Development Trusts. Following the pilots, the methodology would be refined and, if successful, the programme would be rolled out to other islands.

2.8.3 The following potential costs have been identified:

Key Components	Est Cost
Brief preparation and procurement	£2,500
Delivery of 5 pilots	£40,000
Refinement of methodology	£2,500
sub-total	£45,000
Contingency @ 20%	£9,000
Inflation - allowance of 5%	£2,700
total	£56,700

2.8.4 In terms of timetable a c. 12 month programme is predicted for delivery (see Appendix A). Delivery should be a relatively standard process, led and procured by OIC.

2.9 Active Travel Network (RTIF Project 8)

2.9.1 This project brings together three STIDP projects into a single stream, to create a cohesive and integrated active travel and leisure network, the three STIDP projects are:

- Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path
- Loop Paths Network
- Expand Cycle Network

2.9.2 These are briefly described below/

Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path

2.9.3 Orkney has 570 miles of coastline, only some of which is accessible to walkers and cyclists, for example, Birsay to Stromness on the west coast of the mainland, much of South Ronaldsay, long stretches of the St Magnus Way, plus various routes on the wider islands. There is considerable potential to attract key target markets and to expand access to the coastline by filling gaps and creating a full coastal walk for Orkney. This would initially focus on the mainland and linked isles, with other islands potentially following incrementally, if appropriate to their island and the desires of their communities. The initial route would therefore be less than 570 miles

2.9.4 The development of a full coastal path network would join up the various existing paths including non-coastal, partially coastal routes and inland routes creating a strong new offer for Orkney as a place to explore safely and confidently of foot, whilst dispersing visitors across the land to take in the changing landscapes and seasons. It would be supported by signage, orientation and interpretation, highlighting routes, key stories and signposting attractions and assets.



Loop Paths Network

2.9.5 The Asset Audit revealed 18 advertised walking routes across the islands along with many additional public paths. Whilst the relatively gentle walking and cycling that Orkney's landscape offers should be an asset in itself, it is hindered by the disjointed and disconnected routes. Many of the paths are either a route from A to B, requiring walkers to turn back and return along the same route, or they feature dangerous or unappealing section including fast roads without pavements.

2.9.6 The lack of signage and wayfinding along the paths, discourages exploration of the wider landscape for fear of getting lost or not returning in good time. This is also compounded by the condition and / or visibility of routes i.e. they may not be well defined enough to encourage a walker to use them. The creation of shorter, inland loop routes, some adjoining coastal routes too, will combine existing routes with new routes, encouraging safe and confident exploration and supporting dispersal. The expansion of the loop path network would be supported by signage, orientation and interpretation

2.9.7 Examples of new routes could include:

- Expanding nature reserve walks across the islands to create wildlife focussed loops
- Carin-to-Cairn loop (between Cuween Cairn and Widedford Cairn)
- Happy Valley Loop around the wider landscape
- Upland walks in northeast mainland
- Loop walks in the wider landscapes around Lochs using the lochs as a centrepiece with occasional access to the shore where environmental constraints allow

2.9.8 There is also the potential to create an Orkney wide 'peak challenge' potentially linking and promoting: Ward Hill, Hoy (481m), Mid Hill, Mainland (275m), Blotchnie Field, Rousay (250m) and Fitty Hill, Westray (169m).

Expanded Cycle Network

2.9.9 Most cycle routes revealed in the Asset Audit are promoted by Northlink Ferries and range from 38km to 140km across the mainland and Hoy. Sustrans also advertises a Burwick to Kirkwall to Stromness route (NCN1) of 126km cutting through the mainland and South Ronaldsay.

2.9.10 There is scope to expand the network still, linking up more settlements, destination hubs and service hubs taking a cyclist through various landscape and to more attractions. It would be supported by signage, route information, cycle racks, covered cycle storage and electric bike charging points. Below shows these potential routes, all subject to further development.



2.9.11 An enhanced network will encourage dispersal and is environmentally sustainable, encouraging visitors to take this zero-carbon form of transport spending more time outdoors and at more attractions.

Delivery, Timetable and Costs

2.9.12 The development of the three projects would be delivered by two dedicated project officers in OIC (covering the Coastal Path, Loop Path and Cycle way projects). These additional roles would need to be externally funded. It is initially proposed that these roles would be hosted for three years to enable audit of the additional routes and planning and initial implementation of the projects.

2.9.13 It is anticipated that the full delivery of the projects will take longer than three years, particularly given need for landowner consent, planning etc and that further funding will be required in future years. This additional funding will need to be sought and obtained in the 1st three years.

2.9.14 In terms of design development and delivery, all routes and interventions would be fully assessed against environmental priorities and would be designed sensitively, with wildlife and habitats a priority. The routes would need to meet appropriate standards and there would need to be a cohesion in terms of the design of signage and furniture along the routes.

2.9.15 Landowner negotiation will be required to establish new paths / improve existing paths. Delivery and design works would then need to be implemented over an agreed period. This process would need to be led by an OIC team.

2.9.16 Initial costs have been estimated as follows:

- Two Project officer costs for 3 years are estimated at £300,000 inc overheads.
- Coastal Path - initial £250,000 exc VAT capital funding (budget allowance) to support the installation of footpath reinforcement, signage, styles etc. This budget allowance will need to be reviewed over the initial 3-year phase of the project to identify need for, and scale of further funding

- Loop Paths - initial £100,000 exc VAT capital funding (budget allowance) to support the installation of footpath reinforcement, signage, styles etc. This budget allowance will need to be reviewed over the initial 3-year phase of the project to identify need for, and scale of further funding.
- Cycle Network - initial £75,000 exc VAT capital funding (budget allowance) to support the installation of signage and shelters. Noting that the other Essential Projects for the 6 hubs identified above, include shelter provision and e-bike charging which would support the delivery of this project. This budget allowance will need to be reviewed over the initial 3-year phase of the project to identify need for, and scale of further funding

2.10 Overall Project Delivery

2.10.1 The STIDP has identified the need for a **Programme Manager** to support the further development and delivery of the Essential Projects (including those identified for potential funding through the RTIF) and to support partners with developing and driving forward the Desirable Projects.

2.10.2 This role would be situated within OIC to ensure coordination between key parties. The role would be required for at least 3 years (from early / mid-2022) and will require dedicated external funding of c. £175,000.

2.10.3 Funding for this post is being sought from the RTIF (noting that the proposed cost is less than 10% of the total project Cap Ex costs identified as for submission to the RTIF).

2.11 Summary of Costs

2.11.1 The following presents a summary over of the costs associated with the proposed projects

	Cost estimate	Notes
Area 1: Reinforce visitor infrastructure on the mainland		
Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections	£677,063 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
St Margaret's Hope Visitor Infrastructure	£189,750 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation

	Cost estimate	Notes
Dounby Visitor Infrastructure	£405,375 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Finstown Visitor Infrastructure	£107,813 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Stromness Visitor Infrastructure	£116,438 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure	£103,500 exc VAT	Includes fees, contingency and inflation
Area 2: Drive regenerative tourism across the islands		
Pilot projects for Community-led Tourism Plans	£56,700 exc VAT	Consultancy stage only Includes fees and contingency
Area 4: Expand green & active travel / exploration		
Round Mainland Orkney Coastal Path	£300,000 staff costs £250,000 exc VAT works	Includes for 2 officers for 3 years, plus initial cap ex allowance Officers also lead Loop Path and Cycle network projects
Loop Paths Network:	£staff inc. above £100,000 exc VAT works	initial cap ex allowance
Expand Cycle Network	£staff inc. above £75,000 exc VAT works	initial cap ex allowance

Total costs:

Cap ex and consultancy fees: £2,081,639 exc VAT

Active Travel Officers: £300,000

Programme Manager: £175,000

Total: £2,556,639 exc VAT

APPENDIX A – TIMETABLE

		Year 1				Year 2				Year 3	
		2022				2023				2024	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
AREA 1: REINFORCE VISITOR INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE MAINLAND											
Birsay Visitor Infrastructure and Landscape Connections	Community-led planning and engagement process										
	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3)										
	Land owner negotiation										
	Planning and consents										
	Detailed design and Delivery										
St Margaret's Hope Visitor Infrastructure	Parking review and engagement with community										
	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3) for paths and E-Bike										
	Planning and consents										
	Detailed design and Delivery										
Dounby Visitor Infrastructure	Feasibility and Design (to RIBA 3)										
	Planning and consents										
	Detailed design and Delivery										
Finstown Visitor Infrastructure	Feasibility and Design										
	Planning and procurement										
	Delivery										
Stromness Visitor Infrastructure	Feasibility and Design										
	Planning and procurement										
	Delivery										
Kirkwall Visitor Infrastructure	Feasibility and Design										
	Planning and procurement										
	Delivery										
AREA 2: DRIVE REGENERATIVE TOURISM ACROSS THE ISLANDS											
Community-led Visioning Workshops and Masterplans	Brief preparation and procurement										
	Delivery of 5 pilots										
	Refinement of methodology										