

Strathnairn Community Woodlands

Strategic Forest Plan

2013 -2033

(May 2013)

CONTENTS

Summary / Abstract	4
1. Part A - Description of Woodlands	
1.1 Location.....	5
1.2 Background	5
1.3 Stakeholder Engagement.....	5
1.3.1 Scoping Meetings.....	5
1.3.2 Informal Liaison.....	6
1.3.3 Issues.....	6
1.4 Site and Species Description	7
1.4.1 Climate	7
1.4.2 Geology and Soils	7
1.4.3 Topography and Altitude	7
1.4.4 Tree Species Description.....	8
1.4.5 Plant Communities.....	8
1.4.6 Open ground	9
1.5 Long Term Vision.....	9
1.5.1 Aims.....	9
1.5.2 Method of Achievement	10
2. Part B - Survey Data	
2.1 Map and Photographic Coverage:	12
2.2 Habitat and Vegetation.....	12
2.3 Flora and Fauna Surveys	12
2.4 Archaeology	12
2.5 Community Land Unit Evaluation	12
3. Part C – Analysis	
3.1 Policy Framework.....	13
3.1.1 Planning Policies.....	13
3.1.2 Designations.....	13
3.2 Constraints	13
3.2.1 Constraints – both sites	13
3.2.2 Constraints – School Wood.....	13
3.2.3 Constraints – Milton Wood.....	13
3.3 Community Land Unit Evaluation	13
3.4 Landscape Assessment	14
3.4.1 Strathnairn	14
3.4.2 School Wood	14
3.4.3 Milton Wood	14
3.5 Archaeology Assessment	14
3.5.1 Survey Conclusions	14
3.5.2 Survey Recommendations	15
3.5.3 Opportunities	15
3.6 Ecological assessment.....	15
3.6.1 Overall impact	15
3.6.2 Restocking / Regeneration.....	15
3.6.3 Improvements.....	15
3.7 Herbivore assessment.....	15
3.7.1 Rabbits	15
3.7.2 Cattle.....	15
3.7.3 Roe Deer.....	15
3.7.4 Sika/Red Deer.....	16
3.8 Social impact assessment.....	16

3.8.1	General.....	16
3.8.2	School Wood	16
3.8.3	Milton Wood	16
4.	Part D – Management Proposals	
4.1	Silvicultural policy	18
4.1.1	Overall Objectives	18
4.1.2	Opportunities and Constraints.....	18
4.2	Detailed Management Programme	19
4.2.1	Summary	19
4.2.2	Felling	19
4.2.3	Thinning	19
4.2.4	Retentions.....	21
4.2.5	Restocking.....	21
4.2.6	New planting.....	21
4.2.7	Native Regeneration	22
4.2.8	Management of Open Areas.....	22
4.2.9	Protection and Maintenance	22
4.2.10	Monitoring	23
4.2.11	Other Management Operations.....	24
4.2.12	Communications and Information Handling.....	24
4.3	Review	25
	Appendices.....	26
	Appendix 1 – Summary of Activities and Achievements	27
	Appendix 2 – Scoping Report.....	28
	Appendix 3 – National Vegetation Classification Communities Report.....	30
	Appendix 4 – Flora Survey	32
	Appendix 5 – Lichen Survey	35
	Appendix 6 – Moss Survey	37
	Appendix 7 – Badger Survey and Red Squirrel Assessment.....	38
	Appendix 8 – Deer Management Plan (DMP).....	42
	Appendix 9 – Opportunities and Constraints.....	46
	Appendix 10 - Tolerances.....	49
	Maps	50
	Map 1 - Location Map	51
	Map 2a – Tree Species Map: School Wood	52
	Map 2b – Tree Species Map: Milton Wood	53
	Map 3a - Archaeology Survey: School Wood.....	54
	Map 3b - Archaeology Survey: Milton Wood.....	55
	Map 4 - Landscape Character Assessment	56
	Map 5a - Concept Map: School Wood	57
	Map 5b - Concept Map: Milton Wood.....	58
	Map 6a – Opportunities and Constraints Map: School Wood.....	59
	Map 6b – Opportunities and Constraints Map: Milton Wood.....	60
	Map 7b - Milton Wood Felling Map.....	61
	Map 8 - Milton Wood Re-Stocking Map	62
	Map 9 - Milton Long Term Vision.....	63
	Photos	64
	Photo 1a - SNH Aerial Photo: School Wood.....	65
	Photo 1b - SNH Aerial Photo: Milton Wood	66

Summary / Abstract

School and Milton Woods have been owned and managed by the local community in Strathnairn since 2002 when the woods were purchased from the Forestry Commission. Strathnairn Community Woodlands (SCW) is run by local volunteers and operates as a charitable company limited by guarantee with a current membership of approximately 250 local residents.

The group has made significant improvements to the woodlands in the last 10 years: creating and maintaining footpaths and a woodland cabin, felling / thinning areas of the original plantation and replanting with native broadleaves. A core group of local volunteers are involved in day to day management and maintenance, and in raising funds to carry this out. The woods are used primarily for informal recreation as well as a range of social and educational activities.

The long term aims of SCW are to conserve, regenerate and promote the restoration of native woodland habitat and enhance the biodiversity of flora and fauna in the area through restructuring, regeneration and management. Access to the woods for cultural, educational and informal recreational use will continue, to ensure open and inclusive benefit to the wider public. The primary objective for both woods is to enhance both their amenity and conservation value.

This will be achieved by restructuring the woodlands through the use of appropriate low impact silvicultural systems such as thinning and long-term retention to develop continuous cover woodland.

The conservation and amenity value of the woods will be improved by (a) replacing small groups of non-native conifers with native broadleaved species with the aim of achieving 23% native broad leaf cover by 2041 (currently 18%); as well as, (b) over time, increasing the areas of open ground and the areas of Scots pine. This will help to develop a more diverse age structure in the woods; improve opportunities for trees to naturally regenerate and also improve opportunities for ground cover plants to thrive, improving the biodiversity of the woods and their aesthetic / amenity appeal.

Public access will continue to be facilitated through maintaining the path network and car park areas and SCW will also continue to develop the educational and social role of the woodlands within the community, providing opportunities for volunteering and working in partnership with other groups.