
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK FOREST STRATEGY

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Purpose:

This paper requests approval of the final draft of the Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy.

Recommendation:

- a) That the Board approve the final draft of the Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy.

Executive Summary:

1. Consultation on the draft Forest Strategy took place between 12th Feb and 23rd March 2018. The Board are provided with an overview of the consultation responses received (Annex 1a & 1b) and the final draft of the Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy (Annex 2).
2. The Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy is the key document providing strategic direction on future forest management and the restoration of woodlands in the Cairngorms National Park over the next two decades.
3. Specifically the Forest Strategy will:
 - a) Help to deliver the forest related aspects of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2018-2022;
 - b) Encourage new woodland creation that complements other land uses and the landscapes of the Cairngorms National Park;
 - c) Identify key issues and opportunities affecting forests, woodlands and trees in the Cairngorms National Park and provide policy guidance;
 - d) Assist in the appraisal of funding applications for woodland creation; and
 - e) Promote awareness of the value of encouraging more woodland creation in the Cairngorms National Park and encourage greater collaboration between agencies, the forest industry, landowners, land managers and communities

Strategic Context

4. Forestry in the Cairngorms National Park is regulated by Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS). This Strategy provides guidance to assist Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), forest managers and others on the best approach to take before reaching agreement on woodland creations schemes, felling plans and long term forest plans.
5. This strategy has been prepared by CNPA and covers the whole Cairngorms National Park area. It does not overlap, but is bordered by the Highland Forest and Woodland Strategy, Moray Woodland and Forest Strategy, Aberdeenshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy and the Perth and Kinross Forest and Woodland Strategy.

Summary of Work to Date

6. On 26th January 2018 the CNPA Board agreed to the draft Forest Strategy being made available for public consultation between 12th Feb and 23rd March 2018. Consultees were encouraged to respond through an online 'Survey monkey' which received 97 responses summarised in Annex 1.
7. Alongside the consultation draft, we have drafted a Habitats Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment. Both available on our website and on request.
8. Following the consultation the text of the draft Strategy has been improved. The key changes have been to tighten up the wording, remove repetition and provide clearer linkages to UK Forestry Stewardship policies. Many sections have been improved by better and clearer wording but policy guidance remains largely unchanged. The final Targeting section has been changed to reduce ambiguity. A new annex has been added to cover woodland creation on designated sites.
9. The final draft has been prepared for publication by a graphic designer (Annex 2).

Recommendation

10. **That the Board approve the final draft of the Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy.**

Next Steps

11. The Strategy will be published in both hard copy (200) and on line. It will be promoted through direct communication with land owners and land managers and forestry consultants. We will also prepare a film that will help explain the purpose of the strategy and provide case studies and examples of work that exemplify the positive opportunities the strategy conveys.

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