



ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

**Strategic Environmental Assessment
Draft Environmental Report
for the
consultation draft of the
Orkney Islands Council
Trees and woodland strategy**

Cover Note **PART 1**

To: SEA_Gateway@gov.scot SEA Gateway
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Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
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PART 2

An SEA Scoping Report is attached for the plan, programme or strategy (PPS) entitled:

Orkney Islands Council Trees and woodland strategy (consultation draft)

The Responsible Authority is:

Orkney Islands Council

PART 3

- The PPS falls under the scope of Section 5(3) of the Act and requires an SEA under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. or
- The PPS falls under the scope of Section 5(4) of the Act and requires an SEA under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. or
- The PPS does not require an SEA under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. However, we wish to carry out an SEA on a voluntary basis. We accept that, as this SEA is voluntary, the statutory 5 week timescale for views from the Consultation Authorities cannot be guaranteed.

PART 4

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Date

24 January 2025

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Note: Topic papers are provided in a separate document

Non-technical summary

This Environmental Report assesses the potential environmental effects of the draft Trees and woodland strategy for the Orkney Islands Council area (figure 1).



Map of Orkney by Mikenorton [[CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)], via [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Orkney_Islands_Map.jpg)

Figure 1 – the area covered by the strategy

The draft Trees and woodland strategy provides high level strategic direction to encourage tree planting in Orkney to benefit people and nature. It is a requirement of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4).

The key issues facing the Orkney Islands Council area that are of relevance to the Trees and woodland strategy can be summarised as the effects of climate change on people and nature, and the effects of people and land management practices on nature (see separate environmental baseline Topic papers for further information). The draft Trees and woodland strategy seeks to address this where possible by safeguarding the existing tree and woodland resource, encouraging an increase the number of trees, woodlands and hedges and highlighting the public health and wellbeing benefits of them. Increasing trees, woodlands and hedges may have environmental effects. The main purpose of the Strategic Environmental Assessment is to identify whether and where effects may occur, to enable amendments to minimise harmful effects.

None of the themes or the vision of the strategy were predicted to have negative environmental effects (**Annex II: Environmental assessment tables**). The environmental assessment identified that the vision and two of the strategy themes (themes 1 and 3) as having the potential to have positive environmental effects in relation to climate change and air quality. Two uncertain effects were identified, one relating to European sites where until proposals come forward it is not possible to know what the potential effects might be (however negative effects would be avoided through embedded mitigation in the strategy), and the other relating to use of new trees from outside of Orkney for new planting proposals, which may introduce invasive non-native species, tree pests or diseases. However standard industry prevention measures used by commercial suppliers should reduce the risk where trees are sourced from such suppliers, a residual risk remains for trees sourced from non-commercial suppliers, resulting in the uncertain score.

As the strategy is implemented, monitoring will occur on an annual basis to see if there are any unexpected effects (**Annex IV: Monitoring measures table**). If unexpected effects occur, action will be taken to remedy them as appropriate to the effect and its cause.

1. Context for the Environmental Report

a. Background

The plan being assessed is the Orkney Islands Council Trees and woodland strategy. The strategy provides high level strategic direction to encourage tree planting in Orkney to benefit people and nature. It covers the whole of the Orkney Islands Council area (figure 1) for a ten year period.

b. Alternatives

Having a forest and woodland strategy is a legal requirement under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019¹ and National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). (As there are no forests in Orkney, the strategy has been named a trees and woodland strategy, but still meets the requirements of the Act.) This limits the options available for consideration of alternatives, as not having a strategy is not permitted.

Taking a spatial approach to the strategy or using targets to increase the percentage or hectareage of woodland cover has deliberately not been used. This is in recognition of the climatic, nature conservation, archaeological and land use sensitivities found in Orkney, which reduce opportunities for large scale planting and require fine grain site specific assessment. Rather than focussing on quantity by setting targets or spatially identifying broad areas for planting, the strategy instead encourages an increase in the provision of good quality trees, woodlands and hedges that are informed by detailed location specific assessment and that benefit people while also contributing to enhancing biodiversity.

The alternative to this would be to have a broad brush spatial strategy that could not take account of site specific sensitivities, or to arbitrarily set specific targets for an increase in trees, hedges and woodland cover. However climatic conditions significantly limit potential for trees, which makes significant new planting or expansion unrealistic and many locations unsuitable for trees. Combined with the importance of existing land uses (such as the socio-economic prominence of agriculture, and the natural, climate change and tourism value of peatland habitats), setting arbitrary targets or identifying broad areas of land for planting that turns out to be unsuitable would disenfranchise key stakeholders, reducing the credibility and support for the strategy.

c. Environmental protection objectives in other plans, programmes and strategies

There are a large number of other plans, programmes and strategies (PPS) that are of relevance to the strategy. Due to their number, these are listed in **Annex I: Other plans, programmes and strategies**. The PPS are categorised according to their international, national and local scales and are accompanied by information on their

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2019/13/contents/enacted>

purpose, relationship with the strategy and their relevance to the environmental assessment.

2. Current state of the environment

a. Topics considered

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 lists categories of potential environmental effects that should be considered as part of the environmental assessment process. These have been grouped together into eight Topic areas. The Topics are:

- Topic 1: Climatic factors
- Topic 2: Air
- Topic 3: Water
- Topic 4: Soil and geodiversity
- Topic 5: Material assets
- Topic 6: Biodiversity
- Topic 7: Landscape and cultural heritage
- Topic 8: Population and human health

All the SEA Topics have been included in the environmental assessment, as the strategic nature of the strategy and baseline issues have the potential to influence all topics.

b. Environmental baseline

The separate Topic paper presents information on the environmental baseline, ordered by the eight different topic areas. The baseline information has been presented using infographics rather than the traditional text heavy written report style. The aim of this is to make the information more accessible and understandable to consultees and the public.

The baseline data has been taken from a variety of sources, such as (but not limited to) the Census, Scottish Government National Statistics, National Records of Scotland, Forestry and Land Scotland, NatureScot and Registrar of Scotland.

3. Environmental assessment

a. Assessment carried out

The environmental assessment is presented in **Annex II: Environmental assessment tables**. This has been updated following the receipt of advice on the

Scoping report received in November 2024, to include consultee recommendations where relevant.

In summary, none of the themes or the vision of the strategy were predicted to have negative environmental effects (**Annex II: Environmental assessment tables**). The environmental assessment identified that the vision and two of the strategy themes (themes 1 and 3) as having the potential to have positive environmental effects in relation to climate change and air quality. Two uncertain effects were identified, one relating to European sites where until proposals come forward it is not possible to know what the potential effects might be (however negative effects would be avoided through embedded mitigation in the strategy), and the other relating to use of new trees from outside of Orkney for new planting proposals, which may introduce invasive non-native species, tree pests or diseases. However standard industry prevention measures used by commercial suppliers should reduce the risk where trees are sourced from such suppliers, a residual risk remains for trees sourced from non-commercial suppliers, resulting in the uncertain score.

Table 1 provides the scoring matrix used to ensure consistency during the environmental assessment.

Table 1 – scoring matrix

Significance of Effect	
Element would have a major positive environmental effect in its current form as it would resolve an existing issue or maximise opportunities. SIGNIFICANT.	++
Element would have a minor positive environmental effect.	+
Effect of element is uncertain.	?
No connectivity with the environmental Topic/Objective being assessed.	x
Element would have no predicted environmental effects.	0
Element would have a minor adverse environmental effect.	-
The element would have a major adverse environmental effect as it would create significant new problems or substantially exacerbate existing problems. Consider exclusion of option. SIGNIFICANT.	--

Consideration of cumulative/in combination effects was part of the assessment process, rather than being a separate assessment. However no cumulative effects with sufficient information to enable meaningful assessment were found. This is because the strategy is a high level document, so there is limited specific information on where, how and when individual activities/projects might emerge. This means that it is not possible to characterise what effects might occur or identify the location(s) potentially affected, nor the magnitude and spatial extent of effects. So while the overall outcome of the vision to increase trees, woodland and hedges in Orkney might have the potential to give rise to some positive environmental effects, it is not

possible, on the basis of the limited information within the strategy, to identify where those potential effects might occur or their scale.

No negative effects were identified. This is because of the need for site specific assessment built into the strategy that should identify and mitigate negative effects or rule out proposals likely to have a significant adverse effect at the early project specific development stage.

b. Other environmental assessments

A HRA has been undertaken at the same time as the draft Environmental Report. While the HRA is required under different legislation², as a matter of good practice the HRA has been used to inform the Environmental Report and vice versa as part of an iterative process. For ease of cross reference, the HRA is provided in **Annex VI: Habitats Regulations Appraisal**.

² Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations.

4. Monitoring

The effects of implementation of the strategy will be monitored during its lifetime.

Annex IV: Monitoring measures table identifies what measures will be used and what monitoring will be undertaken. If unexpected effects occur, action will be taken to remedy them as appropriate to the effect and its cause

5. Next steps

The draft strategy and the draft Environmental Report will be open to public consultation for an 8 week consultation period. Following the consultation period, consultation responses will be considered and the strategy and the Environmental Report will be amended where required, prior to taking the strategy to council committee for final approval.

Once the strategy (and Environmental Report) has gained Council approval, the strategy will be adopted and a post-adoption statement on the Environmental Report issued. The finalised strategy is anticipated to be ready for adoption in spring 2025.

Annex I: Other plans, programmes and strategies

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
International directives and policies			
European Landscape Convention (European Commission, 2000)	Promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – biodiversity – landscape and cultural heritage – population and human health 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should be a tool for the maintenance and restoration of landscapes and their natural habitats.
The Paris Agreement (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2015)	The agreement sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – climatic factors 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should seek to promote the development and use of appropriate renewable energy sources and contribute to climate change mitigation.
Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC, 1997)	Protocol to the international Framework Convention on Climate Change Framework with the objective of reducing the Greenhouse gases that cause climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – climatic factors 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support measures that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
The Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (Council of Europe, 1995)	The Strategy aims to reverse the decline of landscape and biological diversity, by promoting innovation and proactive policy making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – biodiversity – landscape and cultural heritage – population and human health 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support the strategy by considering the contribution that actions could make to protecting biodiversity and landscapes.

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance 1971	Requires conservation and wise use of wetlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – water – biodiversity – landscape and cultural heritage 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should ensure the protection and enhancement of wetlands.
Taking Sustainable Use of Resources Forward: A thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste (EU 2005)	A sector based strategy produced as a requirement of the Seventh Environmental Action Programme of the European Community, seeking to help Europe become a recycling society that seeks to avoid waste and uses waste as a resource.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – climatic factors – air – material assets 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should seek to minimise waste and promote recycling.
Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection (EU 2006)	A sector based strategy produced as a requirement of the Seventh Environmental Action Programme of the European Community, seeking to establish common principles for the protection and sustainable use of soils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – soil and geodiversity 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should contribute towards the protection and improvement of soil.
UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UN, 1992)	An international legally-binding treaty with three main goals: conservation of biodiversity; sustainable use of biodiversity; fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – biodiversity 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should look for opportunities to conserve, and where possible restore, biodiversity.
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (the Rio Earth Summit) 1992 (UN, 1992)	Treaty aimed at reducing global emissions of greenhouse gases to combat global warming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – climatic factors 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should assist in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
– National legislation (UK and Scotland)			
Air Quality (Scotland) Regulations 2000 (as amended in Scotland)	Establishes standards for air quality and sets limits for various pollutants in Scotland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – air – population and human health 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support measures that would improve air quality.
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended by Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011)	Prescribes the approach to be taken to planning for scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – landscape and cultural heritage 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should ensure that scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological areas are not adversely affected by new development.
Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009	Legislation to set a target for the year 2050, an interim target for the year 2020, and to provide for annual targets, for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; to provide about the giving of advice to the Scottish Ministers relating to climate change; to confer power on Ministers to impose climate change duties on public bodies; to make further provision about mitigation of and adaptation to climate change; to make provision about energy efficiency, including provision enabling council tax discounts; to make provision about the reduction and recycling of waste; and for connected purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – climatic factors 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support and include climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) Regulations 1994 (as amended for Scotland)	These regulations relate to the designation of European sites, and provision of protection to various plant and animal species.	– biodiversity	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should ensure that European sites are protected from loss or damage.
Environment Act 1995	The Act sets new standards for environmental management by statutory bodies.	– all topics	The council must adhere to the standards set out in the act.
Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005	Requires Strategic Environmental Assessments to be completed for plans, programmes and strategies likely to have significant environmental effects.	– all topics	Enables the significant environmental effects of the plan, programme or strategy being assessed to be identified and addressed.
Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (Scotland) Regulations 2017	Requires environmental impact assessments for certain forestry projects.	– all topics	The plan, programme or strategy being assessed will be required to be compatible with environmental impact assessments legislation.
The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017	Requires environmental impact assessment of site specific projects and specifically requires consideration of Sensitive Areas.	– all topics	The plan, programme or strategy being assessed will be required to be compatible with environmental impact assessments legislation.
Equality Act 2010	The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.	– population and human health	The plan, programme or strategy being assessed should ensure that it does not result in individuals or groups with protected characteristics being discriminated against.
Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009	Establishes roles, responsibilities and requirements for sustainable flood management.	– climatic factors – water	The plan, programme or strategy being assessed should support flood management, particularly natural flood management.

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – population and human health 	
Historic Environment Scotland Act 2014	Amongst other things, establishes Historic Environment Scotland with the general function of investigating, caring for and promoting Scotland's historic environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – landscape and cultural heritage 	The plan, programme or strategy being assessed should support the protection and preservation of the historic environment.
Housing (Scotland) Act 2014	Makes provision about housing, including provision about the abolition of the right to buy, social housing, the law affecting private housing, the regulation of letting agents and the licensing of sites for mobile homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – population and human health 	The plan, programme or strategy being assessed should support the provision of housing, particularly affordable housing.
Islands (Scotland) Act 2018	Sets out a requirement for public bodies to have regard to the effects on island communities in relation to their policies and plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – population and human health 	The plan, programme or strategy being assessed can identify development opportunities that enable islands communities.
National Plan for Scotland's Islands (December 2019)	The National Islands Plan provides a framework for action in order to meaningfully improve outcomes for island communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – population and human health 	The plan, programme or strategy being assessed can identify development opportunities that enable islands communities.
Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003	Establishes right of responsible access to land and water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – water – landscape and cultural heritage – biodiversity – population and human health 	The plan, programme or strategy being assessed can provide for and support responsible access.

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
Nature Conservation Act (Scotland) 2004	Act places duties on public bodies for conserving biodiversity, increases protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), amends legislation on Nature Conservation Orders, provides for Land Management Orders for SSSIs and associated land, strengthens wildlife enforcement legislation, and requires the preparation of a Scottish Fossil Code.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – water – biodiversity – landscape and cultural heritage 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.
National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)	Sets out national development plan and policies as a framework to inform LDPs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – all topics 	The plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA must ensure that it complies with NPF4.
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997	Prescribes the approach to be taken in planning for listed buildings, conservation areas and designed landscapes and gardens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – material assets – landscape and cultural heritage 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should ensure that listed buildings, conservation areas and designed landscapes and gardens are not adversely affected.
Sewage (Scotland) Act 1968	Along with the Water Industry (Scotland) Act 2002 this gives responsibilities to Scottish Water to manage the discharge of surface water that enters its drainage systems (by providing sewers and public Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs)) and to maintain water supplies and drainage infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – water – population and human health 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should have regard to Scottish Water’s duties under this act.
Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003	Transposes the Water Framework Directive into Scots law.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – water – biodiversity 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should encourage improvements to the water environment and

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – landscape and cultural heritage – population and human health 	support measures for more efficient use of water.
Water Industry (Scotland) Act 2002	Along with the Sewage (Scotland) Act 1968 this gives responsibilities to Scottish Water to manage the discharge of surface water that enters its drainage systems (by providing sewers and public Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs)) and to maintain water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – water – population and human health 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should have regard to Scottish Water’s duties under this act.
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended in Scotland)	Sets out offences in relation to the protection of certain species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – biodiversity 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support protected species.
Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011	Amends Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and seeks to modernise game law; abolish the designation ‘areas of special protection’; improve snaring practice; regulate invasive non-native species; change the licensing system for protected species; amend current arrangements for deer management and deer stalking; strengthen protection of badgers; change how muirburn can be practised; and make operational changes to the management of Sites of Scientific Interest; game law, use of shores, and invasive species legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – biodiversity 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support provisions of the act.

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004	To make provision in relation to the conservation of biodiversity; to make further provision in relation to the conservation and enhancement of Scotland's natural features; to amend the law relating to the protection of certain birds, animals and plants; and for connected purposes.	– biodiversity	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support provisions of the act.
– National policy (UK and Scotland)			
The Air Quality (Scotland) Regulations 2000	Sets out air quality objectives for Scotland.	– air – population and human health	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should encourage reductions in emissions through a range of measures.
Creating Places - A policy statement on architecture and place for Scotland (Scottish Government, 2013)	A policy statement on architecture and place setting out the comprehensive value good design can deliver. The document contains an action plan that sets out the work that will be taken forward to achieve positive change.	– landscape and cultural heritage – population and human health	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support good design.
Climate ready Scotland - Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019 – 2024 (Scottish Government, 2019)	Sets objectives in relation to adaptation to climate change, Ministerial proposals and policies for meeting those objectives, and the period within which those proposals and policies will be introduced. The Programme also sets out the arrangements for wider engagement in meeting those objectives.	– climatic factors – population and human health	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should encourage reductions in emissions through a range of measures.
Civil Contingencies Act 2004	Delivers a framework for civil protection in the UK and defines the responsibilities for	– material assets	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
	responders to emergency which include (among others)	– population and human health	strategy subject to SEA should support the requirements of responders to fulfil their statutory duties.
Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 – The Road to a Healthier Future (Scottish Government, 2021)	The national cross-government strategy that sets out how the Scottish Government and its partner organisations propose to reduce air pollution further to protect human health and fulfil Scotland’s legal responsibilities as soon as possible.	– air – population and human health	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should encourage reductions in emissions through a range of measures.
Groundwater Protection Policy for Scotland (SEPA, 2009)	This policy aims to provide a sustainable future for Scotland’s groundwater resources by protecting legitimate uses of groundwater and providing a common SEPA framework.	– water – soil and geodiversity	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should aim, where possible, to manage significant flood risk to groundwater from flooding related pollution.
Historic Environment Circular 1 (HES, 2019)	This circular covers the requirements of the secondary legislation (‘the Regulations’) relating to the Historic Environment Scotland Act 2014 (‘the 2014 Act’).	– landscape and cultural heritage	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should follow the guidance for policy development on the management of the historic environment.
Historic Environment Policy Statement (HES, 2019)	Document to which planning authorities are directed in their consideration of decision making for conservation area consent, listed building consent for buildings of all three categories and planning applications affecting all aspects of the historic environment.	– landscape and cultural heritage	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should follow the guidance for policy development on the management of the historic environment.
Our past, our future: the strategy for Scotland’s historic environment	Strategy for the historic environment setting out a national mission to sustain and enhance the benefits of Scotland’s historic environment, for	– landscape and cultural heritage	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should follow the

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
	people and communities now and into the future.		guidance for policy development on the management of the historic environment.
Scotland's Forest Strategy 2019 – 2029 (Scottish Government, 2019)	Sets out Scottish Ministers 50-year vision and 10-year framework to action, expand, protect and enhance Scotland's forests and woodlands, to deliver greater economic, social and environmental benefits to Scotland's people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – climatic factors – water – soil and geodiversity – biodiversity – landscape and cultural heritage 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support the strategy.
Land Use Strategy for Scotland 2021 – 2026 (Scottish Government, 2021)	Outlines strategy for achieving sustainable land use across Scotland and getting the best from the land of Scotland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – all topics 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA could provide more specific direction on the national land use strategy and can be implemented at a regional level.
Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Notes (HES, various)	Series of guidance notes which are designed to support the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) and Scottish Planning Policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – landscape and cultural heritage 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support positive management of the historic environment.
Control of Woodland Removal Policy (Scottish Government, 2009)	Sets out Scottish Ministers policy on woodland removal in Scotland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – climatic factors – water – soil and geodiversity – biodiversity 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support the policy

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – landscape and cultural heritage 	
The River Basin Management Plan for the Scotland River Basin District: 2015–2027 (SEPA, 2015)	Fulfils a requirement under the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – water – soil and geodiversity – biodiversity 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support management objectives for water bodies.
Scotland’s National Transport Strategy (Transport Scotland, 2020)	Scottish Government’s National Strategy for reducing transport emissions by 80%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – climatic factors – air – population and human health 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support reductions in emissions from transport.
Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (Scottish Government, 2022 in draft)	Identifies Scottish biodiversity priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – water – biodiversity – landscape and cultural heritage 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should reflect the purpose of the strategy.
Scottish Government’s Infrastructure Investment Plan (Scottish Government, 2021)	Gives an overview of the Scottish Government’s plans for infrastructure investment over the coming decades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – material assets – population and human health 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should take account of potential impacts (both positive and negative) of actions on existing and planned developments.
Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework, National	As part of the National Performance Framework, Scottish Government have set 15 National Outcomes that the public sector must	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – all topics 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should identify and

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
Outcomes (Scottish Government, undated)	collectively deliver, on children and young people, economy, fair work and business, international, communities, education, health, poverty, culture, environment, human rights.		contribute to delivery of the outcomes that are most appropriate in the plan/programme/strategy area.
Scottish Soil Framework (Scottish Government, 2009)	Ministers policies and objectives for the conservation and use of soils.	– all topics	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should promote soil conservation.
Scottish Water Delivery Plan 2021-22 – 2022-23 (Scottish Water, undated)	The plan sets out how Scottish Water will address challenges to drinking water quality, the environment and customer service.	– water – population and human health	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should be developed with regard to the objectives and actions proposed in the business plan.
Scottish Zero Waste Plan (Scottish Government, 2010)	Provides context for waste planning in Scotland by sets the strategic direction for waste policy for Scotland, with a target of 70% recycling and maximum 5% to landfill by 2025 for all Scotland's waste.	– climatic factors – soil and geodiversity – material assets – population and human health	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA support waste management and good design.
– Local plans and strategies			
Orkney Islands Council Core Paths Plan (OIC, 2018)	Identifies a network of core paths throughout the Orkney Council area.	– biodiversity – population and human health	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support the promotion and development of core paths.

Relevant PPS	Relevant objectives/purpose	SEA topic	Relationship between the PPS and land use planning
Orkney Community Plan (incorporating the Local Outcome Improvement Plan) (prepared by Community Planning Partners)	Strategic documents outlining (usually socio-economic) priorities for communities. Community Planning Partners include local public services such as councils, NHS boards, police and fire services, and other public bodies. They work together to improve the way that local services are planned, co-ordinated and carried out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all topics 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should help deliver priorities to address inequalities and issues in communities.
Local Housing Strategy	Required by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. Sets out how housing authorities will provide for housing needs and demands in their area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - population and human health 	Where relevant to the priorities identified, the proposals in the plan, programme or strategy subject to SEA should support housing delivery.
Local Transport Strategy	Set out how to maintain and improve infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - climatic factors - air - population and human health 	Plan should support sustainable transport solutions and encourage lower carbon forms of transport.

Annex II: Environmental assessment tables

Table A1 –screening table

Element of the strategy	Reason for screening in/out
Vision: By 2035, there has been an increase in trees, woodlands and hedges in our towns and villages and in the countryside across Orkney that are resilient and contribute to tackling climate change, provide diverse and functional habitats that support wildlife, complement land uses and are valued and enjoyed by people.	In. There is potential for environmental effects caused by an increase in trees, woodlands and hedges.
Theme 1 – Protection of existing trees and woodlands	Out. This sets out the requirements of NPF4 policy 6 and provides explanatory text. NPF4 has already been subject to SEA, therefore this theme is screened out.
Theme 2 – Encouraging more trees and hedges	In. There are potential for environmental effects caused by more encouraging trees and hedges.
Theme 3 – Resilience of trees to climate change	In. There is potential for environmental effects caused by increase resilience to climate change.

Table All – assessment for Vision, themes 2 and 3

SECTION OF PLAN BEING ASSESSED:		Vision: <i>By 2035, there has been an increase in trees, woodlands and hedges in our towns and villages and in the countryside across Orkney that are resilient and contribute to tackling climate change, provide diverse and functional habitats that support wildlife, complement land uses and are valued and enjoyed by people.</i>			
(eg Vision, Policy X, Option 1A, etc)		Theme 2: <i>Encouraging more trees and hedges</i> Theme 3: <i>Resilience of trees to climate change</i> As the vision is a combination of the three themes, the vision and themes 2 and 3 are assessed in a single assessment below. (Theme 1 is not assessed for the reasons set out in the screening table.) Mitigation to avoid adverse effects is built into the strategy through the requirement for site specific assessment.			
ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS					
SEA object ive	SEA sub-objective	Nature of effect	Scoring: significance of effect before mitigation	Mitigation and enhancement	Scoring: residual significance of effect after mitigation
1a	Will there be an effect on transport GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a for this strategy	x		
	Will there be an effect on energy GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a for this strategy	x		

<p>Will there be an effect on industrial, manufacture and/or construction processes GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?</p>	<p>n/a for this strategy</p>	<p>x</p>		
<p>Will there be an effect on waste GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?</p>	<p>n/a for this strategy</p>	<p>x</p>		
<p>Will there be an effect on land use, land change and forestry GHG emissions during construction or during operation/occupation affecting carbon sinks (such as trees, carbon rich soils, wetlands, sea grass beds, kelp forests, etc)?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive but minimal effect: an increase in trees and woodlands should help capture more GHG emissions. However, due to the climatic conditions in Orkney, growth rates are slower and trees take a different form compared to trees grown on mainland Scotland. Orkney trees are unlikely to reach the size (and therefore carbon storage capacity) of such mainland trees. In addition, large scale expansion of existing woodlands or creation of large new woodlands is not supported, with small scale planting more in keeping with climatic and landscape character encouraged. Therefore, the contribution of the strategy to this effect will be positive but minimal.</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p>+</p>

	<p>Considering future implications of climate change (eg increased severity of weather resulting in more flooding, periods of drought and extremes of temperature), will there be an effect on existing infrastructure and buildings?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees as natural flood and surface water management. However it is not possible to know where this would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and location are uncertain.</p>	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
1b	<p>Considering future implications of climate change (eg increased severity of weather resulting in more flooding, periods of drought and extremes of temperature), will there be an effect on infrastructure and buildings proposed in the Local Development Plan?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees as natural flood and surface water management. However it is not possible to know where this would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and location are uncertain.</p>	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
2a	<p>Will there be an effect on the levels of UK National Air Quality pollutants (e.g. NO₂, PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂)?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to plant trees in areas where emissions are likely to be high, eg busy public roads. However it is not possible to know where planting proposals would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the location and scale are uncertain.</p>	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+

	Will there be an effect on the levels of other types of air pollution (eg particulates)?	Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to plant trees in areas where particulates from emissions are likely to be high, eg busy public roads. However it is not possible to know where planting proposals would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the location and scale are uncertain.	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
3a	Will there be an effect on the water quality of watercourses, lochs and ground-water from diffuse and point source pollution?	Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees as natural flood and surface water management that would reduce erosion or filter pollution. However it is not possible to know where this would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and location are uncertain.	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
	Will there be an effect on the ecological condition of watercourses?	Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees as natural flood and surface water management that would improve the ecological condition. However it is not possible to know where this would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and location are uncertain.	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+

	Will there be an effect on the ability of watercourse catchments to store water and the natural flood management services they provide?	Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees as natural flood and surface water management. However it is not possible to know where this would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and location are uncertain.	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
	Will there be an effect on public water supplies?	No, as site specific assessment is required for new planting proposals, which should screen out adverse effects in such areas.	0		
3b	Will there be an effect on demand for water from development (residential and business)?	No.	0		
	Will there be an effect on sustainable use of water resources?	No.	0		
3c	Will there be an effect on the water environment from invasive non-native species?	No.	0		
4a	Will there be an effect on carbon rich soils?	No, as site specific assessment is required for new proposals, which should screen out trees in such areas.	0		
	Will there be an effect on soil sealing, soil	No.	0		

	structure and soil loss?				
	Will there be an effect on the levels of soil contamination?	No.	0		
	Will there be an effect on soil erosion and landslides?	Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees as natural flood and surface water management that would reduce erosion. However it is not possible to know where this would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and location are uncertain.	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
	Will there be an effect on geodiversity interests (eg GCR sites)?	No, as site specific assessment is required for new planting proposals, which should screen out proposals in areas with GCR sites that would be adversely affected by trees.	0		
5a	Will there be an effect on sustainable use of natural resources (eg water, aggregates)?	No.	0		
	Will there be an effect on the sustainable use and management of existing and proposed infrastructure (eg water, heat, energy or flood protection infrastructure)?	No.	0		

	Will there be an effect on the use of finite resources through the use of secondary and recycled materials?	No.	0		
6a	Will there be an effect on the favourable condition of areas protected for nature conservation? (European sites, Ramsar sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest)	Uncertain. While there may be positive effects should proposals come forward that would contribute to meeting the conservation objectives for a protected area, it is not possible to know if or where any such proposals would come forward. Negative effects would be avoided as site specific assessment is required for proposals, which would screen out proposals in areas that would be adversely affected by planting. Therefore, although there would be no negative effects, overall the effects of the strategy are considered to be uncertain as there is a possibility of some positive effects should suitable proposals come forward.	?	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	?
	Will there be an effect on protected species?	Yes, there may be positive effects on protected species that would benefit from the cover and habitat that trees would provide (eg otter and riparian planting). However it is not possible to know if or where this would occur, so the effects are considered to have the potential to be positive but the scale and location are unknown. (Negative effects would be avoided as site specific assessment is required that should screen out proposals in areas that would adversely affect protected species.)	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+

<p>Will there be an effect on Scottish Biodiversity List habitats and plants found in Orkney? (in Local Nature Conservation Sites or in the wider countryside)</p>	<p>Yes, there may be positive effects on SBS habitats and species that would benefit from the cover and habitat that trees would provide. However it is not possible to know if or where this would occur, so the effects are considered to have the potential to be positive but the scale and location are unknown. (Negative effects would be avoided as site specific assessment is required that should screen out proposals in areas that would adversely affect SBS habitats and species.)</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p>+</p>
<p>Will there be an effect on Scottish Biodiversity List non-plant species? (in Local Nature Conservation Sites or in the wider countryside)</p>	<p>Yes, there may be positive effects on SBS habitats and species that would benefit from the cover and habitat that trees would provide. However it is not possible to know if or where this would occur, so the effects are considered to have the potential to be positive but the scale and location are unknown. (Negative effects would be avoided as site specific assessment is required that should screen out proposals in areas that would adversely affect SBS habitats and species.)</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p>+</p>
<p>Will there be an effect on invasive non-native species or tree pests and diseases?</p>	<p>Uncertain. While it is not anticipated that there would be effects on invasive non-native species, tree pests or diseases, due to the low stock of trees in Orkney that could be used for new planting, trees would need to be imported for larger planting proposals, which brings with it a risk of introducing invasive non-native species, pests and diseases.</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Standard industry prevention measures used by commercial suppliers should reduce the risk where trees are sourced from such suppliers. However a residual risk remains for trees</p>	<p>?</p>

				sourced from non-commercial suppliers, resulting in the uncertain score.	
7a	Will there be an effect on the special qualities of the National Scenic Area?	No, site specific assessment is required with the need for assessment of effects on the NSA highlighted, which should screen out proposals in areas that would adversely affect the special qualities of the NSA.	0		
	Will there be an effect landscape character and local distinctiveness?	Yes, there may be positive effects on local landscape character and distinctiveness as the strategy encourages planting to complement the pattern and scale of existing woodland and tree cover. However it is not possible know if or where this would occur, so the effects are considered to have the potential to be positive but the scale and location are uncertain. (Negative effects would be avoided as site specific assessment if required that should screen out planting in areas that would have adverse landscape effects.)	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
7b	Will there be an effect on the designated or undesignated historic and cultural environment and assets, either through direct effects as a result of planting or removal of trees, or	No, site specific assessment is required with the need for assessment of effects on historic and cultural interests highlighted, which should screen out proposals in areas that would adversely affect them.	0		

	indirectly through effects on the setting?				
8a	Will there be an effect on housing for local needs?	n/a for this strategy	x		
	Will there be an effect on recreation and active travel opportunities that support healthier lifestyles?	Yes, there should be positive effects if proposals enhance public spaces in a way that encourages more people to explore them and be active (eg through providing play opportunities and more welcoming and sheltered spaces).	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
	Will there be an effect on employment opportunities local to places of residence?	n/a for this strategy	x		

Table All – assessment for indicative settlement mapping

SECTION OF PLAN BEING ASSESSED:		Indicative spatial mapping shown in figure 8.			
<i>(eg Vision, Policy X, Option 1A, etc)</i>		Mitigation to avoid adverse effects is built into the strategy through the requirement for site specific assessment.			
ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS					
SEA objective	SEA sub-objective	Nature of effect	Scoring: significance of effect before mitigation	Mitigation and enhancement	Scoring: residual significance of effect after mitigation
1a	Will there be an effect on transport GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a for this strategy	x		
	Will there be an effect on energy GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a for this strategy	x		
	Will there be an effect on industrial, manufacture and/or construction processes GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a for this strategy	x		
	Will there be an effect on waste GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a for this strategy	x		

	<p>Will there be an effect on land use, land change and forestry GHG emissions during construction or during operation/occupation affecting carbon sinks (such as trees, carbon rich soils, wetlands, sea grass beds, kelp forests, etc)?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive but minimal effect: enhancing the trees and woodlands networks in the mapped settlement should help capture more GHG emissions. However, due to the climatic conditions in Orkney, growth rates are slower and trees take a different form compared to trees grown on mainland Scotland. Orkney trees are unlikely to reach the size (and therefore carbon storage capacity) of such mainland trees. Therefore, the contribution of the strategy to this effect will be positive but minimal.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>
<p>1b</p>	<p>Considering future implications of climate change (eg increased severity of weather resulting in more flooding, periods of drought and extremes of temperature), will there be an effect on existing infrastructure and buildings?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward in mapped settlement to use trees as natural flood and surface water management. However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>

	<p>Considering future implications of climate change (eg increased severity of weather resulting in more flooding, periods of drought and extremes of temperature), will there be an effect on infrastructure and buildings proposed in the Local Development Plan?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees in mapped settlement as natural flood and surface water management. However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>
<p>2a</p>	<p>Will there be an effect on the levels of UK National Air Quality pollutants (e.g. NO₂, PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂)?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to plant trees in areas of mapped settlement where emissions are likely to be high, eg busy public roads. However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>

	<p>Will there be an effect on the levels of other types of air pollution (eg particulates)?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to plant trees in areas of the settlement where particulates from emissions are likely to be high, eg busy public roads. However it is not possible to know where planting proposals would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the location and scale are uncertain.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>
<p>3a</p>	<p>Will there be an effect on the water quality of watercourses, lochs and ground-water from diffuse and point source pollution?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees in mapped settlement as natural flood and surface water management that would reduce erosion or filter pollution. However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>

	<p>Will there be an effect on the ecological condition of watercourses?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees as natural flood and surface water management that would improve the ecological condition. However it is not possible to know where this would occur or on what scale, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and location are uncertain.</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p>+</p>
	<p>Will there be an effect on the ability of watercourse catchments to store water and the natural flood management services they provide?</p>	<p>Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees in mapped settlement as natural flood and surface water management. However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain.</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p>+</p>
	<p>Will there be an effect on public water supplies?</p>	<p>No, as site specific assessment is required for new planting proposals, which should screen out adverse effects in such areas.</p>	<p>0</p>		

3b	Will there be an effect on demand for water from development (residential and business)?	No.	0		
	Will there be an effect on sustainable use of water resources?	No.	0		
3c	Will there be an effect on the water environment from invasive non-native species?	No.	0		
4a	Will there be an effect on carbon rich soils?	No, as there are no carbon rich soils within the area shown in the indicative mapping, and site specific assessment is required for all new proposals, which should screen out trees in areas containing carbon rich soils.	0		
	Will there be an effect on soil sealing, soil structure and soil loss?	No.	0		
	Will there be an effect on the levels of soil contamination?	No.	0		

	Will there be an effect on soil erosion and landslides?	Yes, there should be a positive effect should proposals come forward to use trees in the mapped settlement as natural flood and surface water management that would reduce erosion. However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain.	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
	Will there be an effect on geodiversity interests (eg GCR sites)?	No, as geological and GCR sites tend of the located outwith settlement boundaries and site specific assessment is required for new planting proposals, which should screen out proposals in areas with geological sites that would be adversely affected by trees.	0		
5a	Will there be an effect on sustainable use of natural resources (eg water, aggregates)?	No.	0		

	Will there be an effect on the sustainable use and management of existing and proposed infrastructure (eg water, heat, energy or flood protection infrastructure)?	No.	0		
	Will there be an effect on the use of finite resources through the use of secondary and recycled materials?	No.	0		
6a	Will there be an effect on the favourable condition of areas protected for nature conservation? (European sites, Ramsar sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest)	No. While it is not possible to know where proposals for new planting might come forward in Kirkwall, site specific assessment is required for new planting proposals, which should screen out adverse effects on European sites.	0	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	0

	<p>Will there be an effect on protected species?</p>	<p>Yes, there may be positive effects on protected species that would benefit from the cover and habitat that trees would provide in the mapped settlement (eg otter and riparian planting). However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain. (Negative effects would be avoided as site specific assessment is required that should screen out planting in areas that would adversely affect protected species.)</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p>+</p>
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	<p>Will there be an effect on Scottish Biodiversity List habitats and plants found in Orkney? (in Local Nature Conservation Sites or in the wider countryside)</p>	<p>Yes, there may be positive effects on SBS habitats and species that would benefit from the cover and habitat that trees would provide in mapped settlement. However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain. (Negative effects would be avoided as site specific assessment is required that should screen out planting in areas that would adversely affect SBS habitats and species.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>
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<p>Will there be an effect on Scottish Biodiversity List non-plant species? (in Local Nature Conservation Sites or in the wider countryside)</p>	<p>Yes, there may be positive effects on SBS habitats and species that would benefit from the cover and habitat that trees would provide in mapped settlement. However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain. (Negative effects would be avoided as site specific assessment is required that should screen out planting in areas that would adversely affect SBS habitats and species.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>
<p>Will there be an effect on invasive non-native species or tree pests and diseases?</p>	<p>Uncertain. While it is not anticipated that there would be effects on invasive non-native species, tree pests of diseases, due to the low stock of trees in Orkney that could be used for new planting, trees would need to be imported for larger planting proposals, which brings with it a risk of introducing invasive non-native species, pests and diseases.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">?</p>	<p>Standard industry prevention measures used by commercial suppliers should reduce the risk where trees are sourced from such suppliers. However a residual risk remains for trees sourced from non-commercial suppliers, resulting in the uncertain score.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">?</p>

7a	Will there be an effect on the special qualities of the National Scenic Area?	No, as the mapped settlement is well outwith the NSA.	0		
	Will there be an effect landscape character and local distinctiveness?	Yes, there may be positive effects on local landscape character and distinctiveness as the strategy encourages planting to complement the pattern and scale of existing woodland and tree cover in mapped settlement. However it is not possible to know what scale this would occur, so the effects are considered to be positive but the scale and specific location are uncertain. (Negative effects would be avoided as site specific assessment if required that should screen out planting in areas that would have adverse landscape effects.)	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+

7b	Will there be an effect on the designated or undesignated historic and cultural environment and assets, either through direct effects as a result of planting or removal of trees, or indirectly through effects on the setting?	No, site specific assessment is required with the need for consideration of effects on historic and cultural interests highlighted in the strategy, which should screen out proposals in areas that would adversely affect them in the mapped settlement.	0		
8a	Will there be an effect on housing for local needs?	n/a for this strategy	x		
	Will there be an effect on recreation and active travel opportunities that support healthier lifestyles?	Yes, there should be positive effects if proposals enhance public spaces in the mapped settlement in a way that encourages more people to explore them and be active (eg through providing play opportunities and more welcoming and sheltered spaces).	+	n/a for reasons given in Nature of effect column	+
	Will there be an effect on employment opportunities local to places of residence?	n/a for this strategy	x		

Annex III: Baseline environmental data – see *separate Topic paper document*

Please see the separate Topic paper infographics document.

Annex IV: Monitoring measures table

SEA objective	SEA objective	SEA sub-objective	Measurable?	How to measure?
Reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases with particular focus on emissions from buildings, transport, waste, energy generation and industry, and those arising from land use, land change and forestry (including natural carbon sinks such as peatlands, sea grass, kelp and trees).	1a	Will there be an effect on transport GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a to strategy	n/a to strategy
		Will there be an effect on energy GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a to strategy	n/a to strategy
		Will there be an effect on industrial, manufacture and/or construction processes GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a to strategy	n/a to strategy
		Will there be an effect on waste GHG emissions during construction activity or during operation/occupation?	n/a to strategy	n/a to strategy
		Will there be an effect on land use, land change and forestry GHG emissions during construction or during operation/occupation affecting carbon sinks (such as trees, carbon rich soils, wetlands, sea grass beds, kelp forests, etc)?	positive effects through reduction in GHG by increase in trees, woodlands and hedges consuming such emissions	record of new tree or woodland proposals that are assessed via the Orkney Woodland Group

Ensure existing and proposed infrastructure and buildings are located and designed to cope with future climate conditions.	1b	Considering future implications of climate change (eg increased severity of weather resulting in more flooding, periods of drought and extremes of temperature), will there be an effect on existing infrastructure and buildings?	potentially if trees, woodlands or hedges are used as natural flood management	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment
		Considering future implications of climate change (eg increased severity of weather resulting in more flooding, periods of drought and extremes of temperature), will there be an effect on infrastructure and buildings proposed in the Local Development Plan?	potentially if trees, woodlands or hedges are used as natural flood management	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment
To maintain or improve air quality and reduce emissions of key pollutants.	2a	Will there be an effect on the levels of UK National Air Quality pollutants (e.g. NO ₂ , PM ₁₀ , PM _{2.5} , SO ₂)?	no	n/a
		Will there be an effect on the levels of other types of air pollution (eg particulates)?	no	n/a
Maintain and improve the quality of water resources, and to protect and enhance the state of the water environment.	3a	Will there be an effect on the water quality of watercourses, lochs and ground-water from diffuse and point source pollution?	potentially if trees, woodlands or hedges are used as natural flood management	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment

		Will there be an effect on the ability of freshwater catchments to store water and the natural flood management services they provide?	potentially if trees, woodlands or hedges are used as natural flood management	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment
		Will there be an effect on public water supplies?	no	n/a
Reduce demand for water and minimise unnecessary water use.	3b	Will there be an effect on demand for water from development (residential and business)?	n/a to strategy	
		Will there be an effect on sustainable use of water resources?	no	n/a
To reduce the impact of invasive non-native species on the water environment.	3c	Will there be an effect on the water environment from invasive non-native species?	no	n/a
Minimise contamination and safeguard and improve soil, peat quality and geodiversity.	4a	Will there be an effect on carbon rich soils?	no as the strategy discourages trees, woodlands and hedges on such soils	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment

		Will there be an effect on soil sealing, soil structure and soil loss?	potentially if trees, woodlands or hedges are used as natural flood management, reducing erosion	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment
		Will there be an effect on the levels of soil contamination?	no	n/a
		Will there be an effect on soil erosion and landslides?	potentially if trees, woodlands or hedges are used as natural flood management, reducing erosion	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment
		Will there be an effect on geodiversity interests (eg GCR sites)?	potentially if trees, woodlands or hedges are proposed to be located somewhere with such interests	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment
Encourage the sustainable use and reuse of material assets.	5a	Will there be an effect on sustainable use of natural resources (eg water, aggregates)?	no	n/a
		Will there be an effect on the sustainable use and management of existing and proposed infrastructure (eg water, heat, energy or flood protection infrastructure)?	no	n/a

		Will there be an effect on the use of finite resources through the use of secondary and recycled materials?	no	n/a
Protect and enhance biodiversity.	6a	Will there be an effect on the favourable condition of areas protected for nature conservation? (European sites, Ramsar sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest)	unlikely as most protected areas have been screened out and are identified as unsuitable in the spatial mapping of the strategy	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment
		Will there be an effect on protected species?	uncertain	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment
		Will there be an effect on Scottish Biodiversity List habitats and plants found in Orkney? (in Local Nature Conservation Sites or in the wider countryside)	uncertain	individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment

		<p>Will there be an effect on Scottish Biodiversity List non-plant species? (in Local Nature Conservation Sites or in the wider countryside)</p>	<p>uncertain</p>	<p>individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment</p>
		<p>Will there be an effect on invasive non-native species or tree pests and diseases?</p>	<p>uncertain</p>	<p>individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment</p>
<p>Protect and enhance the character, diversity and special qualities of the landscapes of Orkney.</p>	<p>7a</p>	<p>Will there be an effect on the special qualities of the National Scenic Area?</p>	<p>no</p>	<p>individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment</p>
		<p>Will there be an effect landscape character and local distinctiveness?</p>	<p>no</p>	<p>individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment</p>

<p>Protect and enhance the historic and cultural environment and assets of Orkney.</p>	<p>7b</p>	<p>Will there be an effect on the historic and cultural environment and assets?</p>	<p>uncertain</p>	<p>individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment</p>
<p>Support and enhance the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors to Orkney through housing, recreation and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>8a</p>	<p>Will there be an effect on housing for local needs?</p>	<p>n/a to strategy</p>	
		<p>Will there be an effect on recreation and active travel opportunities that support healthier lifestyles?</p>	<p>uncertain</p>	<p>individual proposals arising through the encouragement the strategy gives to increased trees, woodlands and hedges would be subject to site specific assessment</p>
		<p>Will there be an effect on employment opportunities local to places of residence?</p>	<p>n/a to strategy</p>	

Annex VI: Habitats Regulations Appraisal

Introduction

A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) has been undertaken at the same time as the draft Environmental Report. While the HRA is required under different legislation³, as a matter of good practice the HRA has been used to inform the Environmental Report and vice versa as part of an iterative process.

INFORMATION
European site details
Name of European site(s) potentially affected
Auskerry SPA Calf of Eday SPA Copinsay SPA East Sanday Coast SPA (and Ramsar site) Faray and Holm of Farray SAC Hoy SAC and SPA Loch of Isbister SAC Loch of Stenness SAC Marwick Head SPA North Orkney SPA Orkney Mainland Moors SPA Papa Westray (North Hill and Holm) SPA Pentland Firth Islands SPA Rousay SPA Sanday SAC Scapa Flow SPA Stromness Heaths and Coast SAC Sule Skerry and Sule Stack SPA Switha SPA West Westray SPA
Qualifying interest(s)
See Annex I.
Conservation objectives for qualifying interests
As no sites will experience a likely significant effect (see stage 3 below), and because the conservation objectives of European sites are currently under review

³ Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations.

and so may change, readers should refer to the information for each site on the NatureScot portal SiteLink <https://sitelink.nature.scot/home> for the most up to date information about conservation objectives.

APPRAISAL

STAGE 1:

What is the plan or project?

Relevant summary details of proposal (including location, timing, methods, etc)

Having a forest and woodland strategy is a legislative requirement under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. It is expected that the strategy will cover the period 2025 – 2035. As there are no forests in Orkney, the strategy has been named a trees and woodland strategy, but still meets the requirements of the Act, being to:

- a. identify woodlands of high nature conservation value in the planning authority's area, and
- b. set out the planning authority's policies and proposals in their area, as to:
 - i. the development of forestry and woodlands,
 - ii. the protection and enhancement of woodlands, in particular those mentioned in paragraph a,
 - iii. the resilience to climate change of woodlands, in particular those mentioned in paragraph a,
 - iv. the expansion of woodlands of a range of types to provide multiple benefits to the physical, cultural, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area,
- c. any other matter which the planning authority consider appropriate.

The draft Orkney Islands Council Trees and woodland strategy has considered the whole of the land area within the Council area. It has been prepared as a draft for public consultation so may change, however the HRA has been undertaken to inform the draft strategy. The HRA will be reviewed and if necessary revised following the public consultation period.

STAGE 2:

Is the plan or project directly connected with or necessary for the management of the European site for nature conservation?

No.

STAGE 3:

Is the plan or project (either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects) likely to have a significant effect on the site(s)?

No. The requirement in the strategy for proposals to undertake site specific assessment would ensure that consideration of effects on the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of relevant European sites would be considered by those thinking about planting trees or woodland proposals. Any proposals applying for a grant from Scottish Forestry or the Woodland Trust would also be subject to scrutiny, which would include a proposal specific assessment within input from the Orkney Woodland Group, which includes NatureScot.

Therefore, while it is not possible for the strategy to predict where tree and woodland proposals may occur, it is considered that the requirement for site specific assessment would ensure that likely significant effects are minimised and adverse effects on site integrity would not occur as a result of the implementation of the strategy.

STAGE 4:

Undertake an Appropriate Assessment of the implications for the site(s) in view of the(ir) conservation objectives

Not required.

STAGE 5:

Can it be ascertained that there will not be an adverse effect on site integrity?

Not required.