



**Dumfries and Galloway  
Local Development Plan**

# **Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy**

**Habitats Regulations Appraisal  
(Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994**

April 2014



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## **Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy Habitat Regulations Assessment**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This report identifies the legislative and policy requirements for a Habitats Regulations Appraisal of the Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy (DGFWS).

1.2 A network of sites across the European Community, known as Natura comprise of areas designated as either Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). SACs are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive (1992) and form a European network of important, high quality conservation sites which contribute to conserving 189 habitat types and 788 identified species. SPAs are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Birds Directive for their rare and vulnerable birds (identified in Annex II of the Directive) and also for regularly occurring migratory species. Ramsar sites are designated wetlands of international importance. All Ramsar sites are also Natura sites and/or Sites of Special Scientific Interest and are covered by the Habitats Directive.

1.3 It is a requirement of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 1992 that any plans which are likely to have a significant effect on a European site (SAC or SPA) shall be subject to an 'appropriate assessment' of its implications in relation to the site's qualifying interests and conservation objectives. A plan should not be approved until it has been ascertained that the policies and proposals it contains will not adversely affect the integrity of the sites. Proposed SACs and SPAs should also be given the same consideration.

1.4 The requirement to consider the effect on Natura sites within land use plans in Scotland is transposed into domestic law by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 as amended. These regulations are referred to in this document as the Habitats Regulations.

1.5 The Habitats Directive applies a precautionary approach to developments potentially affecting SACs and SPAs. The interest features of the Natura sites must be maintained so as to avoid deterioration of habitats and significant disturbance of species. An appropriate assessment is required where there is a probability or a risk that the plan or project will have significant effects on a site. This is in line with the ruling of the European Court of Justice in Case C-127/02 (the Waddenzee Judgement) which stated that *"any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site is to be subject to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on that site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects"*. However it is recognised that an assessment of a spatial plan is likely by its nature to be less specific and detailed than the assessment of an individual project.

### **2. Plan Context**

2.1 Once adopted the DGFWS will form supplementary guidance to the Local Development Plan and provides a framework for guiding forestry and woodland practice within the region over the next ten years. This framework will guide both woodland creation and the restructuring and management of

existing forests and woodlands in the region to maximise the benefits for the local economy, communities and environment. The strategy will take account of local circumstances and steer both the type and location of new planting to the most appropriate areas whilst maximising the potential benefits our woodlands bring to such things as local businesses, recreational opportunities and environmental assets. It is hoped that the consideration of issues contained in the strategy will help to reduce conflict over woodland creation proposals. The strategy will also inform the management of existing woodlands, the development of associated processing and infrastructure and the best use of all products from forests and woods.

### **3. Methodology**

The following methodology has been used to carry out this HRA:-

- A list of European sites that should be considered in this appraisal was identified through GIS maps and SNH data (see Map 1 in Section 4)).
- Background information was gathered from the SNH website on each of the European sites identified above, including the relevant qualifying interests and conservation objectives (see Table 1 in section 4).
- All aspects of the DGFWS were screened, using 3 key steps, to identify any proposals likely to have any significant effect on any European site (see Table 2 in section 5).

### **4. European sites potentially affected**

There are 17 Special areas of Conservation and 7 Special Protection Areas wholly or partly within the area covered by the DGFWS. One site is designated both SAC and SPA. There are also 5 Ramsar Sites, but all of these are contained within the boundaries of Natura Sites. One Natura Site that lies entirely outside the boundaries of the region has been included in this appraisal, as it is possible that it may be affected by activities within the DGFWS area.

The location of these areas is indicated on Map 1 and Table 1 provides further details of each site and its qualifying interests.

# Map 1 - Nature Conservation sites

## Key

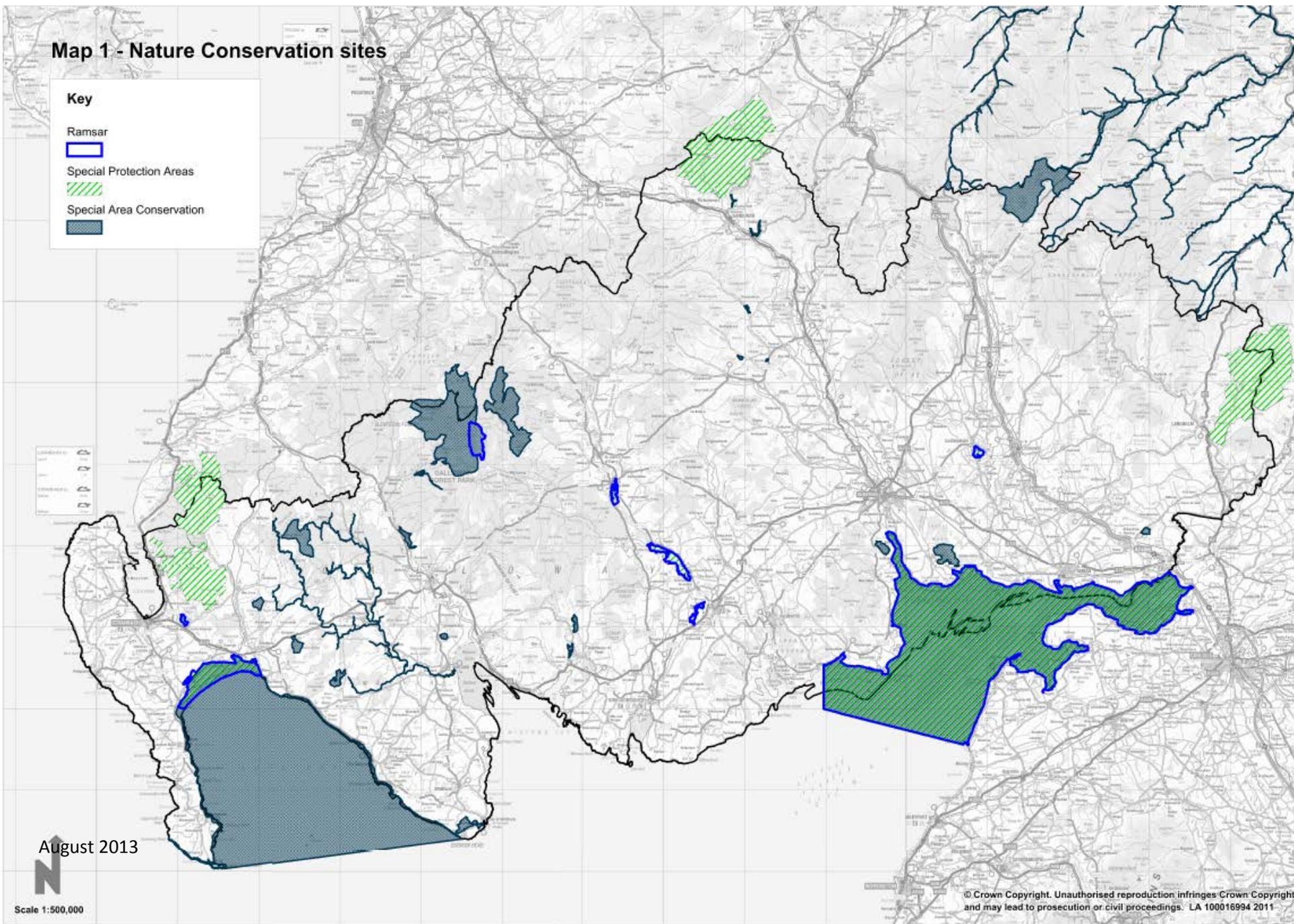
Ramsar



Special Protection Areas



Special Area Conservation



August 2013

Scale 1:500,000

**Table 1. European Sites potentially affected by Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy**

Site Name	Designation	Area ha (total site)	Qualifying Interests (Common Names)	Conservation Objectives	Site Condition
Burrow Head	SAC	244.22	<b>Annex II Species (primary reason for selection):</b> Great crested newt	To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population of the species as a viable component of the site</li> <li>• Distribution of the species within site</li> <li>• Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of the species</li> </ul>	Favourable Maintained
Carsegowan Moss	SAC	49.49	<b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Active raised bog <b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for selection):</b> Degraded raised bogs	To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	Unfavourable No Change

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	
Flow of Dergoals	SAC	170.18	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Blanket bogs</p> <p><b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for selection):</b> Depressions on peat substrates</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	Favourable Maintained
Galloway Oakwoods	SAC	355.1	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Western acidic oak woodland</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitat that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> </ul>	Unknown

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	
Kilhern Moss	SAC	123.83	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Blanket bogs</p> <p><b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for selection):</b> Depressions on peat substrates</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	Favourable Maintained
Kirkcowan Flow	SAC	777.57	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Blanket bogs</p> <p><b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for selection):</b> Depressions on peat</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent of the habitat on site</li> </ul>	<p>Unfavourable No Change: Blanket Bog</p> <p>Favourable Declining: Depressions on Peat substrates</p>

			substrates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	
Luce Bay and Sands	SAC	48759.28	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Coastal dune heathland Shifting dunes Dune grassland Shallow inlets and bays Shifting dunes with marram</p> <p><b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for selection):</b> Intertidal mudflats and sandflats Reefs Subtidal sandbanks</p> <p><b>Annex II Species (not primary reason for selection):</b> Great crested newts</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	<p>Favourable Maintained: Shifting dunes Shifting dunes with marram Great crested newts</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining: Coastal dune heathland Dune grassland</p> <p>Unknown: Shallow inlets and bays Intertidal mudflats and sandflats Reefs Subtidal sandbanks</p>

Merrick Kells	SAC	8698.3	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath Montane acid grasslands Blanket bog</p> <p><b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for selection):</b> Depressions on peat substrates Dry heaths Acid peat-stained lakes and ponds Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels Plants in crevices on acid rocks Acidic scree</p> <p><b>Annex II Species (not primary reason for selection):</b> Otters</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	<p>Favourably Maintained: Acid peat-stained lakes and ponds Acidic scree Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels Plants in crevices on acid rocks Otter</p> <p>Unfavourable Recovering: Blanket bog Depressions on peat substrates Dry heaths Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining: Montane acid grasslands</p>
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Mochrum Lochs	SAC	178.99	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Blanket bogs</p> <p><b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for selection):</b> Depressions on peat substrates</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	Unfavourable No Change
Moffat Hills	SAC	2891.92	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Alpine and subalpine heaths Montane acid grasslands</p> <p><b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for selection):</b> Blanket bogs Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks Dry heaths Tall herb communities Plants in crevices on</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of</li> </ul>	<p>Favourable Maintained: Acidic scree Dry heaths Montane acid grasslands Plants in crevices on acid rocks Tall herb communities</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining: Alpine and subalpine</p>

			acid rocks Acidic scree	the habitat	heaths Blanket bogs  Unfavourable No Change: Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks
Mull of Galloway	SAC	136.39	<b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Vegetated sea cliffs	To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitat that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	Favourable Maintained
Raeburn Flow	SAC	63.96	<b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Active raised bogs <b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for</b>	To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following	Favourable Maintained: Active raised bog  Unfavourable

			<b>selection):</b> Degraded raised bog	are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	Recovering: Degraded raised bog
River Bladnoch	SAC	300.02	<b>Annex II Species (primary reason for selection):</b> Atlantic Salmon	To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (listed below) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population of the species, including range of genetic types, as a viable component of the site</li> <li>• Distribution of the species within site</li> <li>• Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of the species</li> </ul>	Unfavourable Recovering
Solway Firth	SAC	43636.72	<b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Atlantic salt meadows	To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status	Favourable Maintained: Coastal shingle vegetation

			<p>Estuaries Intertidal Mudflats and sandflats Glasswort and other annuals colonising mud and sand Subtidal sandbanks</p> <p><b>Annex I Habitats (not primary reason for selection):</b> Dune grassland Coastal shingle vegetation outside the reach of waves Reefs</p> <p><b>Annex II Species (primary reason for selection):</b> Sea lamprey River lamprey</p>	<p>for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	<p>outside the reach of waves Glasswort and other annuals colonising mud and sand Subtidal sandbanks</p> <p>Unfavourable No Change: Atlantic salt meadows</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining: Dune grassland</p> <p>Unknown: Estuaries Intertidal Mudflats and sandflats Reefs Sea lamprey River lamprey</p>
Solway Mosses North	SAC	652.6	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Active raised bog Degraded raised bog</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following</p>	<p>Favourable Maintained: Active raised bog</p> <p>Unfavourable</p>

				<p>are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	Recovering: Degraded raised bog
Tynron Juniper Wood	SAC	6.67	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Juniper on heaths or calcareous grasslands</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitat that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	Unfavourable Recovering
Upper Nithsdale Woods	SAC	98.38	<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Mixed woodland on</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status</p>	Unknown

			base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes	<p>for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitat that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of the habitat on site</li> <li>• Distribution of the habitat within site</li> <li>• Structure and function of the habitat</li> <li>• Processes supporting the habitat</li> <li>• Distribution of typical species of the habitat</li> <li>• Viability of typical species as components of the habitat</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat</li> </ul>	
River Eden	SAC		<p><b>Annex I Habitats (primary reason for selection):</b> Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels . Rivers with floating vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot. Alder woodland on floodplains.</p> <p><b>Annex II species (primary reason for selection):</b> White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish</p>	<p>Avoid the deterioration of the qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species, and the significant disturbance of those qualifying species, ensuring the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes a full contribution to achieving Favourable Conservation Status of each of the qualifying features.</p> <p>Subject to natural change, to maintain or restore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species;</li> <li>• The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species;</li> <li>• The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species rely;</li> <li>• The populations of qualifying species;</li> <li>• The distribution of qualifying species within the site.</li> </ul>	

			Sea lamprey Brook lamprey River lamprey Atlantic salmon Bullhead Otter		
Castle Loch, Lochmaben	SPA	109.04	<b>Annex I Species (primary reason for selection):</b> Pink footed goose (non- breeding)	To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (listed below) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population of the species as a viable component of the site</li> <li>• Distribution of the species within site</li> <li>• Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of the species</li> </ul>	Unfavourable No Change
Glen App and Galloway Moors	SPA	8942.38	<b>Annex I Species (primary reason for selection):</b> Hen harrier (breeding)	To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (listed below) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population of the species as a viable component of the site</li> <li>• Distribution of the species within site</li> <li>• Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the</li> </ul>	Favourable Maintained

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>species</li> <li>• Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of the species</li> </ul>	
Langholm – Newcastleton Hills	SPA	7544.87	<b>Annex I Species (primary reason for selection):</b> Hen harrier (breeding)	To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (listed below) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population of the species as a viable component of the site</li> <li>• Distribution of the species within site</li> <li>• Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of the species</li> </ul>	Unfavourable Recovering
Loch Ken and River Dee Marshes	SPA	769.11	<b>Annex I Species (primary reason for selection):</b> Greenland white-fronted goose (non-breeding) Greylag goose (non-breeding)	To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (listed below) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population of the species as a viable component of the site</li> <li>• Distribution of the species within site</li> <li>• Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• Structure, function and supporting processes of</li> </ul>	Favourable Maintained

				<p>habitats supporting the species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No significant disturbance of the species</li> </ul>	
Loch of Inch and Torrs Warren	SPA	2111.04	<p><b>Annex I Species (primary reason for selection):</b>  Greenland white-fronted goose (non-breeding)  Hen harrier (non-breeding)</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (listed below) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population of the species as a viable component of the site</li> <li>Distribution of the species within site</li> <li>Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>No significant disturbance of the species</li> </ul>	Favourable Maintained
Muirkirk and North Lowther Uplands	SPA	26330.31	<p><b>Annex I Species (primary reason for selection):</b>  Golden plover (breeding)  Hen harrier (breeding)  Merlin (breeding)  Peregrine (breeding)  Short-eared owl (breeding)</p>	<p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (listed below) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population of the species as a viable component of the site</li> <li>Distribution of the species within site</li> <li>Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>No significant disturbance of the species</li> </ul>	<p>Favourable Maintained: Golden plover Short-eared owl</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining: Hen harrier</p> <p>Unfavourable No Change: Merlin Peregrine</p>

Upper Solway Flats and Marshes	SPA	43636.73	<b>Annex I Species (primary reason for selection):</b> Barnacle goose Bar-tailed godwit Cormorant Curlew Dunlin Goldeneye Grey plover Great crested grebe Golden plover Knot Lapwing Mallard Oystercatcher Pink-footed goose Pintail Redshank Ringed plover Scaup Shelduck Whooper swan (all non-breeding)	To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (listed below) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population of the species as a viable component of the site</li> <li>• Distribution of the species within site</li> <li>• Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species</li> <li>• Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats</li> <li>• supporting the species</li> <li>• No significant disturbance of the species</li> </ul>	Favourable Maintained: Barnacle goose Cormorant Curlew Dunlin Goldeneye Grey plover Great crested grebe Golden plover Knot Lapwing Mallard Oystercatcher Pink-footed goose Pintail Redshank Ringed plover Scaup Shelduck  Unfavourable Declining: Bar-tailed godwit Whooper swan
Castle Loch, Lochmaben	Ramsar	107.6	<b>Ramsar Qualifying Feature:</b> Pink-footed goose,	N/A	Unfavourable No change

			(non-breeding)		
Loch Ken and River Dee Marshes	Ramsar	769.11	<b>Ramsar Qualifying Features:</b> Greenland white-fronted goose, (non-breeding) Greylag goose, (non-breeding)	N/A	Favourable Maintained
Loch of Inch and Torrs Warren	Ramsar	2111.39	<b>Ramsar Qualifying Features:</b> Greenland white-fronted goose, (non-breeding) Sand dune	N/A	Unfavourable Declining: Greenland white-fronted goose: Favourable Maintained: Sand dune:
Silver Flowe	Ramsar		<b>Ramsar Qualifying Feature:</b> Blanket Bog	N/A	Favourable Maintained
Upper Solway Flats and Marshes	Ramsar		<b>Ramsar Qualifying Features:</b> Knot, (non-breeding) Pink-footed goose, (non-breeding) Pintail, (non-breeding) Curlew, (non-breeding) Oystercatcher , (non-breeding) Scaup, (non-breeding) Svalbard Barnacle goose, (non-breeding) Bar-tailed godwit, (non-	N/A	Unfavourable Declining: Bar-tailed Godwit  Favourable Maintained: Knot Pink-footed Goose Pintail Oystercatcher Scaup Svalbard

		breeding)		Barnacle Goose
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## 5. Screening Process

The Scottish Government requires the responsible authority to determine which, if any, elements of the plan would have a likely significant effect on any interest/feature of any European site and therefore require an appropriate assessment (AA). This applies to all Natura Sites, both SAC and SPA.

All aspects of the DGFWS have been screened for potential likely significant effects on Natura Sites. An effect that could undermine the conservation objectives is considered a significant effect. The likelihood of such effects occurring was assessed on a case by case basis, taking into account the precautionary principle and the specific characteristics and environmental conditions of the site concerned.

The screening process followed three key steps:

General policy statements, including general criteria based policies, were screened out of the appraisal as they are unlikely to have a significant effect on a European Site. General policy statements set out the strategic aspiration of the Council for a certain issue and do not relate to specific locations. A general 'criteria based' policy expresses the tests or expectations of the Council when it comes to consider particular proposals.

Projects referred to, but not proposed by the DGFWS, were screened out of the appraisal, as a Habitat Regulations Appraisal should have already been carried out by those who originally proposed such projects.

Projects that were not likely to have a significant effect on a European site were screened out of the appraisal. The reasons for such a decision vary, but include aspects of the DGFWS that are intended to protect the environment; aspects which will not themselves lead to development or other change; or aspects which make provision for change but could have no conceivable effect, or only a minor residual effect, on a European site.

Aspects of the DGFWS screened out as a result of the above process have been recorded in Table 2.

**Table 2. Aspects of the Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy which would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site alone.**

<p>General Policy Statements</p> <p>All of these set out strategic aspirations that do not relate to specific locations.</p>	<p><b>Relevant objectives of the proposed strategy</b></p> <p>A1. Conserve and enhance biodiversity within the region</p> <p>A2. Protect, enhance and restore the water (including flood management), soil and air environment</p> <p>A3. Ensure that tree, forest and woodland planting or restructuring are appropriate to and enhance their landscape setting.</p> <p>A4. Recognise the contribution of trees and woodlands as key components of valued historic environments and to ensure protection of sites and features of interest in woodlands and forests.</p> <p>A5. Encourage the sympathetic planting of restoration sites, creating new habitats, green networks and/or productive forestry and woodland.</p> <p>B1. Support predictable and stable timber supplies</p> <p>B2. Promote greater use of sustainable construction using local timber and supporting greater adding of value to local forest products</p> <p>B3. Support forestry employment and skills development</p> <p>B4. Continue to explore and develop more sustainable timber transport</p> <p>B5. Further develop and enhance forestry related tourism</p> <p>C1. Encourage sustainable forest practices and appropriate woodland expansion to mitigate the effects of climate change</p> <p>C2. Encourage effective development of renewable energy from forests in the form of biomass woodfuel and the integration of appropriate renewable energy schemes within forests and woodlands</p> <p>D1. Encourage and promote the use of forests and woodlands to improve health and wellbeing in a variety of ways</p> <p>D2. Encourage and promote the use of forests and woodlands for outdoor learning</p> <p>D3. Increase the opportunities for access and links to and enjoyment of forests and woodlands by all sectors of society, particularly by developing new woodlands close to towns and villages and promoting community development and participation in woodland management</p> <p>E1. Ensure that where trees are lost as part of development works that appropriate compensatory planting is provided and that trees valued for their rarity, visual amenity or cultural significance are protected and retained</p> <p>E2. Encourage inclusion of trees in landscaping schemes</p> <p><b>Relevant actions of the proposed strategy</b></p> <p>BIO 1 Increase native woodland cover.</p> <p>BIO 2 Reduce fragmentation of native woods through the creation of Forest Habitat Networks.</p>
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	<p>BIO 3 Restore ancient woodlands, through removing non-native species and other appropriate measures.</p> <p>BIO 4 Protect important areas of extensive non woodland habitats such as those recognised in the UK and LBAP including heather moorland, purple moor-grass and rush pasture, semi or unimproved grassland, peatlands, wetlands, water margins and flushes.</p> <p>BIO 6 Manage sites identified as Red Squirrel ‘Strongholds’ according to recognised guidance. Consider the needs of other key species, such as Golden Eagle and Black Grouse, in the management of other sites.</p> <p>ENV 4 Improve water quality by mitigating acidification in sensitive catchments, through restructuring existing and appropriate design of new plantations.</p> <p>ENV 5 Consider the importance of appropriate tree cover in reducing run-off, especially within flood-prone valley systems.</p> <p>ENV 6 Consider hydrological impacts of new planting on water supplies or low river flows, especially in catchments already experiencing abstraction pressures.</p> <p>ENV 7 Focus woodland expansion and restructuring away from deeper peat soils, encouraging peatland protection &amp; restoration (deep peat can also hold valuable historic environmental data)</p> <p>ENV 8 Restrict stump removal to sites where impacts on soil stability and carbon sequestration would be minimal or can be mitigated.</p> <p>ENV 9 Adopt forest practices which do not lead to soil erosion, sedimentation or pollution of watercourses and soils.</p> <p>ENV 10 Encourage tree planting in urban areas to benefit microclimates and improve air quality.</p> <p>ENV11 Improve waterbody morphology by restoration and mitigation by the provision of good quality riparian woodland and buffer strips.</p> <p>LAN 1 Ensure that the capacity of a landscape to accommodate change is considered at an early stage when planning tree planting or forest restructure.</p> <p>LAN 3 Encourage planting open and accessible woodlands close to centres of population.</p> <p>LAN 4 Encourage the planting and ongoing management of trees in urban settings and road improvement schemes.</p> <p>LAN 5 Encourage an increase in, and appropriate management of, trees in non-woodland environments such as wood pastures, parklands and farmland.</p> <p>LAN 6 Reinstate hedgerow trees and shelter belts in appropriate agricultural landscapes (range of potential historic environment, landscape and biodiversity benefits).</p> <p>LAN 7 Publicise best practice in forest design and tree planting including emerging trends in response to climate change eg short rotation forestry or coppice.</p> <p>LAN 8 Work with emerging guidance on integrating wind energy developments within forest landscapes.</p> <p>HIS 1 Create new and manage existing native woodlands along traditional lines, developing a new recognised and valued land-use type that can support low impact wood-based industries.</p>
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	<p>HIS 2 Encourage design solutions which take account of key views, vistas and settings of historic features for potential woodland expansion or restocking (in connection with 'Promoted Heritage Sites').</p> <p>HIS 3 Recognise Archaeologically Sensitive Areas as having special character that require a distinctive approach to woodland management or expansion</p> <p>HIS 4 Encourage the holistic management of designed landscapes/parklands to ensure a legacy of distinctive trees and woodland for future generations.</p> <p>HIS 5 Ensure that land that is unplanted due to archaeological interest is managed to maintain the interest.</p> <p>RES 1 Encourage opportunities to create green networks, woodland habitat and/or productive forestry on land restoration sites which respond to and enhance their setting.</p> <p>RES 2 Encourage early engagement between developers/operators, the council and Forestry Commission Scotland, to identify potential opportunities for woodland planting.</p> <p>STS 1 Identify appropriate opportunities for productive conifer woodland management and expansion which helps support a stable supply of timber for the processing sector within Dumfries and Galloway</p> <p>STS 2 Support the creation of new productive broadleaved woodlands to enable the long term development of that sector</p> <p>STC 1 Promote greater use of the timber products produced in Dumfries and Galloway with local architects and builders</p> <p>STC 2 Ensure planning guidance supports the use of timber in construction and helps Dumfries and Galloway become an exemplar in this subject within Scotland and further afield.</p> <p>STC 3 Continue to encourage further expansion and value add within the existing forest products sector, supporting new product development and innovation</p> <p>STC 4 Encourage greater local processing of hardwood timber</p> <p>FES 1 Further develop and support the work on skills development within the sector, to ensure a competitive, multi skilled workforce for the future.</p> <p>FES 2 Promote employment opportunities within the forestry related sector in Dumfries and Galloway.</p> <p>STT 1 Continue to support and evolve the existing TTG approach to seek partnership solutions to timber transport pressures.</p> <p>STT 2 Seek to identify and support long term strategic solutions to the roads infrastructure to allow ongoing realisation of the downstream economic benefits to timber production in Dumfries and Galloway.</p> <p>FRT 1 Promote Dumfries and Galloway as a forest based tourism destination</p> <p>FRT 2 Encourage and support greater private sector provision of both forest based tourism facilities and associated support services such as accommodation.</p> <p>SCC 1 Identify appropriate opportunities for woodland expansion schemes for carbon storage and sequestration</p>
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	<p>benefits</p> <p>SCC 2 Support approaches which diversify the woodland resource and improve its robustness in respect to climate change and likely adaptation pressures</p> <p>SCC 3 Utilise the most appropriate techniques and practices to minimise soil disturbance, capture rainfall and reduce site run-off</p> <p>DRE 1 Encourage use of wood for fuel (has to be balanced with supply issues particularly in relation to larger biomass plants)</p> <p>DRE 2 Develop effective local guidance and practice to minimise woodland loss from renewable energy developments.</p> <p>HWB 1 Promote the benefits of woodlands and greenspace in respect to personal health and wellbeing.</p> <p>OLS 1 Support and develop woodland educational activities and engage with communities</p> <p>WFC 1 Support and develop recreational activities in forests and woodlands, including countryside walks, mountain bike trails, improved links, bridle routes and tourism facilities, etc. for a diverse range of users and groups</p> <p>WFC 2 Empower communities to develop a sense of ownership and stewardship</p> <p>WFC 3 Promote the use of sustainable travel as a means of accessing forests</p> <p>EIT 1 Consider possible guidance relating to landscaping schemes</p> <p>EIT 2 Consider possible awareness raising events for importance of trees in the landscape, possibly linked to climate change agenda</p>
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Aspects excluded from the appraisal because they are not proposals generated by the Proposed Plan.	<p>BIO 6 Manage sites identified as Red Squirrel 'Strongholds' according to recognised guidance. Consider the needs of other key species, such as Golden Eagle and Black Grouse, in the management of other sites.</p> <p>ENV 1 Ensure that the beneficial effects of forestry and woodland for water are maintained and improved by following requirements set out in the Forests &amp; Water Guidelines.</p> <p>ENV 2 Ensure that new planting and restructuring contributes to measures within the River Basin Management Plans.</p> <p>ENV 3 Establish appropriate woodland in nitrate vulnerable zones.</p> <p>LAN 2 Continue the process of restructuring productive forests to enhance their landscape setting in accordance with the UK Forest Standard.</p> <p>DEV 1 Implement policy in Local Development Plan in respect of loss of trees and compensatory planting</p>
Aspects that protect the	BIO 5 Manage sites nationally or internationally designated for woodland (Special Areas of Conservation or Sites of

<p>natural environment, including biodiversity, or conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment.</p>	<p>Special Scientific Interest) to achieve and maintain favourable conservation status.</p>
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The only other aspect of the proposed DGFWS that could potentially have a significant effect on a Natura site is the section and maps relating to Woodland Expansion. The maps identify specific locations for woodland expansion relating to the following woodland typologies: Native Woodlands; Mixed Farm/Policy Woodlands; Hedgerow Trees/Shelter Belts; Softwoods; and Energy Forests. They classify areas as unsuitable, sensitive, potential and preferred area for woodland expansion. All Natura sites have been identified as potential constraints and taken into account during preparation of the maps. Though this has resulted in Natura sites being identified as sensitive for many woodland types, it has not totally excluded them, or the land surrounding them, from woodland expansion because, for sites such as SACs designated for native woodland, expansion of native woodland may not be detrimental; indeed it may be desirable. However, this means that a likely significant effect cannot be totally ruled out from all sites using the maps alone.

However, this section makes it clear that it provides strategic guidance only and that all proposals, even those that fall into the ‘preferred’ areas on the maps, will require further consideration of site-specific issues. The Strategy includes the following statement (para 9.12) in relation to local issues related to Natura sites:

“All forestry proposals likely to have a significant effect on an existing or potential Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Ramsar site, including proposals outwith the site, will require an appropriate assessment and will only be permitted where the proposal does not adversely affect the integrity of the site or there are no alternative solutions and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a socio-economic nature.”

Therefore, the procedure proposed by the Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy will ensure that all potential likely significant effects on Natura sites will be identified at a later stage. The Woodland Expansion section and associated maps of the DGFWS can therefore be screened out of this appraisal on the basis that they will not in themselves lead to development or other change.

## 6. In-combination effects

The requirement of the Directive is to undertake an appropriate assessment of a plan if it would be likely to have a significant effect on a European Site “either individually or in combination with other plans and projects.” Individual aspects of the DGFWS that have been screened

out above, because they will have no likely significant effect at all or because they are too general in nature, do not require an in-combination assessment since they clearly will also have no cumulative effect, or any cumulative effects (as for effects individually) cannot be identified.

### **7. Mitigation**

All aspects of The Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy have been screened out of further appraisal. No mitigation measures are required.

### **8. Appropriate Assessment**

All aspects of The Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy, alone or in combination, have been screened out of further appraisal. Appropriate assessment of the Proposed Plan is not required.

### **9. Conclusions**

Dumfries and Galloway Council, as the plan-making body concludes that it can be ascertained by means of this Habitat Regulations Appraisal that adoption of the Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy would have no adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura sites.