

Land Use and Biodiversity Team,  
The Scottish Government,  
1C-North Victoria Quay,  
Edinburgh,  
EH6 6QQ

National Museums Scotland  
Chambers Street  
Edinburgh  
EH1 1JF

Scottish Charity No. SC 010440

29 January 2016

Dear Land Use and Biodiversity Team

### Land Use Strategy for Scotland 2016-2021

The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland is a national independent membership charity with over 2,800 members (Fellows) across the globe (for more information please see [www.socantscot.org](http://www.socantscot.org)). Our interests in the Land Use Strategy for Scotland are mainly heritage related and we have attempted to relate them to the questions asked in the consultation below. The Society recognises the pressure that land across Scotland is under from various and often competing uses and we welcome the Scottish Government's efforts to develop a strategy to allow more efficient and productive use of our unique landscape resource.

#### Consultation Responses

*Q 1a Do you think that the Vision, Principles for Sustainable Land Use and three long term Objectives are still fit for purpose?*

The Vision is appropriate but the Objectives are very heavily skewed towards natural resources or nature, and remove the historic environment from sustainable land-use. The principles appear to provide a useful balance with appropriate informed management but do not highlight the impact of the historic environment.

*Q 1b Please provide your reasons for your answer.*

Land-based businesses include the historic environment, such as the properties looked after by Historic Environment Scotland, the National Trust for Scotland and Historic Houses Association, to name a few. Scotland includes exceptional cultural landscapes which must feature as part of any truly sustainable Land Use Strategy. The Principles highlight the need for informed decision-making and multiple benefits from the land, but certain of these could lead to impacts on the historic environment that would need specific advice and information to ensure sustainability. For example, the prioritisation of derelict or vacant land is exactly the type of location that will have the potential for high historic environment value. The sense of identity and wellbeing provided by landscape in Scotland is mainly attributed through the human interaction with that landscape. The Principles would be easily adapted to include reference to the importance of the historic environment.

*Q 2a Do you agree that continued use of an ecosystems approach is an effective way to manage Scotland's natural capital?*

The ecosystems approach is certainly beneficial for natural resources and systems in the landscape, but must be used in conjunction with an understanding of the impacts such an approach may have on the historic environment.

*Q 2b Please provide reasons for your answer.*

If we take forestry for example, much of Scotland's excellent and unique cultural landscapes are exceedingly well preserved (often over thousands of years) in the exact same locations as

#### telephone

• general enquiries 0131 247 4133 • director 0131 247 4115 • facsimile 0131 247 4163  
• finance 0131 247 4135 • publications 0131 247 4145 • website [www.socantscot.org](http://www.socantscot.org) • email [info@socantscot.org](mailto:info@socantscot.org)



new forestry is intended or where existing forestry is to be felled. Both processes will have an impact on this valuable and non-replaceable historic environment resource.

*Q 3a Is the relationship as set out in the draft Land Use Strategy 2016 - 2021 clear?'*

The relationship between the Land Use Strategy and the Historic Environment Strategy is not clear, but should be given the obvious synergies between the two. Sectoral plans should include the Archaeology Strategy for Scotland which was launched in 2015.

*Q 3b Do you have any comments on the relationship between the LUS and Scotland's Economic Strategy 2015, National Planning Framework, National Marine Plan and other relevant policies?*

As above, the Land Use Strategy should engage directly with the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland since both have clear and unambiguous links to Scotland's rural and urban landscapes.

*Q 4a Do you think that the activities described above could be useful?*

Yes.

*Q 4b Do you have any suggestions on other kinds of information and activities that could be useful?*

As above, the symbiotic nature of the historic and natural environment suggests that information and activity should include all aspects of sustainable land use.

*Q 5 How could the content of the current Scottish Forestry Strategy be updated to better reflect the Objectives and Principles of the Land Use Strategy and other key priorities?*

Not answered.

*Q 6a Do you consider that there could be advantages in having a single policy statement about land which deals with ownership, use and management?*

If this raises awareness at all decision-making levels of the need to consider the historic environment in management of land, then yes.

*Q 6b Do you have any comments on the relationship between current land related policies and how these would relate to a single policy statement?*

The current Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) is now out-of-date since the publication of the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland, it would be useful to ensure that the review of SHEP includes the Land Use Strategy.

*Q 7a Do you agree that models and GIS tools could help inform decision making about land use/management change?*

Yes.

*Q 7b Please provide your reasons for your answer.*

The Scottish historic environment sector has been leading the development of publically accessible GIS tools (such as Canmap and Pastmap). A large amount of work has already been undertaken to ensure high standards and the use of international metadata in such

mapping; the incorporation of this information, and its development into polygon data with full metadata, is already providing dividends for decision-makers and for those involved in land management and research at all levels.

*Q 7c Do you think that a baseline ecosystems services mapping tool could be useful?*

Yes.

*Q 7d Do you have any comments on a mapping tool?*

Such a tool should take advice from the work already undertaken in the heritage sector, and ensure that historic environment information is incorporated also. The Historic Land Assessment project lead by Historic Environment Scotland has now mapped the historic dimension to land use across Scotland (see [HLAmap.org.uk](http://HLAmap.org.uk)); this information must be fully integrated into the Land Use Strategy and could form the basis for a mapping tool.

*Q 8a Do you agree that regional land use partnerships could be a helpful way to support regional delivery of the Land Use Strategy?*

The Society as a national body has consistently found that regional or local approaches are helpful. For example, the creation of a national Scottish Archaeological Research Framework is now being developed through more regional local research frameworks that address particular local issues. The geography and diversity of Scotland's landscapes would be well served by specific local approaches.

*Q 8b Who do you think could be best placed to lead these initiatives?*

Local people, through communities of place or interest have the greatest stake, although it often requires independent "neutral" bodies with no vested interest to enable the widest participation and transparency.

*Q 8c Can you suggest any alternative means of supporting the delivery of the Land Use Strategy at regional level?*

There are various regional or locally constituted organised groups of volunteers with an interest in land use and management who would be keen to get involved with the LUS, such as North of Scotland Archaeological Society, Association of Certificated Field Archaeologists, Glasgow Archaeology Society etc., as well as national organisations with local working parties such as the National Trust for Scotland.

*Q 8d Do you have any other comments on this policy?*

Not answered.

*Q 9a Do you think that regional land use frameworks could be useful to inform regional/local land use decision-making?*

See above answer for 8a. Local communities would be best placed to be involved in regional frameworks.

*Q 9b Which aspects of this approach do you think require further development?*

Not answered.

*Q 9c Do you have any comments on this proposal?*

Not answered.

*Q 10a Do you think that land use mediation or facilitation could be useful in a land use context?*

Land use at a strategic level and indeed local issues will inevitably have competing considerations. The use of mediation is useful in certain circumstances, but independent, neutral facilitation from the outset (see Q8 and 9 above) would help to mitigate these issues.

*Q 10b Please provide your reasons for your answer.*

Transparency of delivery allows greater understanding of differing objectives and does not allow competing land uses to claim ignorance of needs, opportunities and risks can be weighed and discussed openly.

*Q 11 Do you have any suggestions on other potential measures to encourage climate friendly farming and crofting?*

Support for the promotion of protection and promotion of historic environment assets should form part of any package of integrated land use that promotes climate friendly farming and crofting, by diversifying the interests of such land managers.

*Q 12a Do you agree that more localised map-based ecosystems assessments could be useful to assist in informing funding decisions?*

As noted above, map-based historic environment assessments should be integrated with ecosystem assessments, with the development of polygon-based data for the whole of Scotland to assist in the identification and definition of such assets in any sustainable land use.

*Q 12b Please provide your reasons for your answer.*

Integration of spatially defined historic environment assets into a sustainable land use strategy will bring benefits to both the historic environment, but also the economies that depend on our incredible cultural landscapes. However, if land managers do not know what assets they have they cannot help to deliver on the positive aspirations of the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland.

*Q 13a Do you agree that an assessment of ecosystems health and a spatial approach could be helpful to further inform targeting for the next SRDP?*

See above with regard to spatial approaches integrating the historic environment and not just ecosystems.

*Q 13b Please provide your reasons for your answer.*

See the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland for the benefits delivered by the historic environment and cultural landscapes.

*Q 14a Do you agree that an urban pilot project could be useful?*

Yes.

*Q 14b Please provide your reasons for your answer.*

Land use includes urban environment and the historic environment sector has been pro-actively approaching the issues of land use within an urban environment for some time now, through commercial pre-development work, through academic projects to community projects such as Scotland's Urban Past lead by Historic Environment Scotland, the lead public body for the historic environment.

*Q 15a Do you think that a strategic vision could be useful for the uplands?*

Yes. The development of a strategic vision for the uplands would be critical in helping to transparently expose the competing opportunities in this landscape, and must include the historic environment.

*Q 15b Do you have any comments on this proposal?*

See above.

*Q 16a Do you agree that the Land Use Strategy indicators are still fit for purpose?*

In general yes with the caveats explained below.

*Q 16b Do you have any comments on the future monitoring of the revised Land Use Strategy?*

The indicators could be enhanced by including volunteering in the landscape (urban or rural) both in nature and cultural pursuits (some examples are suggested in 8c above, but are certainly not the only ones). The Scottish tourism visits will already include the cultural factor in our Scottish landscapes, since this can rarely be split from the "natural" scenery. The indicators are particularly urban-focused and some thought should be given to how to monitor the effectiveness of the Land Use Strategy in urban environments.

*Q 17 Are there any other activities that you think we should be undertaking to achieve better understanding and application of the Principles or delivery of the Strategy?*

It is of crucial importance that the LUS engage with as wide a range of community organisations as possible, both communities of place and specialism. This will help to mitigate against "silo-thinking", the consequences of which may include minimising direct potential and damaging indirect efforts of other initiatives.

*Q 18 Are there any other points you wish to make about any aspect of this draft Strategy?*

While the extremely important historical question of upland landscape is referenced elsewhere, we are not sure that coastal landscapes have been adequately addressed. Doubtless they are covered, in general terms, but their historical distinctiveness and fragility may require extra emphasis. A particular concern may be decisions on land use elsewhere which can impact negatively on adjacent or even quite distant landscapes. Not merely coastal, of course.

*Q 19 Do you have any comments on the policies and proposals in this draft Strategy in terms of how they may impact on any equalities group, i.e. with regard to age, gender, race, religion, disability or sexuality?*

Scotland's landscape (natural, cultural and historic) has been impacted upon by people of different ages, gender, religion, ability, etc., and that heterogeneity could be usefully reflected in how we go about making decisions in the present day, to the inclusion of all groups today.

*Q 20a: Do you consider that the Environmental Report set out an accurate description of the current environmental issues/baseline?*

The Environmental Report included the historic environment and cultural landscapes as important components and potential beneficiaries of the Strategy, which does not seem to carry over into the Strategy itself.

*Q 20b: Please give reasons for your answer.*

Not answered.

*Q 21a: Do you consider that the predicted environmental effects as set out in the Environmental Report are accurate?*

Not answered.

*Q 21b: Please provide reasons for your answer including further information you feel should be considered in the assessment.*

Not answered.

*Q 22a: Do you consider that the recommendations and opportunities for mitigation and enhancement are accurate?*

Not answered.

*Q 22b: Please provide reasons for your answer.*

Not answered.

*Q 23: Are you aware of alternatives to the proposed policies that should be considered as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process conducted for the draft Strategy?*

Not answered.

### **Summary**

Land use is as important to the future of the historic environment and our ability to maximise it as a resource, as it is to the natural environment. We would therefore encourage the Land Use and Biodiversity Team to incorporate the historic environment into this overarching strategy, recognising the importance of cultural as well as environmental landscapes to Scotland. Reference to the historic environment could be easily made in key sections throughout this Strategy ensuring it is not limited to the consideration of "natural" resources alone. The Society advocates a more inclusive and joined up approach to the LUS would strengthen the outcomes and better maximise the potential of Scotland's land resources. Please don't hesitate to contact the Society if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely



Dr Simon Gilmour  
Director (director@socantscot.org)