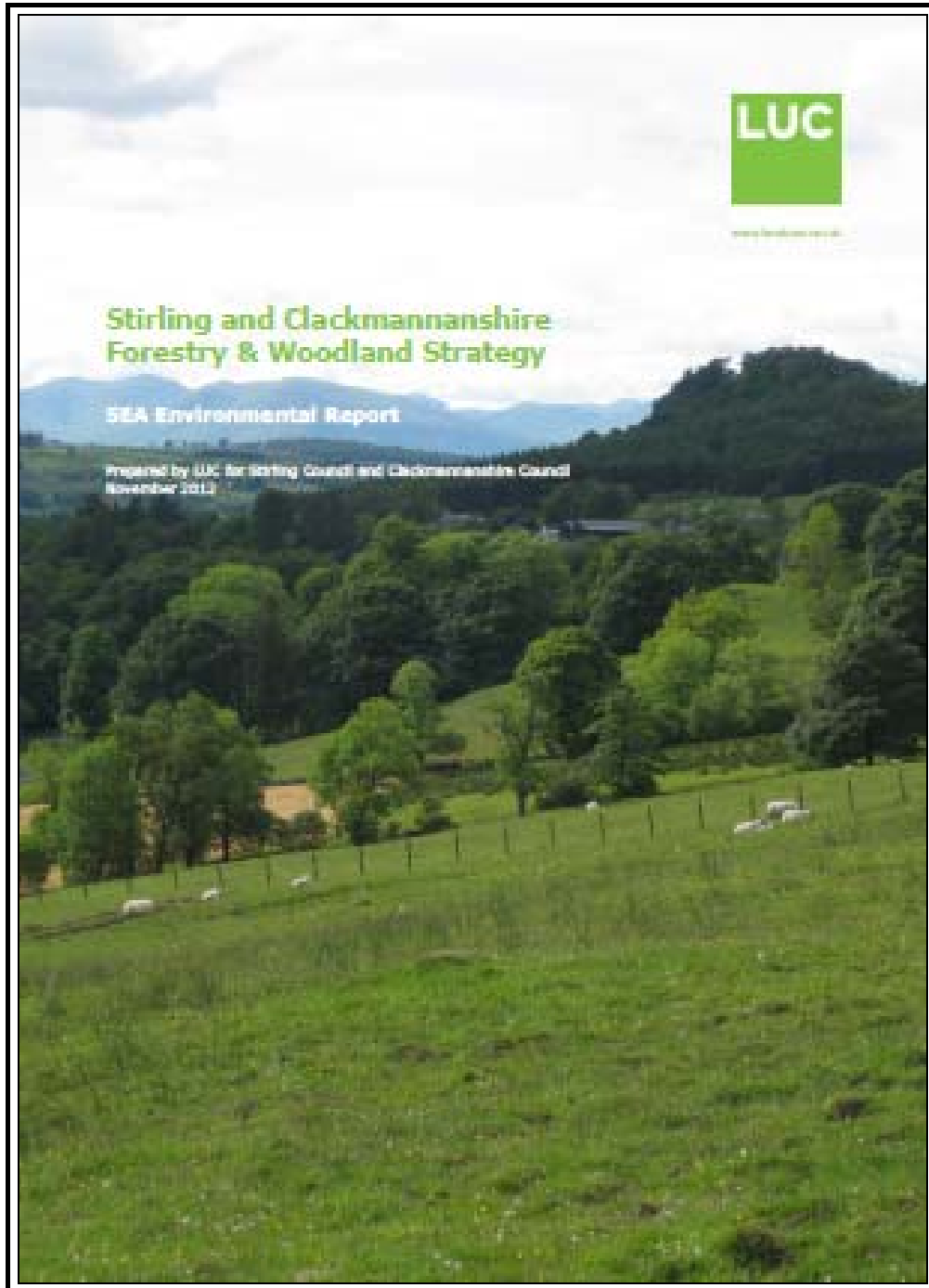# STIRLING & CLACKMANNANSHIRE
FORESTRY AND WOODLAND STRATEGY

SEA – POST ADOPTION STATEMENT JANUARY 2016

PART 1
To: SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or SEA Gateway Scottish Executive Area 1 H (Bridge) Victoria Quay Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

PART 2
A post-adoption SEA statement is attached for the PPS entitled:
Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy
The Responsible Authority is:
Stirling Council

PART 3	
Contact name	Richard Callender
Job Title	Senior Planning Officer
Contact address	Stirling Council Planning Service Corporate Operations Teith House Kerse Road Stirling FK7 7QA
Contact tel no	01786 233662
Contact email	callenderr@stirling.gov.uk
Signature & date	███████████████ 30 March 2016

POST - ADOPTION SEA STATEMENT

Post-adoption SEA statement for:

Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy

Adopted on:

14th August 2014 by Clackmannanshire Council and 1 October 2014 by Stirling Council

Responsible Authority:

Stirling Council

POST-ADOPTION SEA STATEMENT
INTRODUCTION

This document (referred to here as the post-adoption SEA statement) has been prepared in accordance with Section 18 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

POST-ADOPTION SEA STATEMENT
AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

WEBSITE
The full PPS as adopted, along with the Environmental Report and post-adoption SEA Statement are available on the Responsible Authority's website at:

www.clacksweb.org.uk and www.stirling.gov.uk

OFFICE ADDRESS
The PPS, as adopted, along with the Environmental Report and post-adoption SEA Statement may also be inspected free of charge (or a copy obtained for a reasonable charge) at the principal office of the Responsible Authority:

Contact name, address and telephone number

Richard Callender Teith House Kerse Road Stirling FK7 7QA - 01786 233662

Times at which the documents may be inspected or a copy obtained:

Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm

Name of Responsible Authority	Stirling Council
Title of PPS	Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy
Purpose of PPS	To provide a strategic framework for forestry and woodland proposals in Stirling and Clackmannanshire
What prompted the PPS (e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)	Existing strategy was outdated in terms of national planning and forestry policies and objectives in Scottish Planning Policy and Scottish Forestry Strategy
Subject (e.g. transport)	Forestry
Period covered	2014 - 2019
Frequency of updates	5 years
Area of PPS (e.g. geographical area)	1. Administrative area of Clackmannanshire Council. 2. Administrative area of Stirling Council outwith Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
Summary of nature/content of PPS	The Councils can use the Strategy and its associated spatial data in responding to consultations on woodland creation proposals and in assessing development proposals that could affect woodland (e.g. wind farms). The Councils will also have regard to the Strategy when preparing their Local Development Plans and it may be a material consideration in planning decisions, for example where woodland removal is proposed. The Strategy can also be used to promote the multiple benefits of woodland management and expansion.
Date adopted	14th August 2014 by Clackmannanshire Council and 1 October 2014 by Stirling Council
Contact name & job title Address, email, telephone number	Richard Callender Senior Planning Officer Teith House Kerse Road Stirling FK7 7QA – callenderr@stirling.gov.uk 01786 233662
Date	

Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy has been subject to a process of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), as required under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. This has included the following activities:-

- Taking into account the views of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland) (i.e. the Consultation Authorities) regarding the scope and level of detail appropriate for the Environmental Report.

- Preparing an Environmental Report on the likely significant effects on the environment of the draft document which included consideration of:
    - the baseline data relating to the current state of the environment;

    - links between the Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy and other relevant strategies, policies, plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives;

    - existing environmental problems affecting the Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy ;

    - the Strategy's likely significant effects on the environment (positive and negative);

    - measures envisaged for the prevention, reduction and offsetting of any significant adverse effects;

    - an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives chosen;

    - monitoring measures to ensue that any unforeseen environmental effects will be identified allowing for appropriate remedial action to be taken.
- Consulting on the Environmental Report
- Taking into account the Environmental Report and the results of consultation in making final decisions regarding the Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy

- Committing to monitoring the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy. This will also identify any unforeseen adverse significant environmental effects and to enable taking appropriate remedial action.

Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy was produced as a consequence of the new development plan system being introduced with the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Structure Plan being replaced with separate Local Development Plans for the two Council areas. The Structure Plan included an Indicative Forestry Strategy which required to be replaced. Additionally this strategy had a commercial woodland bias and did not reflect the wider economic, environmental and social benefits of woodland now being promoted by the Scottish Government's planning and forestry policies. The Strategy forms a link between these and also other relevant national and local environmental and planning strategies and plans relating to forestry and woodlands.

The Strategy was developed by Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils in partnership with Forestry Commission Scotland and the Central Scotland Forestry Trust (now Central Scotland Green Network Trust), with guidance from a Steering Group of key stakeholders, including SNH and the Community Woodlands Association. A draft Strategy and Environment Report were produced by consultants and subject to wide ranging public consultation which informed the final version of the document.

SEA was fundamental to the development of the Strategy with the Environmental Report identifying that, overall, the Strategy's objectives are expected to be positive. A few potential negative impacts came through the SEA process and, as detailed below, the Strategy has been revised to take account of these issues.

TABLE 1

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FINDINGS FROM ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT	INTEGRATED INTO PLAN (Y/N)	HOW INTEGRATED/TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT OR REASON FOR NOT BEING TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT
Strategy should include inventory battlefields in the 'sensitive category' for woodland expansion.	Yes	Inventory battlefields included in the sensitive category.
Due to presence of European /Natura sites in the Strategy area an Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) should be undertaken.	Yes	Strategy highlights SAC's and SPA's and requirement to refer to restrictions related to these designations.
Geological Conservation Review (GCR) sites should be taken account of in the strategy.	Yes	The Strategy highlights that account requires to GCR's require to be taken in the design of new woodland expansion proposals. Replace text - The Strategy highlights that GCR's require to be taken into account in the design of new woodland expansion proposals .
Strategy should include guidance on design issues related to landscape form and character.	No	Landscape character analysis included in the Strategy but inappropriate to include specific guidance in a document whose main purpose is to set out 'strategic' advice and guidance.
Guidance on specific species and planting densities.	No	Not appropriate at this 'strategic' scale although the Strategy identifies native woodland and mixed woodland as the most appropriate types of woodland expansion in the Strategy area.
Guidance on maximising the role of trees and woodland to contribute to sustainable water management and habitat networks.	Yes	Strategy and appendices address these areas in general and include references to appropriate policy documents.

Balance with other land uses and understanding the distribution of under-used /derelict land in agricultural areas to help clarify where new woodlands can add most value.	No	Not possible to undertake at this strategic level. However there are references in the Strategy and appendices to environmental quality and the 'Woodlands In and Around Towns' Initiative.
Guidance tailored to specific conditions in each local authority area.	No	Strategy covers a relatively small part of the Scottish land mass. The Strategy clearly outlines issues to be considered in the location and design of woodland expansion proposals that, in turn, the Councils and FCS will use when assessing the merits of woodland proposals.
Development of guidance related to the key themes of FWS and acknowledgement that specific areas are subject to different pressures and priorities.	No	Each woodland proposal site will display varying characteristics. The Strategy sets out generic consideration and the related plans and strategies which will taken into account in assessing woodland proposals.

POST-ADOPTION SEA STATEMENT TEMPLATE - GUIDANCE NOTE 2

1 The Responsible Authority must set out how the opinions expressed during the consultation procedures at Section 16 of the Act have been taken into account. All consultation responses must be covered.

2 The Responsible Authority must also set out how the results of any relevant consultations under Regulation 14 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (The UK Regulations) i.e. consultations with other EU Member States.

3 Before disclosing consultees' details or opinions remember to ensure that you have complied with relevant legislation such as The Data Protection Act, The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

TABLE 2 –LISTS CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND SETS OUT HOW THEY HAVE BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

CONSULTEE / RESPONDENT	SUMMARY	HOW THE COMMENT WAS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN MAKING THE DECISION TO ADOPT THE FINAL PPS
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Concern that reference to River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) refers to water quality and not status.	Strategy refers to environmental quality, additionally RMBP is listed as a policy document reference.
	ER did not include maps relating to water status, sensitive wetland areas and soils.	It was considered that there was no readily available mapping information at a strategic level. The mapping of agricultural and forestry capabilities is considered to cover strategically the wetland and soil issue. Water status would be difficult to capture at the strategy level and could well change over the period of the strategy.
	Concern over the omission of cumulative and synergistic effects of woodland creation.	As these are likely to be very specific for sites and also relates to non-forestry developments it was considered that it was not an issue that could be effectively addressed at a strategic level.

	Support the proposal to publish context specific guidance to support FCS but not clear who would be responsible for developing the guidance	This will be developed by the Councils as they see fit with input from Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS).
	Consider that there should have been further discussion regarding mitigation or enhancement through assumed mitigation	Desire to keep the Strategy a concise document. Reference made to the relevant documents that will be utilised by the Councils and FCS in assessing forestry proposals. Further discussion of them would not have be helpful.
	SCWFS does not identify a monitoring framework which it is understood will be delivered through a stand alone Action Plan. SEPA would welcome the introduction of indicators for monitoring water quality and use of soils.	Councils are in discussions with FCS to derive indicators which are readily available from public bodies in relation to consented forestry works undertaken.
The Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland)	Note that while the Strategy is likely to have a broadly positive effect on the environment there may also be some negative effects on the historic environment. However note the mitigation measures identified.	No change to the Strategy.
	Inventory battlefields should be included in the sensitive category.	Inventory Battlefields added to the 'sensitive' category for woodland expansion.
	Lack of clarity how the Strategy will be delivered in relation to the mapping of woodland expansion.	No change to Strategy. It lays down a strategic approach and highlights sensitivities to be taken into account by the Councils and Forestry Commission Scotland when considering proposals and their proposed mitigation measures.
Scottish Natural Heritage	Lack of reference to Geological Conservation Review(GCR) sites.	The Strategy specifically states woodland expansion proposals require to take account of impacts on the geodiversity value of GCR sites and also consider where woodland planting could improve understanding, access and interpretation.

SNH requested that Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) screening be undertaken.	HRA undertaken and issues raised incorporated into the Strategy.
It should be clearly demonstrated how the outcomes of the Forestry and Woodland Strategy will be aligned and developed consistently with those in neighbour authorities.	Neighbouring strategies have been or are being developed in different timeframes and approaches. Additionally they have different issues to address. Therefore the Strategy has not been altered in this respect. However the Councils will make neighbouring authorities aware of the Strategy by referring to in responding to forestry consultations.
Consider that it would be valuable to that UK BAP priority species and networks may occur on land not classified as vacant and derelict and that these undesignated sites may be sensitive to new planting.	Strategy and Appendices make reference to the importance of considering UK BAP and LBAP priority species and habitats as part of any forestry proposals .
Consideration should be given to include a potential indicator to cover monitoring of the impact of woodland on creation on non-woodland UK BAP species and habitats and their networks.	Discussions are on going with Forestry Commission Scotland on the most appropriate and readily recognised indicators for inclusion in an action plan to monitor the progress of the strategy.

POST-ADOPTION SEA STATEMENT
REASONS FOR CHOOSING STIRLING & CLACKMANNANSHIRE FORESTRY AND WOODLAND STRATEGY AS ADOPTED, IN THE LIGHT OF OTHER REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy was developed to replace the outdated Indicative Forestry Strategy in the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Structure Plan which was soon to be redundant. The Strategy was developed as a local reflection of the Government's forestry and planning policies and strategies. It sets out the local environmental and social issues which the Councils and Forestry Commission Scotland will take into account when assessing forestry proposals. It has also be developed as a guide for parties wishing to take forward forestry and woodland proposals in Stirling and Clackmannanshire.

The Strategy is part of a wider set of national and local environmental and planning strategies and plans such as Scottish Forestry Strategy, Scottish Planning Policy, Local Development Plans, Core Path Plans and Forth Area Management Plan (River Basin Management Planning) and has regard to them in the adopted document. As well as environmental issues cultural and social issues were also of importance in framing the strategy.

The Environment Report's scenarios as well as the consultation feedback to the draft strategy influenced the form and content of the Strategy with the background detail being arranged in appendices. Consultation was undertaken on-line and by public walk-in events generating a range of responses from stakeholders and the public.

The Strategy, by it's very nature, is a strategic document, guiding woodland development in the two council areas whilst balancing Scottish Government's objectives for the future expansion of woodland cover. There did not appear to be any reasonable alternative approach other than that adopted.

Monitoring of the impact of Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy will be undertaken by regimes currently in place by the Councils, Forestry Commission Scotland and other public agencies concerned with the state of the environment in the strategy area.

Monitoring activities will include, but will not be restricted to:-

i) Forestry Commission Scotland Registers - Grant Schemes, Felling Licence Applications and Environment Impact Assessments to assess scale and species mix for woodland expansion proposals

ii) SEPA waterbodies classification

iii) Clackmannanshire and Stirling Local Biodiversity Plans

It is anticipated that the Councils and Forestry Commission Scotland will meet on an annual basis to review the progress of the strategy and have particular regard to the following:- -

i)   Area of new planting proposed /approved - conifers + broadleafs
ii)   Area of native woodland proposed/approved
iii)   Area of felling proposed /approved
iv)   Loss of woodland to development

Special regard will paid to the impact, if any, of the above on Inventory Battlefield sites Natura 2000 sites and GCRS's.

It will not be possible to monitor every aspect of the strategy in detail as the exact impact of specific woodland proposals may not be evident for a number of years. Additionally it could be that woodland planting and felling interact with other environmental works being promoted by the Councils, Forestry Commission Scotland or other agencies impacting on the local environment.

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy has been developed in partnership to promote appropriate forestry proposals in the strategy area. The Councils and Forestry Commission Scotland believe that the principles outlined will result in the delivery of well balanced and designed woodlands which sit well in the landscape and deliver community benefits and which take account of economic, social and environmental objectives.