



Consultation Report on the Management Plan for Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve (NNR) 2018 - 2028



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This report provides a summary of all the comments received during the consultation on the Management Plan for Loch Lomond NNR. It details SNH's response to the comments and any changes we will make to the plan as a result.

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1 Consultation Background

The previous Reserve Plan has lapsed and we are in the process of drafting a new plan to guide the management of SNH's part of the NNR for the next ten years. While we are not considering any radical changes for the management of the reserve there are a number of emerging issues that the plan will need to address.

At the moment we have staff shortages on the reserve and certainly for the first year of the plan many of the tasks identified are aspirational. We are hoping to be able to resolve staff resourcing in the future and will be able to undertake the plan as proposed.

Through the consultation process we hope to ensure that our key partners in the management of the wider NNR and any other interested parties are fully aware of our proposals for managing the site and of our long term vision for the NNR. We are keen to afford our consultees the opportunity to comment on our plans and to suggest their own thoughts on the management of the reserve.

2 Consultation process

The consultation period ran from 7th May 2018 until Monday 18th June. During this period the plan was posted on the SNH's website inviting comment and letters sent to our key partners and land owners involved in managing the NNR. The actual deadline for consultation responses was extended until 31 August at the request of partners to allow for more time to comment.

3 Outcomes of consultation

Three written response were received from the RSPB, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park and from the Montrose Estate. No responses were received from the online consultation on the SNH web site.

The detailed consultation responses are summarised below at Annex 1 together with SNH's response.

4 Summary

In light of the consultation responses we have made a few changes to the plan, mainly clarifying certain points and now updated the management plan accordingly. We will publish the final version on the SNH website.

5 Document Properties

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Signed off by: Caroline Gallacher

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Internal ID: A 2737508

Annex 1: SNH response to comments received

Table summarising comments and responses.

All responses must be followed by noted, accepted or rejected.

Set out as follows:

Comments received	SNH response	Consequences for draft plan
RSPB Scotland		
In order to clearly identify what tasks will be completed when and in which years, a work plan would be a useful addition to the MP. This would also assist in aligning staff resources and budget requirements	This information is held in internal systems where we prioritise and allocate staff resources and budgets annually.	No change.
The Vision should cover the whole NNR and how each partner contributes to this through their management. It follows, that the site description also broadly covers the whole NNR, providing an overview of it and its importance. It would then be appropriate to have a detailed site description of the MP area and from which the objectives arise from.	Noted	We have revised the introductory section of the document to clarify the different areas of the NNR. We have altered the vision to cover the SNH managed areas only but included a desire to develop a vision for the whole site collaboratively with our partners.
include a map showing the National Nature Reserve (NNR) and who manages the various parts of it.	Noted	Map added to introductory section.
Suggest text change in first paragraph to read 'The Endrick Mouth's wetland floodplain fen habitats support a wintering population of geese including Greenland White-fronted goose...'	Accepted	Text revised
The fourth paragraph in section 2 discusses SNH's legal obligations and considers	Noted	Example changed.

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<p>appropriate assessments. An example of this refers to “providing a new visitor facility on the reserve”, as there is no likelihood of this happening on the area that this MP covers, then we suggest a different example is used to prevent any confusion with RSPB’s plans for this on Wards Farm. For clarity, as the first part of this section, including the table, also refers to the whole NNR, these should sit above in the site description. It would therefore follow that the objectives should only refer to the land that SNH manages.</p>		
<p>Our understanding of the SSSI designations is that Aber Bog SSSI was incorporated into the Endrick Mouth and Islands SSSI, which isn’t clear in the paragraph above the table in section 2.</p>	Accepted	Plan text updated to reflect this.
NH 1		
<p>Under objective NH1 it would be more accurate to say that the Endrick Mouth hosts just over 250 wintering Greenland white-fronted geese, as the five year average is 259. Some text change suggestions in italics are: ‘The geese feed at several locations <i>on</i> the Endrick Mouth’. ‘<i>We will work with landowners to manage the sward to ensure that the conditions remain suitable for geese</i>’.</p>	Accepted	Plan text updated to reflect this.
<p>The paragraph relating to woodlands is not relevant under a wetland objective, it should</p>	Accepted	Woodland tasks moved to NH 3.

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possibly sit under NH3 with some revision to include all woodland habitats or broaden NH1 to include all breeding bird assemblage species.		
Spotted crane and barn owl are mentioned in the Tasks but not in the overview text, it would be helpful to have a reason for these tasks included.	Noted	Text updated in relation to both species. Barn owl task moved to NH 4 where wider biodiversity is covered.
Task NH1.1 description is very vague and could be more specific as to what the actual task is.	Noted	Details of task are developed annually dependant on ground condition and needs.
NH1.2 and NH1.3 should specify 'goose' roost and 'geese' feeding areas for clarity	Accepted	Plan text updated to reflect this.
NH1.5 should include 'Carry out <i>annual</i> breeding bird survey, <i>using standard methodology</i> ', involving volunteers where possible <i>and coordinate these with the RSPB</i> .	Noted	Plan text updated to reflect this.
In NH1.6, we are unclear what is meant by only surveying for indicator species, what would the indicator species be and how does this relate to SCM of the breeding bird assemblage, which requires monitoring of all species?	Noted . We will only be monitoring species listed on the relevant BTO habitat indices for lowland damp grasslands, lowland open water and margins and woodland in accordance with the JNCC , 2004, Common Standards for monitoring for birds.	Plan text updated to clarify this.
NH1.8 would be clearer if 'predator' was added in front of 'perches'	Noted	Plan text updated to reflect this.
NH1.9 is not relevant to wetland and how does this fit with a co-ordinated effort for barn owl?	Noted	Barn owl task moved to NH 4.
Given there are numerous habitats being mentioned in the various objectives, we consider whether a habitat map would be helpful and complete the suite of maps for the	Rejected	

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plan.		
We are unclear what the purpose of producing a wetland management plan (NH2.2) is for; we recommend that this MP should include all aspects of wetland management rather than preparing another plan.	Rejected. We produce detailed project plans for certain tasks as internal documents.	
Task NH2.3 refers to carrying out rare plant monitoring, but this seems a little vague, could specific plants be mentioned, for example Scottish Dock, which is noticeable by its absence in the description text. Given the SNH managed part of the NNR holds the highest density of pure <i>Rumex aquaticus</i> , it should be worth highlighting.	Noted	Text updated to reflect this.
NH 3 In the first paragraph, Inchcailloch is mentioned but from earlier in the Plan it stated that it was managed by the LL&TTNPA. For purposes of clarity it might be better to mention the three (or four) oak woodlands by name in the objective because it could be confused for all the oak woodlands in the NNR.	Noted	Text has been updated in introduction to reflect that SNH continues to undertake habitat management on Inchailloch.
There isn't a task that mentions monitoring of indicator species such as wood warbler, redstart and pied flycatcher that would help inform whether the conditions the objective is trying to achieve is being met.	Rejected. We do not undertake this monitoring.	No change
Task NH3.2 is not very SMART and it should be possible to add detail to make it so, for example define regular, in "Carry out regular Herbivore	Rejected. Herbivore Impact Assessments are undertaken when a need is identified and in response to SCM. There is no fixed pattern	No change

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Impact Assessments”, is this twice a year, once a year, once every other year etc.		
<p>NH 4</p> <p>We are very pleased to see the inclusion of objective NH4 and its reference to the threat of INNS on the reserve and also beyond. Maintaining the existing levels of control is essential and in the short term helps to minimise the spread and impact INNS could have on the whole NNR and also reducing the seed source into the wider Loch Lomond catchment. We suggest reference should also be made to the smaller populations of less well known INNS such as few-flowered leek, money flower, pick-a-back plant etc...that is collaboratively managed across the wider NNR on the RSPB Reserve.</p>	Accepted.	Text changed to note wider INNS managed .
The paragraph before the table refers to WeBs and water vole, suggest it doesn't fit under this objective and perhaps should be under NH1 and therefore task NH4.5 should also move?	Rejected. These are wider biodiversity projects rather than related to features and therefore we feel should remain within this biodiversity objective.	No change
We welcome task NH4.2 'Investigate possibilities for creating a catchment wide INNS project', as this is extremely important to deal with the INNS issue in the long term and we fully support this action. Would it be possible to add the word 'advocate' to this task because as well as internally looking for possibilities there may also be a need for some internal and external advocacy for such a project.	Noted support for catchment project.	No change
For coherency the 'reserve' should be replaced	Noted	Introductory text updated to clarify

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by 'NNR' and for clarity where Endrick Mouth is referred to, is this the SNH part of the Endrick Mouth?		what areas are being referred to.
We also assume that task VM1.2 refers only to the SNH managed land but if there are accessibility issues some events could be held in partnership with RSPB at the RSPB Loch Lomond Reserve. A clearer definition of hard to reach groups would be helpful as this would help target effort.	Noted and appreciate the suggestion for joint events. We have not defined groups as this may change over time with organisational priorities.	No change
Under objective VM2: Coordinate the promotion of the NNR with the RSPB and the LLTNP as the number one site to see wildlife and landscape in the National Park, it states that "The NNR is managed through a partnership between SNH, RSPB and LLTNP, who all promote the reserve through a coordinated plan", the ambiguity of this sentence is referred to above. However, we do aspire to this and welcome its inclusion in this draft MP.	Noted.	Changes made to introductory text to clarify the different roles and plans.
The planning and reporting task PM 2.3 does not include how the annual report will be distributed to the landowners/managers of the SNH managed part of the NNR and also to other partners involved with the wider NNR.	Noted. Annual reporting is an internal task through our corporate systems and we do not share all of this with external partners. However, at the end of the plan period, we will produce a Reserve plan review which will be externally available.	No change
Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority		
Vision We think the vision should state that the on-site visitor experience is largely provided by your	Rejected. We have revised the vision to cover the SNH managed area only but have noted a desire to create a vision for	No change

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partners.	the whole NNR working with partners where we can recognise the different contributions each organisation makes.	
Vision It is important for the vision to flag up that there is informal access to the less accessible SNH area, especially to the Crom Mhin area, and that the whole of the NNR north of the Endrick falls inside the East Loch Lomond Camping Management Zone.	Rejected. We do not see this as part of the vision but have included reference to the camping management zone under objective VM1.	Updated text under VM1.
Vision We think it should go further and set out an aspiration to improve the 'visibility' of the SNH section of the NNR in ways that respect its conservation sensitivities.	Noted We see this as part of the promotion of the whole NNR under objective VM2.	Updated text under VM2.
Protected areas It would be helpful to note capercaillie are currently absent from the NNR. This would explain the absence of any management for them.	Noted Footnote added to inform readers of this.	Updated text under Protected areas
Recommendation to undertake a project satellite tagging geese	Rejected We do not believe this is within our resource capacity or expertise. Other organisations such as the BTo and WWT are more experienced in this field and able to undertake such work.	No change
NH 3 Explain why mainland oak woods are not actively managed	Noted	Text updated under NH 3
NH 4 Include reference to grey squirrel control	Noted	Text updated under NH 4
NH 4 Include reference to management for osprey	Noted	Text updated under NH 4
NH 4.2 A catchment wide INNS project would be fantastic	Noted.	No change

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<p>and the NNR and associated designations along with the National Park Partnership Plan and INNS Wild Challenge provide a very strong impetus for this work. There is also scope to apply the experience gained through control of INNS on the NNR to the wider catchment.</p>		
<p>Management for people We think that a Visitor Experience Improvements section for the SNH part of the NNR would be a useful addition to the plan. This would encapsulate aspirations and actions in relation to measures such as improved signage and capitalising on path links and boat access, e.g. by canoe or kayak and any proposed or anticipated improvements to the path network in the surrounding area that might improve connections between the reserve and the surrounding area.</p>	<p>Rejected. Improvements to this area of the reserve are not a priority for us and we believe partners are better placed to provide access.</p>	
<p>The new Outdoor Recreation Plan for the National Park will be produced in 2019 and it will reflect an aspiration within the National Park Partnership Plan to better support and promote water based recreation in the Park. Given that the Endrick Marshes are relatively straight forward to access from the River Endrick, we could anticipate a small increase in canoe / kayak activity through the area, recognising that there may also be a need to manage disturbance risks during key periods</p>	<p>Noted We have made reference to this in the plan and added a task to contribute during the development of the recreation plan. We believe many of the actions on managing impacts will need to be made previsit and at launch points not on the NNR.</p>	<p>Updated text under VM 1.</p>
<p>VM 1 We strongly support this objective and are keen to continue our collaborative work with SNH to help deliver this. There are clearly opportunities for volunteering on the SNH section that help to deliver</p>	<p>Noted We also see benefits in working together to promote and manage volunteering.</p>	<p>No change</p>

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<p>our overall targets for volunteering in the National Park. We would be keen to work more with you to develop these opportunities.</p> <p>There may also be scope to make more use of this section for educational work, recognising at there are currently limitations on ease of access especially for larger groups or younger ages.</p>	<p>We see limited scope in using the SNH are for educational work due to accessibility issues. In addition education work is not a priority for us at this site. However, we would support others using the reserve for this purpose and happy to direct enquiries of this nature to the LLTNP and RSPB</p>	
<p>VM 2 We would be interested in discussing the scope for establishing a camping permit area in this section, e.g. at the Crom Mhin, noting it would be controlled under the East Loch Lomond Camping Management Zone.</p>	<p>Rejected We do not think the ground conditions or the sensitivities of its notified features of interest make this part of the NNR suitable as a camping location.</p>	No change
Montrose Estates		
<p>Commented on resources for ongoing management of mink.</p>	<p>Management of mink is an element of the agreement with the estate and therefore an obligation for the estate to deliver.</p>	No change
<p>Noted a desire to be involved in reviewing visitor management.</p>	<p>Noted We will ensure the estate are offered the opportunity to be involved in discussions on visitor management.</p>	No change