

Table 6 Overall conclusions from Stage 3 – the short-list of possible areas

	Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats	Conclusion
Solway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality natural and cultural heritage – probably the strongest of the firths overall • Accessible area, with good transport infrastructure and potential for developing opportunities for enjoyment and recreation • Some issues and opportunities in area - could benefit from better planning and management • Considerable social and economic benefit for area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As accessible to England as within Scotland • Added value of a NP would be in terms of developing potential rather than resolving current issues which are generally of lower order than in the other firths 	Short-list
Clyde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some high quality areas of natural and cultural heritage • Very popular area for marine and coastal recreation • Very accessible area, with good transport infrastructure and a wide range of opportunities for enjoyment and recreation • Significant issues and opportunities in area - could benefit from better planning and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns over natural heritage quality throughout management unit – particularly on the east; • Current recreational provision is good compared to some of the other areas • Less dependence of coastal communities on the use of the coastal and marine environment • Possibly less social and economic benefit than other areas • Very close proximity to Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park 	
Argyll Coast and Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high quality natural and cultural heritage, particularly in the principal area • Very popular area for marine and coastal recreation • Accessible area, with wide range of opportunities for enjoyment and recreation • Significant issues and opportunities in larger area - could benefit from better planning and management • Some social and economic benefit for area overall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current recreational provision is good compared to some of the other areas • Visitor facilities and infrastructure already at or near capacity at peak times of year • Social and economic benefit greater in most remote part of area 	Short-list
Argyll Islands, Lochaber and South Skye Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high quality natural and cultural heritage • Popular area for marine and coastal recreation • Accessible area, with a range of opportunities for enjoyment and recreation • Significant issues and opportunities in area and covers 2 local authorities - could benefit from better planning and management • Considerable social and economic benefit for area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large area – may lack coherence • Current recreational provision is quite good compared to other areas • Some concern that increased visitors could detract from its special qualities 	Short-list

Lochaber South Skye Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high quality natural and cultural heritage • Popular area for marine and coastal recreation • Accessible area, with a range of opportunities for enjoyment and recreation • Some issues and opportunities in area - could benefit from better planning and management • Considerable social and economic benefit for area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current recreational provision is quite good compared to other areas • Some concern that increased visitors could detract from its special qualities 	Short-list
Wester Ross and North Skye Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality natural heritage • Popular area for coastal recreation • Some issues and opportunities in area - could benefit from better planning and management • Considerable social and economic benefit for area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less accessible area • Current recreational provision is quite good compared to other areas 	Short-list
North Uist, Sound of Harris, Harris and South Lewis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high quality natural and cultural heritage • Some issues and opportunities in area - could benefit from better planning and management • Significant social and economic benefits possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively inaccessible area • Marine recreation limited to more specialist activities • Visitor facilities and infrastructure limited 	Short-List
South Uist, Sound of Barra, Barra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high quality natural and cultural heritage • Significant social and economic benefits possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively inaccessible area • Marine recreation limited to more specialist activities • Visitor facilities and infrastructure limited • Less added value of the Park because of fewer issues and opportunities 	
Orkney and Pentland Firth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality natural and cultural heritage • Some issues and opportunities in area - could benefit from better planning and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively inaccessible area • Less added value of the Park because of single local authority, with marine powers for part of its area • Less overall social and economic benefit than other areas • Larger area covering Pentland Firth raises some concerns over safety and also future offshore renewable energy development 	

Shetland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high quality natural and cultural heritage • Some important issues and opportunities in area – particularly within sheltered waters - which could benefit from better planning and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively inaccessible area • Less added value of the Park because of single local authority powers and other management arrangements • Less overall social and economic benefit than other areas 	
Fair Isle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality natural heritage • Supportive local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively inaccessible area • Less added value of the Park – fishing issues could be addressed in other ways • Less overall social and economic benefit than other areas 	
Moray Firth & Inner/East Moray Firth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some areas of high quality natural and cultural heritage • Accessible area, with wide range of opportunities for enjoyment and recreation • Some issues and opportunities in area - could benefit from better planning and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some concerns over natural heritage quality throughout management unit; • Less social and economic benefit than other areas • Natural heritage qualities are confined to a relatively narrow coastal strip. 	