

Sabina Strachan  
Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site Co-ordinator  
Historic Scotland  
Room 1.22  
Longmore House  
Salisbury Place  
Edinburgh EH9 1SH

17 June 2008

Dear Ms Strachan

RESPONSE TO HEART OF NEOLITHIC ORKNEY MANAGEMENT PLAN 08-13

The Society is grateful for the opportunity to take part in the consultation on this important management plan. Information on the Society is available on our website, but as the senior antiquarian body in Scotland we believe strongly that any management plan dealing with a World Heritage Site should include strong commitments to the preservation and conservation of our historic environment assets, and that best practice be applied at all levels of this plan.

Outwith the series of questions noted in the Response Form, we would note that the Figures are incorrectly referenced throughout, with Fig A3 apparently having been inserted and thus being confused throughout the document with Fig A4, and thus A4 with A5 etc. In addition we would note that in Section 4.5.3 the international legislative framework should include the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) Valletta 1992, and the European Landscape Convention (Florence 2000).

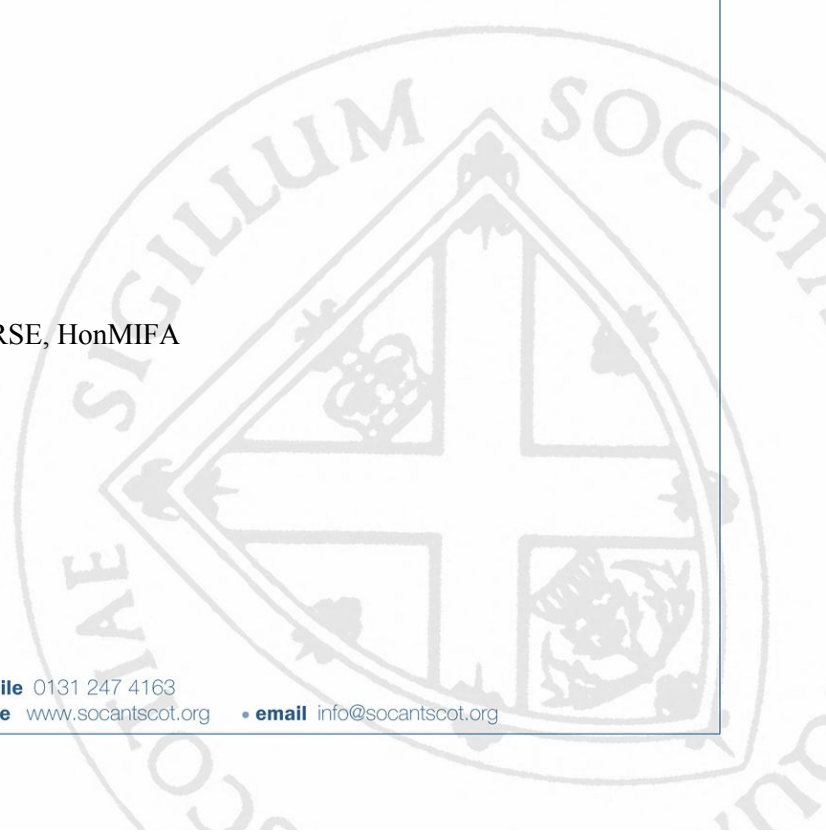
We enclose the Response Form as requested and also enclose the Respondent Information Form.

Yours sincerely

P.P. ROGER MERCER OBE, MA, FSA, FRSE, HonMIFA  
President

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HS Consultation Response ref: ORK/WHS/014  
RESPONSE FORM:

HEART OF NEOLITHIC ORKNEY WORLD HERITAGE SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2008–13

Please complete your name and address below and add your comments on the consultation beneath each question. Please return it with your respondent information form.  
Thank you for your help.

Name	Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
Postal Address	c/o National Museums Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF
<b>HEART OF NEOLITHIC ORKNEY WORLD HERITAGE SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2008–13</b>	
<b>Question 1</b> Do you have any comments on the current Buffer Zone?	
<p>The current Buffer Zone does not encapsulate the full extent of the 1998 Inner Buffer Zone around Stromness, but then neither does the 1998 Outer Buffer Zone. From analysis of the maps provided it appear that the Zone of Visual Influence on which the Current Buffer Zone is based does not incorporate the visible hillsides and summits around the WHS. We would suggest that this is potentially problematic for a site that has landscape as a core value. The Current Buffer Zone would also appear to utilise ephemeral boundaries such as fencelines, and this could lead to problematic distinctions in the future. The Outer Buffer Zones of both the Stenness area and the Skara Brae area have an artificial gap between them, which we would also see as potentially problematic in future.</p>	
<b>Question 2</b> Do you have any comments on the proposed Buffer Zones?	
<p>The Local Buffer Zone around Stenness is similar to the Zone of Visual Influence but uses more substantial and robust boundaries, particularly on its eastern side. We would encourage further use of more substantial boundaries around the entire perimeter of the LBZ. The Local Buffer Zone still suffers from not including the hill slopes and summits, especially those noted in the analysis provided by Atkins. The Skara Brae Local Buffer Zone is much larger than the previous Inner Buffer Zone, and more preferable to that previous 1998 IBZ. The Large Buffer Zone, taking in all the hillsides, and indeed the majority of Mainland and a large extension South is ambitious and to be recommended.</p>	
<b>Question 3</b> Do you have any comments on the Other Values of the World Heritage Site; is anything missing?	

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These other values are to be commended, we would advise replacing "as" with "because" as a minor grammatical change.

**Question 4**

Do you have any comments on the range of Stakeholders that have an interest in the World Heritage Site; are any missing?

The list of Stakeholders is comprehensive, without greater local knowledge the Society is not in a place to comment on its veracity. However, from a national strategic point of view we would ask that RCAHMS be considered as a partner institution in ALL World Heritage Sites in Scotland, since it is the public body with a remit for recording and archiving material on Scotland's places. There is specific reference in Section 3.3.4.3 "Other Values" to the development of WHS depictions on cartography; as the national body with a remit to provide the Ordnance Survey with heritage information for incorporation on maps of Scotland this would be an area directly relevant to the RCAHMS.

**Question 5**

Do you have any comments on the Evaluation of the Aims and Actions of the 2001 Management Plan; is anything missing?

No comment

**Question 6**

Do you have any comments on The Vision or Long-term Aims for the World Heritage Site?

No comment

**Question 7**

Do you have any comments on the Issues identified for the World Heritage Site over the next

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five years; is anything missing?

No comment

**Question 8**

What in your opinion is/are the Issue(s) of the highest priority and why?

Issue 2 is a priority, as are Issues 5 & 6 since clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the various partners and stakeholders underpins the effective management of all aspects of the WHS. This must ensure that no aspect of the management etc. of the WHS is left without a lead partner taking responsibility.

**Question 9**

Do you think that there any issues in the Management Plan that may affect an equality group (age, disability, religion and belief, gender, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender), race); if so, how, and what can be done to mitigate them?

The Society considers that disability will always be an issue that will be difficult to address comprehensively in a landscape environment.

**Question 10**

Do you have any comments on any of the specific Objectives, how they relate to the Issues and how they have been prioritised?

Objective 2: Consideration of the definition of Setting has wider implications for ALL heritage assets and should be pursued in consultation with developments in Historic Scotland and with stakeholders across the sector.

Objective 5: The Society suggests that Ministers consider a World Heritage Site SHEP to provide a robust background and guidance.

Objectives 15&16: The WHS monitoring should be instructed to provide information to the Scotland's Historic Environment Audit (SHEA).

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Objective 18: The Society would welcome any information forthcoming from the development and consultation on a research agenda/framework/objectives to inform and consult with the Scottish Archaeological Research Framework Project (ScARF) currently being undertaken by the Society. The first of the panels to be formed in this Project is the Neolithic panel. The Society contact is Dr Jeff Sanders (jeff@socantscot.org 0131 247 4138).

Objective 20: The Society would suggest that the Education Officer of Archaeology Scotland could be contacted in this regard.

Objective 21: The Society would encourage any development of electronic linking of records of objects to include consideration and discussion between OAT and RCAHMS to allow linking directly to and from their site-based records too.

Objective 29: The development of WHS "microsites" is currently haphazard depending on the partners involved and the lead management. The Society suggests that HS seriously consider a World Heritage Site portal for Scotland, with brief information on each site and a clear and easy clickable route direct to all such "microsites" created for ALL Scotland's WHS's, this could include links to the relevant VisitScotland websites etc. Objective 29 could increase its aspiration to incorporate a wider appeal and direct links to tourism through VisitOrkney and natural heritage portals/websites.

Objective 32: The Society is keen to emphasise that the importance of the Single Outcome Agreement should not be underestimated, and would advise that this is maintained as a High priority. It should be clear that this can develop over time, and should be considered at a national strategic level to provide measurable outcomes that can be included in the Outcomes for the whole heritage sector across Scotland's Local Authorities.

**Question 11**

Do you have any comments on how any of the specific Objectives will be monitored?

Issue 4 should include a core objective to maintain and develop worldwide access to this stunning WHS resource. See Objective 29 comments above as a possible measure.

**Question 12**

Do you have any general comments about how the Management Plan will be implemented and progress reported?

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No comment. The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland is wholeheartedly supportive of this and the other World Heritage Site initiatives, and is always available for further discussion as required.

**Question 13**

Do you have any other comments about the Management Plan that you have not covered in your responses to other questions?

The Society would note that the Figures are incorrectly referenced throughout, with Fig A3 apparently having been inserted and thus being confused throughout the document with Fig A4, and thus A4 with A5 etc.

In addition, we would note that in Section 4.5.3 the international legislative framework should include the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) Valletta 1992, and the European Landscape Convention (Florence 2000).

**ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT**

**Question 14**

Do you have any comments on the baseline information, or the environmental problems/issues?

No comment

**Question 15**

Do you have any comments on the approach taken for the environmental assessment?

No comment

**Question 16**

Do you agree with the results of the environmental assessment? Have we identified the key issues?

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No comment

**Question 17**

Do you have any comments on the environmental mitigation measures, including the schedule of commitments?

No comment

**Question 18**

Do you have any comments on the proposed additional environmental monitoring indicators?

No comment