

Consultation Report: National Nature Reserve Proposal; New & Expanded Designations



Falkland Islands Government

Environment Department

Directorate of Policy, Economic & Corporate Services

July 2026



Overview

The Falkland Islands Government (FIG) Environment Department undertook a public consultation on proposals to designate 10 new National Nature Reserves and expand 5 existing reserves between the 7th of April to 5th of May 2026. The consultation was undertaken in accordance with Executive Council decision ExCo 181/25 to ensure stakeholders and members of the public had an opportunity to provide feedback.

The proposals relate to both government-owned land and privately owned land where landowners had expressed a wish for their land to be designated as National Nature Reserves. If adopted, the next step would be to draft legislation for the proposed areas to be designated as National Nature Reserves, with accompanying regulations, and incorporated into the Falkland Islands protected area network. Designation would also enable management provisions applicable to National Nature Reserves.

A total of 161 survey responses were received through both digital and paper submissions. Additional feedback was gathered during a public information drop-in session held in Stanley on 16 April 2026, attended by 8 individuals.

The findings of the consultation, including a summary of responses received, are presented within this report. Feedback provided by stakeholders and members of the public is being used to inform Executive Council prior to a final decision being made on the proposals.

Key findings from the public survey

- **48%** of respondents support the proposal to designate additional nature reserves, while 38% opposed the proposal. A further 9% were unsure and 4% expressed no preference.
- **45%** of respondents supported the proposed regulations for the new and expanded National Nature Reserves, while 35% opposed them. A further 10% were unsure and 1% expressed no preference.
- Overall, support exceeded opposition for both the proposed reserve designations and the proposed regulations, although responses indicate that views were not unanimous and a range of perspectives were expressed.
- Responses indicated greater support than opposition for both the designation of additional National Nature Reserves and the proposed regulations. The strongest theme among supportive respondents was the importance of protecting habitats, species and areas of biodiversity value. Opposition was primarily driven by concerns regarding public expenditure, resource allocation, the practical implementation of regulations, and perceptions that the proposed areas were not subject to sufficient threat to warrant additional protection.
- Views differed notably by respondent location. Respondents residing in Stanley were generally supportive of both the proposed reserve designations and associated regulations, whereas respondents residing in Camp were more likely to oppose the proposals.



Demographic profile of respondents

		n	%
Respondent category	Individual	135	84%
	Organisation	4	2%
Length of time living in the Islands	Less than 1 year	2	1%
	1-5 years	9	6%
	5-10 years	7	4%
	More than 10 Years	120	75%
Location	Stanley	92	57%
	Camp	43	27%
	MPC	3	2%
	Overseas	4	2%

Note: not all respondents completed the demographic questions. Percent totals may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

A total of 161 responses were received during the consultation period. Most responses were submitted by individuals, with a small number received from organisations.

The majority of respondents were ordinarily resident in Stanley, followed by Camp. A small number of responses were received from Mount Pleasant Complex and overseas respondents.

Most respondents reported having lived in the Falkland Islands for more than ten years.



Survey Results

Support for additional nature reserves

Respondents were asked whether they supported the proposal to designate additional National Nature Reserves. Table 1 presents the responses received.

Table 1 - Level of support for the proposal to designate additional nature reserves

	n	%
Yes	77	48%
No	61	38%
Unsure	15	9%
No Preference	7	4%

Answered: 160; Skipped: 1

A total of 160 respondents answered this question. Just under half of respondents (48%) supported the proposal to designate additional National Nature Reserves, while 38% opposed the proposal. A further 9% of respondents were unsure and 4% expressed no preference. These results indicate a plurality of support for the proposal, although a substantial proportion of respondents expressed opposition.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of responses by respondent location.

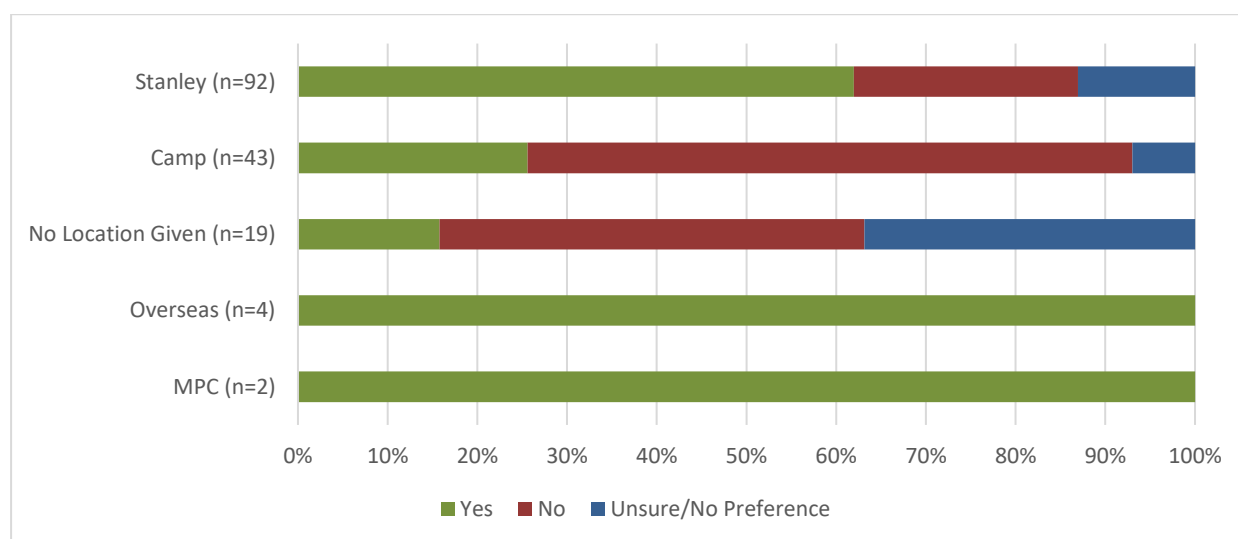


Figure 1 - Support for the proposal to designate additional National Nature Reserves by respondent location (%)

Respondents residing in Stanley were generally supportive of the proposal, with 62% indicating support and 25% indicating opposition. In contrast, respondents residing in Camp were more likely to oppose the proposal, with 67% indicating opposition and 26% indicating support. Respondents who did not provide their location were less supportive of the proposal, with 47% indicating opposition, 16% indicating support, and 37% indicating they were unsure or had no preference. Responses from MPC and overseas respondents were limited in number and should therefore be interpreted as such.

In total, 62 respondents provided comments relating to the concept of designating additional nature reserves in the Islands. Table 2 overleaf, shows the themes that emerged, broken down by respondents' level of agreement.



Table 2 - Main themes arising from comments on proposal to designate additional nature reserves

Level of Support	Main Theme	Frequency
Yes	Protecting habitats, species and areas is important	15
	Support for additional further reserves	4
	Difficulty in justifying FIG spending or resource use during uncertain financial times	3
	Landowner (including FIG) awareness on designation implications	2
	Regulations must remain practical and effective overtime	2
	Falklands are underperforming globally regarding protected areas	1
	Monitoring of these areas should inform the management.	1
	Other species (invertebrates) should be included in proposal	1
	Perceived risk of encroachment and imposed limitation onto farming land	1
	Support private land being volunteered for designation	1
	Effectiveness of current reserves needs addressing	1
No	Difficulty in justifying FIG spending or resource use during uncertain financial times	14
	Natural environment not considered at risk	10
	Issues with consultation and proposal processes	2
	Will not serve the broader community	2
	Support Private land being volunteered for designation	1
	Effectiveness of current reserves needs addressing	1
	FIG Land shouldn't be designated with restrictions	1
	Lack of trust in conservation authorities	1
	Mengeary Point shouldn't be designated	1
	Private landowner management suffices	1
	The land could be used commercially instead	1
	Preference for sites to be considered on a case-by-case basis	1
Unsure	Difficulty in justifying FIG spending or resource use during uncertain financial times	2
	Effectiveness of current reserves needs addressing	2
	Preference for sites to be considered on a case-by-case basis	2
No Preference	Protecting habitats, species and areas is important	1

Note: Individual responses could be assigned to more than one theme. As a result, theme frequencies do not equal the total number of respondents providing comments.

Among respondents who supported the proposal, the dominant theme was the importance of protecting habitats, species and areas, which was mentioned 15 times. Among respondents who opposed the proposal, the most common themes were difficulty in justifying public expenditure during uncertain financial times (14 mentions) and a view that the natural environment was not currently at risk (10 mentions).



Support for proposed regulations

Respondents were asked whether they supported the proposed regulations for the new and expanded National Nature Reserves. Table 3 presents the responses received.

Table 3 - Level of support for the proposed regulations for the proposed nature reserves

	n	%
Yes	72	45%
No	56	35%
Unsure	16	10%
No Preference	2	1%

Answered: 146; Skipped: 15

A total of 146 respondents answered this question, with 15 respondents choosing not to provide a response. Overall, 45% of respondents supported the proposed regulations for the new and expanded National Nature Reserves, while 35% opposed them. A further 10% were unsure and 1% expressed no preference. While support exceeded opposition, the results indicate a range of views regarding the proposed regulatory framework.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of responses by location.

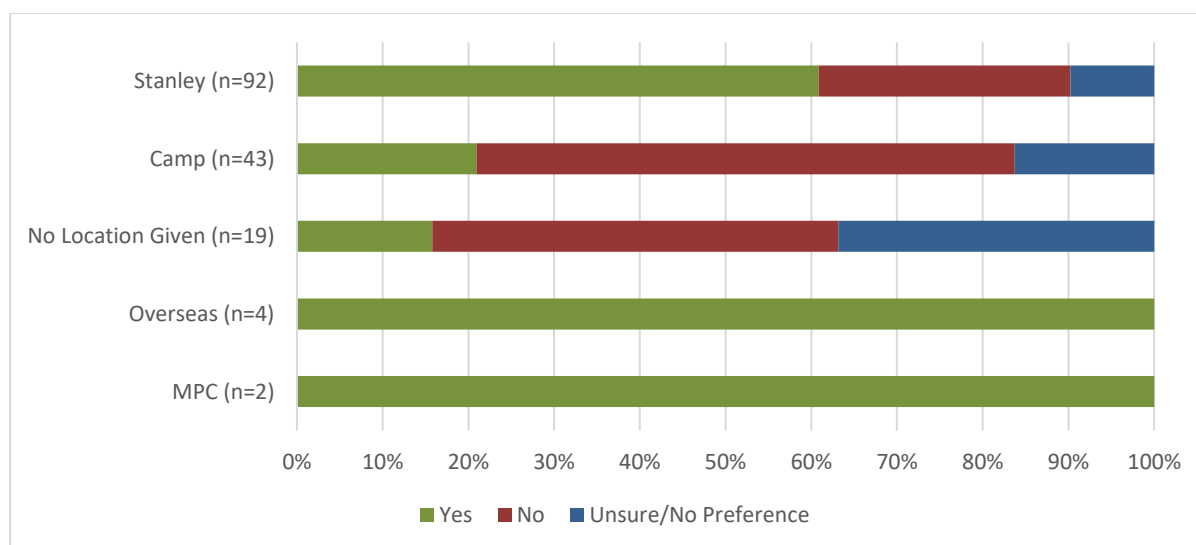


Figure 2 - Level of support for proposed regulations for the proposed nature reserves grouped by location

Respondents residing in Stanley were generally supportive of the regulations with 61% indicating support and 29% indicating opposition. In contrast, respondents residing in Camp were more likely to oppose the proposal, with 63% indicating opposition and 21% indicating support. Respondents who did not provide their location were less supportive of the proposal, with 47% indicating opposition, 16% indicating support, and 37% indicating they were unsure or had no preference. Responses from MPC and overseas respondents were limited in number and should be interpreted as such.

Table 4 overleaf shows the themes that emerged, broken down by respondents' level of agreement.



Table 4 - Main themes arising from comments on proposed regulations for the proposed nature reserves.

Level of Support	Main Theme	Frequency
Yes	Support proposed regulations as they are	7
	Support for regulations that remain practical and effective over time	7
	Protecting habitats, species and areas is important	2
	Regulations are needed for reserves	2
	Concerns over public and recreational access limitations	2
	Concern over increasing economic pressures on natural environment	1
	Education on current NNRs and regulations is priority	1
	Effectiveness of current reserves needs addressing	1
	Mengeary Point shouldn't be designated	1
	Perceived increasing public land access restrictions	1
	The rest of the islands is open for prohibited activities	1
	Without CWNO, updated designations mean little	1
	Individuals who damage environment should be accountable	1
	Concerns about regulations enforcement and compliance	1
	Regulations must remain practical and effective overtime	1
No	Regulations must remain practical and effective overtime	7
	Concerns about regulations enforcement and compliance	4
	Natural environment not considered at risk	4
	Individuals who damage environment should be accountable	1
	Disagreement with conservation/invasive priorities or management	1
	Farmers are better placed to manage the land	1
	Lack of trust in conservation authorities	1
	Will not serve the broader community	1
	Regulations impeding on cultural way of life	1
Unsure	Concerns over public and recreational access limitations	3
	Regulations impeding on cultural way of life	2
	Support for regulations that remain practical and effective over time	2
	Natural environment not considered at risk	1

Note: Individual responses could be assigned to more than one theme. As a result, theme frequencies do not equal the total number of respondents providing comments.

Among respondents who supported the regulations, the most common themes were support for the proposed regulations as drafted (7 mentions) and support for regulations that remain practical and effective over time (7 mentions). Among respondents who opposed the regulations, the most common themes also regulations must remain practical and effective over time (7 mentions), followed by concerns over enforcement and compliance with regulations and a view that the natural environment was not currently at risk, both receiving 4 mentions.



Respondents were invited to provide any additional comments relating to the proposals. In total, 51 respondents chose to provide further comments. These comments were reviewed and grouped into themes, which are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5 - Feedback from further comment section

Main themes	Frequency
Protecting habitats, species and areas is important	11
Difficulty in justifying FIG spending or resource use during uncertain financial times	8
Natural environment not considered at risk	8
Effectiveness of current reserves needs addressing	5
Issues with consultation and proposal processes	4
Marine habitats should also be considered for designation	3
Preference for sites to be considered on a case-by-case basis	3
Risk to areas is limited due to location of proposed areas	3
Lack of trust in conservation authorities	2
Monitoring of these areas should inform the management.	2
Application of proposed regulations to existing NNRS	1
Balancing biodiversity protection with economic development needs	1
Concerns about regulations enforcement and compliance	1
Farmers are better placed to manage the land	1
Perceived increasing public land access restrictions	1
Regulations must remain practical and effective overtime	1
Support for additional further reserves	1

Note: Individual responses could be assigned to more than one theme. As a result, theme frequencies do not equal the total number of respondents providing comments.

The most frequently occurring theme related to the importance of protecting habitats, species and areas of environmental significance (11 mentions). Concerns regarding public expenditure and resource allocation (8 mentions), and perceptions that the natural environment was not currently at risk (8 mentions), were also commonly raised.

Drop-in Session

Eight members of the public attended the drop-in information session held on 16 April 2026 between 12:00 and 17:30. Discussions focused primarily on the implications of the proposals for privately owned land and agricultural activities. Questions and concerns were raised regarding whether designation could result in restrictions on private farmland or lead to land being removed from agricultural use. Attendees also sought clarification on whether similar regulations could apply to existing National Nature Reserves located on private land without consultation with landowners and managers. Further discussion centred on how the proposed regulations would be implemented, monitored and enforced. Participants also discussed the biodiversity value of proposed sites and the role of National Nature Reserves in protecting areas of local and global environmental significance.