

**Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005  
00705 – Scottish Canals Heritage Strategy 2013-38 – Post-Adoption Statement****1.0 Background**

As required under Section 18(3) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, this statement outlines how the assessment findings and the comments received during the consultation on Scottish Canals Heritage Strategy and its accompanying Environmental Report have been taken into account in the adopted strategy, published on 6 May 2013.

In relation to Section 18(3)(d), there were no consultations under regulation 14 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (S.I. 2004/1633) as the strategy will not affect other EU Member States. The headings below relate to the remaining requirements of Section 18(3) and have been used to structure this document:

- (a) How environmental considerations have been integrated into the strategy
- (b) How the environmental report has been taken into account
- (c) How the opinions expressed during the consultation period have been taken into account
- (e) Reasons for choosing the strategy as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered
- (f) Measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the strategy

The Environmental Report is available to download from the SEA Database, [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/environmental-assessment/sea/SEAG](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/environmental-assessment/sea/SEAG), and from Scottish Canals' website here: [www.scottishcanals.co.uk/history--heritage/heritage-strategy/background](http://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/history--heritage/heritage-strategy/background). The final Heritage Strategy is available to view online or download in PDF format, see [www.scottishcanals.co.uk/heritage-strategy](http://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/heritage-strategy).

This Post-Adoption Statement has been sent to the Consultation Authorities and a notice will be published in the national press. The statement is also available for public inspection at Scottish Canals, Canal House, 1 Applecross Street, Glasgow, G4 9SP and on our website: [www.scottishcanals.co.uk/history--heritage/heritage-strategy/background](http://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/history--heritage/heritage-strategy/background).

**2.0 Integrating environmental considerations into the plan and taking account of the environmental assessment**

The nature and purpose of the Heritage Strategy is environmental in terms of its overarching vision: "Through our good stewardship the heritage of our canals will be valued, celebrated and conserved for Scotland".

The vision, aims and objectives of the Strategy incorporate wider environmental interests such as sustainability and climate change. One of our strategic aims is "Our approach to the heritage of today and the future assures environmental and organisational sustainability and derives social and economic benefits" and Objective 18 is "to improve energy efficiency of traditional buildings on Scottish Canals' properties".

The SEA topic 'biodiversity, flora & fauna' was included in the assessment as a precautionary measure following recommendations made during the screening and scoping

stages. The environmental assessment informed the issues and opportunities that the Heritage Strategy is designed to address, in particular relating to baseline and condition.

Whilst none of the effects of the Strategy are likely to be significant at a strategic level, projects that may have environmental impacts will be required to follow Scottish Canals' environmental appraisal process. The appraisal process questions were listed in Table 9 under 5.1 Mitigation of the [Environmental Report](#). This requirement will help to mitigate any potentially negative local impacts.

### **3.0 How the opinions expressed during the consultation period have been taken into account**

#### **3.1 Summary of responses**

38 written responses were received during the nine-week consultation which started on 19 November 2012. The Environmental Report was uploaded on 5 December 2012 which allowed 7.5 weeks to provide comments. The Heritage Strategy Consultation Report (May 2013) summarised the responses and public meeting discussions, analysed the views expressed, identified the key issues, and explained the substantive changes made to the consultative draft as a result of these issues. The Consultation Report is available from [www.scottishcanals.co.uk/history--heritage/heritage-strategy/background](http://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/history--heritage/heritage-strategy/background).

Respondents were encouraged to structure their responses using the series of 10 questions provided in the draft document or in the online response form. Question 7 specifically relates to the Environmental Report:

*Do you have any comments on the Environmental Report? Your thoughts on any of the following topics would be appreciated:*

- *the baseline environmental information and key issues*
- *the scope and approach taken for the environmental assessment*
- *the findings of the assessment*
- *the measures proposed to mitigate the environmental effects of the plan*
- *the proposed approach to monitoring those effects*

Each of the SEA consultation authorities, Historic Scotland, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) provided responses specifically about the Environmental Report. Their responses have been published on the [SEA Database](#).

A further seven respondents answered Question 7 or provided comments relating to the Environmental Report. Of these only two respondents (one organisation and one individual) provided detailed comments. Of the remaining five, one respondent directed us to the general comments in the body of their response, two respondents had difficulty accessing the report (after it was uploaded onto the website), one respondent did not have time to read the report in detail and one respondent did not feel that it was written for the layman and so declined to comment.

The following summarises the detailed comments received on the Environmental Strategy and the responses from the consultation authorities.

1. One respondent stated that more attention should be given to bankside management and maintenance for coarse fishery angling which can be integrated with plant and wildlife conservation objectives.

2. One respondent felt that “the findings of the Environmental Report seem sound and justifiable” and pointed out that the assessment could have made use of the biological data available on the National Biodiversity Network and the Scottish Wildlife Trust Phase 1 surveys that were undertaken in the 1990s to improve the baseline data.
3. SNH “support the findings of the report, that the strategy is likely to have positive impacts on the SEA objectives overall”. Given the mitigation measures that are in place, cumulative impacts on protected species arising from conservation or management works to structures should not be significant at a strategic level. SNH noted the action to undertake collaborative work to control invasive species and agreed that this could have a positive effect on habitats at a strategic level.
4. Historic Scotland welcomed the assessment and findings relating to the strategic aims and objectives and the use of our existing systems to appraise site-specific issues and assist in monitoring the performance of the strategy.
5. SEPA reaffirmed that SEA topics in their remit had been scoped out of the SEA, as per their advice at screening and scoping stages.

### **3.2 Main issues and our conclusions**

Five main issues were identified during the analysis of the other responses, as outlined in 2.2 of the [Consultation Report](#). Issues 2 and 3 have some bearing on SEA topic areas.

Issue 2 was that respondents felt that insufficient emphasis and priority had been placed on natural heritage objectives. Issue 3 related to suggestions to include objectives relating to regeneration and development and physical access for recreation and health. Item 1 of the responses to Question 7 listed above also relates to recreation. If included these have the potential to affect population and human health, both topics scoped out of the SEA.

In response to Issues 2 and 3, the introduction to the final Heritage Strategy has been made more explicit. Issues relating to regeneration, development and access in general are higher level objectives covered by the Scottish Government’s policy, [Making the Most of Scotland’s Canals](#) (April 2013) and Scottish Canals’ [Vision](#) (April 2013) and so have not been added to the Heritage Strategy. Item 2 of the responses to Question 7 listed above refers to data we should have reviewed to compile the environmental data for the Environmental Report. We are aware that relevant data on protected species has been collected by other authorities but is not available through the National Biodiversity Network in order to protect their habitats. However, the available data should have been reviewed more fully. In response to these comments, an additional action has been added to the final strategy: Action 1.7 Develop strategy to fill priority gaps in habitat survey information by February 2014.

### **4.0 Reasons for adopting the finalised plan**

As explained at 4.2 of the [Environmental Report](#), we assessed alternatives including not having a strategy, expanding the scope of a strategy to form a policy framework, or producing a joint heritage strategy for Scottish Canals and the Scottish Waterways Trust.

The Heritage Strategy has been prepared in consultation and the vision, aims, issues and objectives have been refined through this process. As a result we have modified the strategic aims, changed priority levels related to specific objectives and added additional

actions. The environmental assessment has helped to inform the final version of the strategy through making amendments to the draft objectives.

The majority of the objectives included in the Heritage Strategy are considered to have positive or neutral environmental effects. For conservation and management objectives, the effect on habitats for areas subject to vegetation management is uncertain at this stage but likely to be minimal and local effects mitigated through our environmental appraisal process.

Overall, we consider that the Heritage Strategy fulfils its purpose by providing a clear framework to value, celebrate and conserve Scotland's canal heritage to bring about real benefits for heritage and people, and incorporates wider environmental issues as far as possible.

## **5.0 Monitoring**

Further environmental assessment will be required for some of the strategy's objectives as they are progressed. Scottish Canals' environmental appraisal process was revised on 13 April 2013 after the [Environmental Report](#) was published. The list of questions in Table 9 under 5.1 Mitigation of the Environmental Report has therefore been updated. The process will be reviewed annually as part of our compliance programme and is audited at regular intervals.

The Heritage Strategy, as adopted on 6 May 2013, will also be audited annually and progress reports published on Scottish Canals' website. 5.2 of the Environmental Report explains that all of the actions – including those which have potential environmental effects – will be monitored as performance measures of the strategy. Projects are also audited for completed Post-Project Appraisals, compliance with the environmental appraisal process and meeting consent conditions.

**Scottish Canals**  
**28 October 2013**