### REPRESENTATIONS

mments received 30.01.25 bjection 21/06/2024 remains the same as I do not see any significant changes to the chough I see that an archaeology report has been submitted. The repurposing of land into a commercial campervan and campsite will have significant knock on effects ghbouring residents/crofters along Tráigh Bheasdaire. Why have they not taken this tion? Ing in this statement that acknowledges the impact to the traditional croft-land Rushgarry and Sandhill. Non campsite visitors will now be driven further along in vehicles and in doing so will disturb the natural habitat that this area is famous for. tion of a stock fence along the east side of the road we have seen visitors driving down chair embankment to reach the lower beach level breaking the ground as they do so ting stuck in the process. ked hard on our Croft to re-wild designated areas to encourage wildlife. Since my ction letter we have seen this summer the welcome return of Corncrakes and the new art-Eared Owls.
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ction letter we have seen this summer the welcome return of Corncrakes and the new
hat we experience here have historically sought the peace and tranquility of this poilt and unique accessible beach in the Outer Hebrides. The presence of a commercial have consequences. In my daily walks along the shoreline I meet people passing slands who value the unspoilt natural and wide open uninterrupted views. They will ere. Furthermore there is nothing in this updated application about the impact on our infrastructure with a single narrow road leading past residents homes to the north end Residents out for a walk or parents and grandparents pushing prams have to regularly let large motorhomes pass by. This in my view has an unacceptable impact on our and our safety.
meeting with the investors of Berneray Sands Ltd and despite promises to engage dents, the company with its external investors has refused to talk to residents despite its through our Island Community Council. I am deeply anxious that the Campsite is e of a more ambitious tourist industry development.
e precious but vulnerable to any man-made activity that could compromise our fragile lune system. In the recently broadcast BBC Alba programme Eòrpa: After the Storm 5) environmental experts including Professor Stewart Angus (NatureScot), our local d MSP discuss the fragility of our dunes and lack of funds and resources to protect ts. Should policy makers not be adopting a preventive conservation strategy? One that mmercial development of our natural and ecologically sensitive coastline. We have a and duty of care to ensure that future generations of residents enjoy our islands and unspoilt part of Berneray.
uld like send a short video that evidences the return of Corncrakes to our Croft in a is within view of the proposed site area.

27A	Additional comments received 28.01.2025
	I write to confirm my continuing objection to the above updated application, and ask that you take into consideration my previous letter of objection dated 31/12/2024.
	Recent storms have brought even more into focus the devastating collapse of the dune system at East Beach, in particular the small area which remains at high tide. The chances of the proposed site becoming at flood risk are considerable, and the proposed reaction to this, to move to 'higher ground', surely goes directly against the previously stated intention to make the site as unobtrusive as possible. I have not understood, from the start, how a site of this nature can ever be 'Unobtrusive' but certainly, any movement to higher ground will not help this. I understand that a development of this sort in an area of flood risk goes directly against advice in the Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan. There can be little doubt that an increased footfall and 'drivefall' in this area will compact the underlying ground which makes it even more liable to erosion. The applicants write of planting more Marram grass to help stabilise the dunes, but seem to be unaware that Marram will not thrive after planting unless it is left undisturbed. With the best will in the world, the increased numbers concentrated in this area, are not going to leave plantings undisturbed!
	The minor changes in the updated application do nothing to address the problem that the development is completely in the wrong place. It will have a major effect on a beautiful area full of varied wildlife, and particularly on ground and dune nesting birds. It is an area designated as Croft land, not as the semi-industrial site proposed! The road system through the island already struggles to cope with the volume of large mobile homes, and will be put under huge pressure if such a development increases the number of these travelling over the island. It is particularly concerning that the application is made in the name of the crofter tenant, but is backed by others who have no connection to the island, and plainly no appreciation of the unique character of the place, which will be dented, if not destroyed, by a development on this site. I feel very strongly that this application should be rejected outright, and that the way forward is to encourage Berneray crofters to accept 2 or 3 Mobile homes at a time(I understand up to 3 are allowed without the need for permission), so that the effects are spread out, instead of concentrated in such a small and vulnerable area.
28A	is already a good case for refusal. Additional comments received 28.01.2025
204	I write to request that my original letter of objection (30/12/2024) to the proposed camp site at 8 Rushgarry, Berneray be carried forward and looked at in conjunction with my comments of objection in response to the amended plan.
	I urgently request that a visit is made by a member of the planning decisions committee to understand exactly the area of the proposal, in relation to the area of East Beach and the entirety of the 2x3 mile island, with its population of approx 130 (Berneray Community web site.)
	There are already lodged letters of objection from residents of East Beach that specify the relevant areas of discrepancies to the original proposal and areas of concern, referred to the corresponding OHLDP sub sections and paragraphs which I whole heartedly support. Additionally The Islands Scotland Act of 2018, The Scotland Land Reform Act 2003.
	Environmental Stewardship for Future Generations.
	The European Landscape Convention 2006 encouraging understanding of what is special about 'our place, what defines 'identity.' Scotland's Place and Communities. Its stories, traditions, skills and

Safeguarding for future Generations, the value of our landscape.

Guidance on Designation of Local Landscapes. P21 Table 1. Landscape criterion, Scenic -

Landscapes with strong visual, sensory and perceptual impacts--- appreciated for its beauty.

Landscape that has a strong sense of identity, Landscape with a strong sense of place,

Landscape which contributes to both the physical and psychological health and well being of a local community.

Mental Health and well being.--- importance of 'spatial' awareness, including dark skies.

The proposed site is not a romantic image coined by 'Berneray Sands' (CN SC753583) its proposal seeks a commercial scale and destruction of what so many who live and come to Berneray, seek.

Surely the voices of residents, islanders and those visitors and businesses whose livelihoods are based on the very appreciation of the peace, the rare and unique natural environment and nature in its widest forms should be considered?

In speaking to a couple from Germany staying (without own transport) at the Gatliff Trust during the community 'Tea' on December 30<sup>th</sup>, they did not know of the proposed Camp site and were horrified by its proposed impact. One of the couple based his whole year on this quiet and beautiful place. This was his 9<sup>th</sup> visit, his partner her 2<sup>nd</sup>. They were devastated and said it would mean the end of their visits if the proposal went ahead.

I object

to the damage/disturbance/possible extinction in our time of certain rarities of flora, fauna including those red and amber listed species that this proposal could bring about. The proposal to bring in potentially 100 plus people daily, additional discrepancies of the number of vehicles on the site daily.

The disturbance through foot fall, noise, human /pets ---land /air /and sea pollution eg waters looking so beautiful Seilibost and Luskentyre but deemed to be a high health hazard due to high e-coli levels.

East Beach is horse shoe shaped, far smaller than the above, its waters home to rare divers and resident otters.

The only East facing Beach on the Uists.

The pathway for migratory species.

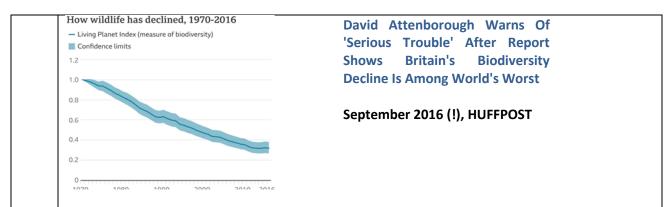
Light Pollution, disturbance to human and nature--- altering of circadian rhythms.

The effects upon our 'dark skies.'

Consultation. It happened. Tick box. However it needed to be well advertised, meaningful, and not presented as a 'done deal.'

A Full EIA is required.

	Since this Proposal my sense of Solastalgia, Mental Health and well Being has been severely compromised.
	I am not alone in this feeling of outrage at what is being proposed.
	My sense of place and concerns for the natural world, the unique and fragile eco system, the respect for the planets' inhabitants and deep seated concerns that this is not croft owner led, and lack of empathy if passed, that this beautiful island will become another mismanaged destruction of habitat, like yet another media led 'Skye, The North Coast 500', etc.
	I thank you in advance for taking the time to consider and relate these objections to the above planning application and its short, medium and long term effects on island life, its culture, heritage, natural heritage and its unique position, physically and metaphorically, with influence on global natural issues.
	There are so many factors that influence this objection and I sincerely hope the above and preceding comments make it clear that I object in the strongest possible terms to this proposed development, and how it 'sits' within the entirety of East Beach, the Island and its negative effects for the Planet.
29	Regarding the Berneray campsite May application (24/00180/PPD) and Clachan sands, October
	application 24/00314/PPD, I object on the grounds that neither have a full environmental impact survey (unless they are not accessible to the public due to the cyber attack?). Whilst managing
	tourism on the island and providing an income for local communities is a must, these
	business models will derive financial profit from the island's unique ecosystems and therefore they
	have a responsibility to preserve and restore them as appropriate. Despite their potential, I cannot support either proposal without the appropriate EIA and resulting mitigating actions and ongoing
	responsibilities for sustainable management. This will be particularly important with the increased
	footfall in both areas. I would however, like to commend the Benerary applicants for considering climate change adaptation, the scale of the campsite and the sensitive design of any infrastructure.
	I would hope both applications are being considered as part of a longer-term plan for managing tourism and other income-generating activities on the islands, including exploring ways of deriving value from the land through conservation (carbon credits etc) rather than land use change.
	If both applications can contribute to local communities, whilst protecting and ideally enhancing the natural ecosystems on which they rely, I very much look forward to seeing the projects take shape.
30	I would like to register my objecton to the SIZE of the proposed Campsite at No. 8 Ruisgarry on the Isle of Berneray.
	A smaller sized, nature friendly proposal, which would offer maybe 10 tent pitches, only a very limited number of motorhome pitches and smaller, reduced facilitities, could maybe be a creative way to invite nature loving tourists who visit the island in search of quiet, spactacular views and the Flora and Fauna of the island.
	As custodian of the land, and given the dreary situation of wildlife - UK, including Scotland, in general
	<i>being two of the most wildlife depleted countries</i> - it should be our aim to support regeneration of habitats and not to put more and more pressure on such sites.



The latest State of Nature report shows that much of the wildlife in the UK and its Overseas territories is in serious trouble. In Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) 1,500 species are now at risk of being lost completely.

https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/news/state-of-nature-report#degraded- habitats

Before mentioning the reasons for my objection I would like to **appreciate the positive factors mentioned in the Campsite proposal**.

1. "....There is a small colony of sandmartins at the north end of the beach ...The majority of the tunnels are at the very top of the dune structures and these are vulnerable to coastal erosion. A way to support the colony of birds and it's growth would be to fund an artificial sandbank to provide a nesting place that is protected from the risk of coastal erosion during storms. The applicant would therefore commit to installing the proposed artificial sandbank to encourage the sandmartins to remain on the beach and for their colony to grow in the future. <a href="https://afterminerals.com/advisory-sheet/rspb-langford-lowfields-artificial-sand-martin-bank-creation/">https://afterminerals.com/advisory-sheet/rspb-langford-lowfields-artificial-sand-martin-bank-creation/</a>

2. "....machair flowers will be sown on the turf roof to enhance the machair grass and encourage bees, butterflies, insects and birds to inhabit the roof. The addition of the wild flowers to the grazing machair grass will seek to encourage a rich variety of species to the campsite area. The wildflower species that would thrive within the Berneray machair and which the applicant would seek to sow would be; ox-eye daisy, yellow rattle, bird's foot trefoil, kidney vetch, corn marigold, wild pansy, red bartsia, earth marsh orchid, common centaury, common knapweed, tufted vetch and red clover."

Very well thought through and positive

Comment to nr. 2:

I have walked the grazing machair very often. The soil surface on this part of machair just above the beach is quite thin. The dominant species there are:

the beautiful, scented Lady's Bedstraw (Galium verum), Eyebright (Euphrasia sp.), in some places Yarrow (Achillea millefolium)., Common Daisy (Bellis perennis). plus some species suggested by the applicant: Red and white Clover, Bird's foot Trifoil (Lotus corniculatus), etc.

**Ox eye Daisy, Knapweed and Corn Marigold,** are too high growing for the grazing machair grass and will thrive on the croftland on the other side of the fence.

3. *"The campsite's policy on Climate Change and Biodiversity will also seek to educate visitors about the machair and the sand dune formations on the site. Clear signage will be provided to direct visitors to the protected beach access points..."* 

Comment to Nr 3

Many visitors will come with their dogs. Free roaming dogs in the breeding season are a very big problem for vulnerable ground-breeding birds. They should be **kept on a lead from Mid-April to Mid-July.** 

	Additional comment to 1. Buildings and Structures "The proposals include a minimal approach to disturbing the landscape on the site." It isn't a minimal disturbance, but will be seen from the viewpoint above the bus shelter, especially in early Spring / late Autumn and Winter when the lights will be switched on. For wildlife, especially AVIFAUNA, a campsite of the suggested size brings too much disturbance.
	Main Reason for my objection: The vulnerable situation of the AVIFAUNA
	1. Berneray East beach lies on the main (or one of the main) migratory route(s) of many seabirds, Gulls, Divers, Waders and Passerines.
	On their way North in Autumn as on their way South in Spring, after crossing the Minch, many birds land to rest and feed on Busdara beach. (This cannot be said of Berneray Westbeach: Migratory birds passing Westbeach are in a very small proportion compared to the number observed at Busdara Beach as the birds tend to forage on seaweed).
	2. Busdara Beach is one of the very few <b>East side beaches of the Uists</b> and so most important for migratory birds, as mentioned above.
	3. Busdara beach also offers (used to offer) in summer <b>nesting opportunities for ground nesting birds</b> which are very vulnerable to disturbance by too many visitors and especially by free roaming dogs.
	Ground breeding birds are:
	<b>RINGED PLOVER,</b> now on the RED LIST of endangered birds. Chooses sand, shingle and gravel pit to breed. (I observed one or two breeding pairs on our beach but not in the last two or three years. Too much disturbance). <b>ON RED LIST</b>
	Here a list of other birds observed by me on Busdara Beach, all of them of AMBER LIST of conservation concerns
	Turnstone, Sanderling, Redshank, Arctic Tern, Mallard, Shelduck, Black-throated Diver, Red- breasted Merganser, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull,
	Here a list of other birds observed by me on Busdara <b>Beach</b> , all of them of RED LIST of endangered species:
	Shag, Lapwing, Curlew, Whimbrel, Blacktailed Godwit, Dunlin, Purple Sandpiper, Corncrake, Linnet Birds of Conservation Concern is compiled by a coalition of the UK's leading bird conservationand monitoring organisations and reviews the status of all regularly occurring birds in the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man.
	The assessments show that the status of UK bird populations continues to decline.
	Birds of Conservation Concern   BTO - British Trust for Ornithology
31	I am writing to register my objection to this proposal. I am doing this on the grounds that:
	1. The scale of the development is disproportionate to the size of the island and the number of its residents.
	2.It will contribute to the present drift towards 'over-tourism' in the Western Isles.
	The Scale of the Development
	There has long been a need for a formal arrangement for campers and motorhomes/campervans on Berneray. Over recent years the local population have noted the increase in these large vehicles on the island and their negative impact on the machair and the natural environment. This was

particularly so near the Queen's Beach where the coastline was clearly deteriorating due to excessive overnight camping. A decision was made to restrict access to the machair on the west side of Berneray to agricultural vehicles only, and a second designated parking area was made available for day-time parking only. Unfortunately this has led to increased wild camping behind the popular East Beach dunes at Beasdaire, an area already prone to coastal erosion and experiencing land degradation due to excessive vehicular use.

category collected on different days, may not be able to cope with this huge increase of waste. With Increased traffic on the main road the road surface will inevitably deteriorate. There may with be more congestion, possibly potholes, damage to the verges, and a greater risk of trips and falls. A walk down the island might not be the pleasurable activity it used to be.

People come to the islands for many reasons - the landscape, the culture, the remoteness, the wilderness, the peace and quiet of it all. They also come for the small scale, 'home grown' nature of the place, Berneray Week being a perfect example. They like shopping in the small locally owned, sometimes quirky shops. They enjoy the variety of our eating outlets -cafes, restaurants, outdoor food booths. Small museums, often run by historical societies and staffed by volunteers are very popular. They like staying with local people, striking up a relationship with them and finding out about the place. They also like small scale camping opportunities.

On the island of Vatersay with a population of 80, there is a very successful sustainable camping arrangement, for campers in tents and motor homes run from the local Community Hall. They do not have a campsite. They have 6 designated areas, on croft land, by the main road, each with 4 spaces, for campervans to overnight park( Maximum stay 3 nights) They also have camping space on croft land, outside the perimeter of the Community Hall (Maximum people 2, Maximum stay. 2 nights) They are all out with the visibility of the local population. The shower and toilet facilities, open 24 hours, are based at the local Community Hall as is the Honesty Box where donations are left for overnight stays.

The island of Tiree has also found a solution for accommodating campervans. It is the Croft Camping Site business which provides pitches on crofts for solo campers and caravaners, people in cars and on motor bikes with tents and people with campervans and motorhomes. Each croft supports 3 pitches only All sites are greenfield, un-serviced pitches with no hook-ups. Central facilities are available at one site where crofts are close to each other. Guests book a pitch for a night in advance.

Parking sites specifically for camper vans called Arias are very common in France and more recently in Spain, Italy and Portugal. They are parking areas for self-contained motor homes where people can park overnight. Every town and village in France has one. They are mostly provided by local councils but private ones also exist. They provide the most basic of facilities – fresh water, toilets, waste water exchange and waste disposal. They are operated by parking ticket machines and are inexpensive. They are suitable for people on the move rather than holiday makers. Any, or a mixture of the above, in combination with small camp sites with facilities of lower environmental impact could provide sort of solution for campervans.

Berneray is a small beautiful island renowned for its wild flowers, birds and beaches. It used to be known as 'The Green Jewel of the Sound'. We want people to come here and enjoy it as we do but not at the expense of the natural environment. Solutions have to be found that are low-key, and unobtrusive and in keeping with scale of this place. In this age of sustainable tourism this must be surely possible.

## The Threat of Over-tourism

Over-tourism occurs when too many visitors flock to the same place, causing detrimental impacts on the environment, local communities, and visitor experience.' (Sustainable Travel International)

Since the Covid pandemic has ended there has been a global surge of interest in travel and holidays. This has been fuelled by our increasing exposure to screens in the form of films, social media, mobile phones internet and television and our easier access to information. We are constantly seeing new places we would like to visit and it is so easy now to find a place and book a holiday. It is only recently we realised that tourism could be a problem and could have a negative impact on our own lives, with the growth of short-term holiday lets locally and the subsequent lack of rented accommodation for young people and others. First we heard of Barcelona contemplating banning Airbnb because of its negative impact on housing there. Then it was Rome charging tourists an entrance fee to visit the city because of congestion in the centre. Now over- tourism has come closer to home with graphic examples of it in places like Skye, Orkney and Wester Ross.

# The Island of Skye

Skye has always been a holiday destination, however in recent years numbers have increased exponentially. In 2017 a Guardian article described islanders complaints about the island's poor provision for tourists and the impact on the local population: a lack of public toilets and people defecating in public spaces, lack of parking and tourists parking on verges damaging the roadsides, – local people unable to get from A to B or access their crofts, roads choked with camper vans, tour buses and cars, and huge congestion at tourist hotspots like the Old Man of Storr, Neist Point the Quiraing.

By 2024 a 1million people were expected to visit Skye annually. This is a huge number for an island populated with a population of 13,,000 people. It must have been a mystifying experience for the small hamlet in Glenbrittle near the Fairy Pools, to witness, over two decades, the transformation of their relatively unknown backwater, into one of the nation's tourist hotspots. By 2024 200,00 visitors, were expected to visit the Fairy Pools annually.

Today the overcrowding still goes on and the local authority is struggling to limit numbers by introducing a Park and Ride type arrangement or a booking system to stagger visits during the day.

Carrell. C.2017 Skye Islanders call for help with overcrowding after tourist surge. The Guardian 09 August. Accessed 30 January 2025

Crichton. T. 2024 Infrastructure lagging behind tourism. Stornoway Gazette 12 April Accessed 30 January 2025

Mac Kenzie. K. 2024 Editorial Negotiating a tricky road over tourism in the Isle of Skye. West Highland Free Press 4 September. Accessed 30 January 2025.

## Orkney

Orkney with its population of approximately 22,500 people has long been a popular place to holiday. It has around 450,000 tourists a year, half of whom come as day trippers. Orkney welcomes more cruise ships than any other island in Scotland and in the summer months up to 3 cruise ships visit Orkney daily disembarking up to 7000 on the main island. This is on top of most tourists who came to the island independently.

In 2023 residents and local business protested, demanding a reduction of the number of these ships. They complained about overcrowding at popular places causing erosion of natural habitats and the destruction of fragile eco-systems. They felt cruise ships put excessive pressure on local services and facilities, cultural heritage sites and local communities. They complained that the level of traffic congestion was so severe at times, the local police had to close local roads to ensure the safety of the population. Many people felt the huge daily influx of visitors disrupted their daily lives leaving

them with a sense 'of lack of control in their own environment' There was a strong feeling from the business sector that the cruise ships contributed nothing to the local economy and had done little for them.

In response to this dissatisfaction a new scheme was approve in August 2023 by Orkney Council to limit the number of visitors landing on the island daily. Ships are now being graded in relation to their passenger capacity. The new policy says the combined total of passengers for all categories of cruise ships calling at Kirkwall's two ports daily ,should not exceed 5000. This is a move in the right direction for the people of Orkney and an acknowledgement that they have been listened to.

Hopefully more solutions will be found in the future by local authorities and other bodies who have control over those who comes to the islands, to prevent tourism getting out of control.

Day. J. 2024. The beautiful UK islands restricting cruise ships as fears of over tourism soar. Express. 12 January Accessed 28 January 2025

Stewart .A. 2023 STV News. Cruise ships limit proposals to reduce visitor numbers gets thumbs up. STV News. 27 August. Accessed 28 January 2025

## The North West 500

This venture was the brain child of Prince Charles in 2015 who initiated the project to promote economic growth in the West Highlands. It has since been managed by NC500 Ltd who have promoted it widely. Although hugely popular, it has also been highly controversial. As early as 2017 the University of Stirling produced the paper Over tourism on Scotland's North West 5000 and Potential Solutions. It cited lack of community consultation (in advance of the initiative), traffic congestion, and an increase in visitor numbers resulting in a reduction in the quality of life of the locals. Matters became very difficult in 2020 when the numbers using the route surged and staycations brought people to the area who had little previous experience of rural holidays. Irresponsible camping, inconsiderate parking, littering and dangerous driving became commonplace. The route had been hugely over-promoted before there was adequate infrastructure to services to sustain it – lack of accommodation, toilets, parking, food outlets, signage, and petrol pumps. Combined with this were the narrow, single track, country roads, unsuitable for many of the huge vehicles that were driving on them.

In 2024 FODOR TRAVEL's famous **NO LIST** placed the West Coast 500, along with Venice and the Acropolis in Athens on the list of much loved international holiday destinations, where their very popularity was creating such environmental strain that they were being destroyed. FODOR suggest the places on their No List should be avoided because they needed a break from tourists and time to recover.

Brown.G.A.2020. North West 500 and the Summer of Discontent 14August gailantheabrown.com Accessed 29 January 2025

Ruck. A. 2020.' Over-tourism' on Scotland's North Coast 500. 13 May University of Stirling Accessed 29 January 2020

We are in the early days of over-tourism here with the its significant impact on lack of rented accommodation locally. Difficulty in getting on ferries can be difficult but hopefully this is being now being rectified. People do a lot of complaining about cyclists and motorhome owners and this will continue with the Rushgarry and Clachan Sands proposals. The latter will make a further contribution to our footfall s in the summer. Over time there will be a cumulative effect of all of this on our community natural environment in Berneray.

Increased tourism has had an enormous positive impact on the Highland and Island bringing increased prosperity, job opportunities, chances for individuals to create wonderful creative initiatives some of which are world class. Downpour Gin for instance. It has allowed the Hebrides to open up and present itself to the world. It is a double-edged sword however and it can, as we can see, have impacts that if they are not managed, could be d.isastrous One thing is sure, and that is that tourism will continue. Berneray is a beautiful place but it is fragile and it is in transition. If we create projects that bring ever more people to the place with all their trappings of cars and noise and traffic and concentrate them in the same place, we will destroy the fragile balance we have here. I think the proposal for a campsite at Rushgarry, Berneray is too big, too close to the sea and in the wrong place on the island.