

Consultation Title	Scottish Crown Estate: Strategic Management Plan
Date	22/11/19
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Scottish Land & Estates (SLE) is the voice of rural businesses throughout Scotland. We are a membership-based organisation representing a wide range of rural businesses, including farmers, foresters, tourism operators, housing providers, leisure companies, and renewable energy providers. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to this consultation.

Developing the Strategic Management Plan

- 1. Are the opportunities to contribute to sustainable development appropriate for the Scottish Crown Estate? If not, please provide examples of additional or alternative opportunities.**

Yes. SLE considers the opportunities to contribute to sustainable development across the Crown Estate portfolio have been sufficiently outlined in the plan.

While it is briefly mentioned under “Economic Wellbeing”, training is one aspect that could possibly be expanded to contribute to sustainable development. For example, the strategic plan could highlight the role the Scottish Crown Estate can play in giving school children access to learning opportunities in land management, aquaculture etc. These operations will only be sustainable in the future if there is a supply of young people ready to take employment in the sector.

Delivering the Vision

- 2. Do you feel that the Vision in the Strategic Management Plan meets your expectations for the Scottish Crown Estate for the next 5 years?**

Yes, fully.

Objectives, Priorities and Policies: Theme 1

- 3. Do you believe that the objectives, priorities and policies contained in theme 1 will allow us to achieve our vision for the future management of the Scottish Crown Estate?**

Yes. We particularly agree that under part 4 (paragraph 64.), a manager must have regard to the likely effect on the overall value of the Scottish Crown Estate when developing policies around community empowerment for the estate. This consideration should be couched in terms of whether any change will improve or at least sustain the principles of the vision (namely; financial benefit, and the wider long term social, economic and environmental benefits).

SLE agrees that the Scottish Crown Estate should not be limited to the land or property that currently forms part of the Estate as described in part 7. This is crucial if the vision is to be delivered.

Objectives, Priorities and Policies: Theme 2

4. Do you believe that the objectives, priorities and policies contained in theme 2 will allow us to achieve our vision for the future management of the Scottish Crown Estate?

Yes. That there is not a one size fits all approach will allow for the flexibility needed to ensure the assets of the Scottish Crown Estate are managed effectively.

In terms of the rural estates, SLE is of the view that increasing local control or involvement in decision making could be welcomed if it can be demonstrated that doing so will positively contribute to delivering the strategic vision in the long and short term.

Objectives, Priorities and Policies: Theme 3

5. Do you believe that the objectives, priorities and policies contained in theme 3 will allow us to achieve our vision for the future management of the Scottish Crown Estate?

Yes. We place particular value on priority 18 which establishes a requirement for local organisations interested in the management of assets to consider how they can take on the function and liabilities for the longer term, whilst delivering added value, transparency and efficiency. This is essential if increased local control is to meet the core aims of the Scottish Crown Estate.

6. Do you feel the objectives, priorities and policies will deliver success to the Scottish Crown Estate?

This will depend upon the adaptability of the objectives, priorities and policies to meet future challenges. As it stands, SLE considers they are suitable to enable success in current circumstances.

SLE is of the view that policies and priorities should be developed to ensure the rural economy can grow and thrive even under challenging and changing circumstances. This means that policy must be tailored to ensure that enhancing productivity, business resilience and environmental benefit are among the top priorities.

7. Do you feel there are any other opportunities for revenue generation that have not been identified in the draft Plan?

The possibility of payments for delivering public good in (farming practice, for example) and carbon trading have not been highlighted here. There is perhaps scope to do so, but it may only become clearer once the political landscape has settled.

Given that on average, farms made a loss from agricultural activity of £14,600 in 2018 (source: [#Route2050 – A direction of travel for Scottish land management to 2050](#)), we consider it important for rural estates to focus on improving business resilience and efficiency. Measures to deliver this could include:

- A focus on soil health and management
- Increased knowledge exchange, including discussion groups and monitor farms
- Resource Use Audits to enable businesses to identify areas for improvement
- Animal Health plans to improve disease management
- Integrated Crop Management
- Greater uptake of skills training
- Investment in applied research, including farmer led field scale trials

By focusing on enhancing productivity and efficiency, rural businesses will maximise output while rationalising input, thereby delivering environmental benefits as well as cost savings in the long term.

- 8. Do you feel the objectives, priorities and policies will impact you positively, negatively or have no impact on you as an individual or as part of an organisation?**

Not applicable

- 9. Do you feel that the objectives, priorities and policies align and take account of wider Scottish Government objectives?**

Yes. We consider the Scottish Government's wider objectives such as those relating to the climate emergency, sustainable development and inclusive economic growth have been taken into account by the objectives, priorities and policies contained in the plan.

SLE would like to see the Land Use Strategy embraced as future policy is developed as we consider it has the potential to provide a mechanism that enables a more coherent approach to getting the most out of the land.

Reporting, monitoring and review

- 10. Do you have any comments or additional suggestions on the arrangements for monitoring and review of the Plan?**

SLE finds the proposals acceptable.