

Highland-wide Local Development Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Finalised Environmental Report

March 2012



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Following the publication and consultation on the Strategic Environmental Assessment – Environmental Report which accompanied the Highland-wide Local Development Plan Main Issues Report and the Revised Environmental Report which accompanied the Highland-wide Local Development Plan – Proposed Plan we are now publishing a Finalised Environmental Report which accompanies the Adopted Highland wide Local Development.

The changes at this stage are largely factual and are related to comments made by Consultation Authorities during consultation on the Revised Environmental Report in 2010.

Appendix 6 of this Finalised sets out how we have considered the responses to Revised Environmental Report.

Modifications made to the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and Strategic Environmental Assessment implications

The modifications made by the DPEA are mainly minor in nature and are not expected that these will have an adverse impact on the integrity of the Natura sites either alone or in combination. There are three more major modifications, these are:

- Map 6 – East Inverness – The allocation for bulky good to the south west of Inverness Retail and Business Park to be expanded to cover the whole of the retail park area except that covered by Tesco.
- Policy 21 (Culloden Moor) and Map 11 to be deleted.
- A further allocation to the east of Milton of Connage, Ardersier has been included.

While these changes are considered to be more major it is not anticipated that these will have a significant environmental effect either alone or cumulatively given the mitigation already included within the plan. To ensure this was the case a SEA – Site Assessment was undertaken for the expanded allocation at Inverness Retail and Business Park and the additional site at Ardersier. These are attached to this update statement as Appendix 7.

Of a more minor nature given the above changes the policy/mapping numbering has changed and this will be reflected through the Post Adoption Statement.

It is considered that the Report of Examination and the modifications which are to be made to the plan have been made having regard to the Revised Environmental Report (September 2010) as submitted to Scottish Ministers as part of the Report of Examination.

You can view the Report of Examination online at:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/HWLDPExamination.htm>

Appendix 7 includes all of the modifications made by the Reporters and the SEA implications and a justification.

Non-technical summary

This is the finalised Environmental Report for the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. The Strategic Environmental Assessment has been subject to consultation at a number of stages and the Post-Adoption Statement will set out how and when The Highland Council took on Board these comments.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Development Plans Team using the details below:

Post Planning and Development Service The Highland Council Council Offices Glenurquhart Road Inverness IV3 5NX	E-mail devplans@highland.gov.uk Fax (01463) 702298 Phone (01463) 702259
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What is the Purpose and/or objectives of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan

The purpose of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan is to guide development of Highland over the next 20 years. The highland-wide Local Development plan will inform the production of the area Local Development Plans and will be used as the primary tool for making decisions on applications for planning permission/

What is the state of the current environment?

General

The Highland-wide Local Development Plan will cover an area of approximately 26,484 square kilometres. Highland has a population of 251,953 (2008).

Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

There are a large number of designated sites across Highland. These can be summarised as:

Designation	Number of Sites	Area covered (Hectares)
Site of Special Scientific Interest	361	1041797.9
Special Area of Conservation	91	151347.2
Special Protection Area	51	1310238.7
National Nature Reserve	23	134206.7
Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance	171	3114.5
Local Nature Reserve	1	55.28
RAMSAR	13	167876.7

In addition to the biodiversity, flora and fauna of designated sites there are a number of protected species and habitats across Highland.

There are potentially a number of priority habitats in the UK BAP ('UK') or Local Biodiversity Action Plans located within Highland. Equally there are a number of other important species which may be present in the area.

Human Health

Information from the census is one of the best simplest measures we have of the health of our population. In the area which is to be affected by the plan the percentage of total population with a long term limiting illness is 18.4% this is below the 20.3% of average in Scotland as a whole.

Soil

There are a wide range of soil types in Highland. Further information on these can be found in the baseline data appendix of the SEA.

Water

The quality of the freshwater environment is also recognised internationally for its importance as a spawning ground for wild salmon and use by whisky distilleries. The many lochs and rivers that characterise the area are important for local economies and provide the scenic backdrop that encourages so many tourists to the area.

Air

Highland region is not affected by air pollution from extensive road networks and heavy industries as in other parts of Scotland.

Climatic Factors

Transportation is one of the main contributors to climate change due to emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂). High levels of CO₂ and other 'greenhouse gases' in the atmosphere are thought to accelerate the earth's natural warming. This warming is predicted to have a variety of environmental consequences including increased frequency and severity of storm events, as well as rises in sea level. Changes in rainfall patterns could lead to increased erosion and pollution associated with surface run-off.

Material Assets

For the purposes of this Environmental Report waste, access and transport are considered to be material assets.

Cultural Heritage

There are a number of cultural and built heritage features in Highland. These are set out in the table below:

Designation	Number of Sites
Schedule Monuments	1237
Listed Buildings	A - 186 B - 1667 C(S) – 1161
Entry in Inventory of Gardens Designed Landscapes	51
Conservation Areas	30
Entry in Inventory of Historic Battlefields	6

The Highland Historic Environment Record includes 53677 records of all known archaeological sites, historic buildings and historic landscapes that make up the archaeological and historical heritage of the Highland area.

Landscape

This guidance covers the whole of Highland and therefore it can be expected the landscape varies significantly across the area. Seven Landscape Character Assessments cover the Highland Council area and describe the changes in landscape from the rolling farmland around the Inner Moray Firth Coast to the rocky undulating plateaus of Skye and Lochalsh. The Munro's, Corbett's and other hills and mountains are key features in the landscape and attract visitors to the area year after year.

What might happen if the Highland-wide Local Development Plan was not implemented?

Without the Highland-wide Local Development Plan it is considered that the likely future changes to the area will be;

- Potential for a lack of consistency in planning decisions could lead to poor quality development across Highland potentially reducing the quality of townscape and landscape;
- An approach to issues such as air quality may not be taken forward as it is more of a strategic issue therefore having a potentially significant negative effect on climate change;
- Failure to establish a Highland wide approach to the safeguarding and enhancement of the natural heritage;
- Failure to address adaptation to climate change at the regional scale; and
- Risk of increased cumulative impacts, including attrition upon areas of high landscape value including NSAs, SLAs and areas with qualities of wildness.

Assessing the options

Appendix 3 sets out each of the different visions, spatial strategies and policy approaches which have been subject to assessment.

Following discussion with the Consultation Authorities we have assessed each of these options against the following SEA topics and objectives:

Maintain and enhance designated wildlife sites, biodiversity, valuable habitats and protected species, avoiding irreversible losses.
Maintain, enhance and create green networks for wildlife and people.
Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate nature/natural environments
Protect and enhance human health
Retain and improve quality, quantity and connectivity of publicly accessible open space.
Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths
Reduce contamination, safeguard soil quantity and quality
Minimise waste
Avoid impact to and where possible enhance the water environment
Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (inc future capacity)
Maintain air quality
Reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change
Increase proportion of energy from renewable sources
Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport
Protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment
Value and protect the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscapes
Conserve and enhance landscape character and scenic value
Safeguard wild areas

You can find the full assessment results in Appendix 4, we have also carried out assessments of the sites which we allocated in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and the results of these can be found in Appendix 5.

How can the significant effects of these be minimised or maximised?

To minimise the significantly negative affects and maximise the significantly positive affects we have proposed mitigation measures. Some of these have been through adjustments of the policy others include specific site related mitigation. These are contained following each vision/spatial strategy or policy assessment.

Why have these options been assessed?

These options have been through the Local Development Plan process and have been informed by key agency and other partnership working to fully consider the implications of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. These options have been further augmented by public consultation.

How will we monitor its effectiveness?

The affect on the environment will be assessed alongside the overall monitoring of the effectiveness of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. This monitoring will largely be done using existing expertise in The Highland Council.

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Appendix 2 - Baseline data

Appendix 3 - Alternatives to which SEA has been applied

Appendix 4 - Assessment of alternative approaches

Appendix 5 - Assessment of proposed allocated sites

Appendix 6 – How responses to Revised Environmental Report have been taken on board.

Appendix 7 – Modifications to the HwLDP following examination and the SEA Implications

Introduction

Purpose of this Environmental Report and key facts

As part of the preparation of Highland-wide Local Development Plan, The Highland Council is carrying out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is a systematic method for considering the likely environmental effects of certain PPS. The central aim of SEA is to help ensure that the environment is given the same level of consideration as social and economic factors within the plan. It can do this by promoting;

- Integration of environmental information into the plan preparation and adoption process;
- Early dialogue with consultees, particularly those with environmental expertise, but also the wider public;
- Full and objective consideration of alternatives to ensure that the best environmental options are identified and taken on board as far as possible; and increase public participation in decision making; and
- Transparency of decision making, through the publication of the post adoption statement.

SEA is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The key SEA stages are:

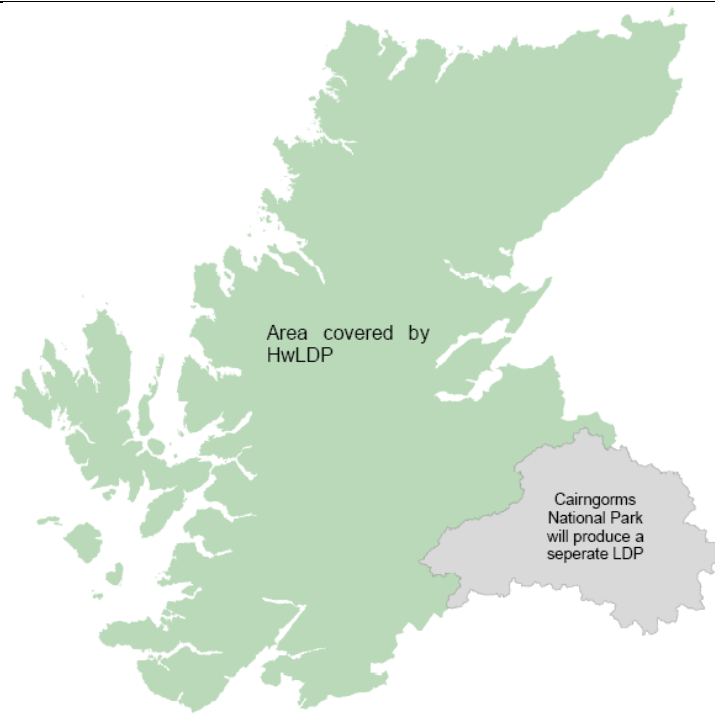
Screening	determining whether the PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects and whether an SEA is required
Scoping	deciding on the scope and level of detail of the Environmental Report, and the consultation period for the report – this is done in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage, The Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Environmental Report	publishing an Environmental Report on the PPS and its environmental effects, and consulting on that report
Adoption	providing information on: the adopted PPS; how consultation comments have been taken into account; and methods for monitoring the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the PPS
Monitoring	monitoring significant environmental effects in such a manner so as to also enable the Responsible Authority to identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and undertake appropriate remedial action.

The purpose of this Finalised Environmental Report is to:

- provide information on the Highland-wide Local Development Plan
- identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and its reasonable alternatives;
- provide an opportunity for the Consultation Authorities and the public to offer views on any aspect of this Finalised Environmental Report.

The key facts relating to The Highland-wide Local Development Plan are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Key facts relating to the Highland-wide Local Development Plan

Name of Responsible Authority	The Highland Council
Title of Plan, Program or Strategy (PPS)	Highland-wide Local Development Plan
What Prompted the PPS	The Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 requires Planning Authorities to produce Local Development Plans. The detailed regulations for this was brought forward through the Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 which came into force on the 28 th February 2009.
Subject	Town Planning
Period Covered by the PPS	2010 - 2030
Frequency of Updates	Every 5 years in line with Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006
Area Covered by PPS	 <p>The map shows the Highland region of Scotland. A large area is shaded in light green, labeled 'Area covered by HwLDP'. A smaller area in the southeast is shaded in light grey, labeled 'Cairngorms National Park will produce a separate LDP'.</p>
Purpose and/or Objectives of PPS	The purpose of the HwLDP is to guide development of Highland over the next 20 years. HwLDP will inform the production of the area Local Development Plans and will be used as the primary tool for making decisions on applications for planning permission.
Contact Point	Simon Hindson, Planner Simon.hindson@highland.gov.uk (01463) 702261

SEA activities to date

Table 2 summarises the SEA activities to date in relation to Highland-wide Local Development Plan

Table 2. SEA activities to date

SEA Action/Activity	When carried out	Notes
screening to determine whether the PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects	<i>Not Applicable</i>	
scoping the consultation periods and the level of detail to be included in the Environmental Report	February 2009	
Outline and objectives of the PPS	April 2009	
relationship with other PPS and environmental objectives	April 2009	
environmental baseline established	April 2009	
environmental problems identified	May 2009	
assessment of future of area without the PPS	June 2009	
alternatives considered	June 2009	
environmental assessment methods established	June 2009	Workshop held with Consultation Authorities to look at a range of matters including assessment method more information available online at http://HWLDP.blogspot.com
selection of PPS alternatives to be included in the environmental assessment	June 2009	
identification of environmental problems that may persist after implementation and measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects	June 2009	
monitoring methods proposed	July 2009	
Publication and consultation on Environmental Report	August 2009- November 2009	
Consideration of consultation responses	November 2009- March 2010	A report is available as appendix 6 detailing the responses and how they have been considered in bringing forward this revised environmental report. http://www.highland.gov.uk/developmentplans .
Submission of Revised Environmental Report and Consultation period of 10 weeks.	24 th September 2010 – 3 rd December 2010	
Examination of Highland-wide Local Development Plan – prepare an update statement with all comments on Revised Environmental Report for DPEA	May 2011	
Preparation of “SEA update statement” following receipt of Report of Examination considering changes made to the Highland-wide Local Development Plan by Reporters. This should be read alongside the Revised Environmental Report (September 2010)	February 2012	

A Number of other SEAs have been carried out by the Highland Council on other PPS' which are directly related to the HwLDP. A copy of these are available on request.

Highland-wide Local Development Plan Context

Outline and objectives of Highland-wide Local Development Plan

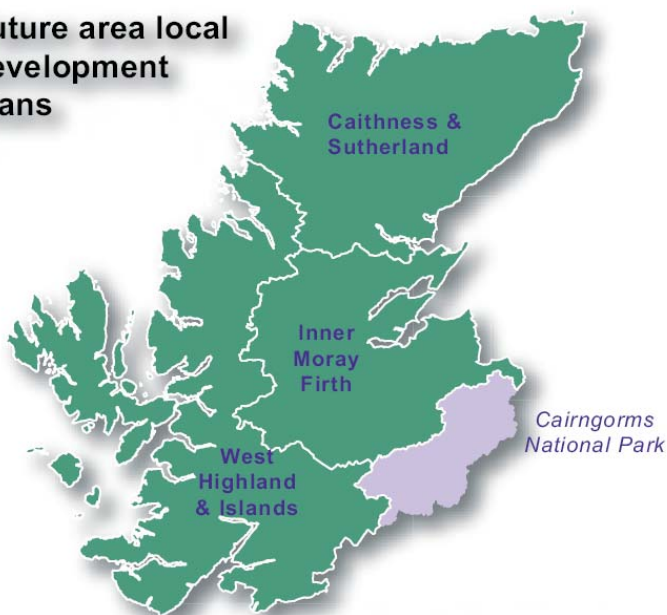
Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes “an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme”. The purpose of this section is to explain the nature, contents, objectives and timescale of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan.

As a legal requirement of the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006, the Highland Council is preparing a Highland Local Development Plan as the new land use plan for development of a scale and nature that are of regional (Highland) significance. The plan will cover the period from 2010 – 2030 and replaces the Highland Structure Plan which was adopted in 2001. It will also update the general policies of the existing local plans. The plan will be reviewed within a 5 year cycle.

The Highland Council Local Development Plan extends over an area of 26,484 square kilometres and is an area of high quality natural environment and diverse historic background. It has a population of 217,440 and at 8.2 persons per square kilometre, is sparsely populated compared with other regions in Scotland. A large proportion of the land area is identified as “fragile” in terms of remoteness and scarcity of population.



Future area local development plans



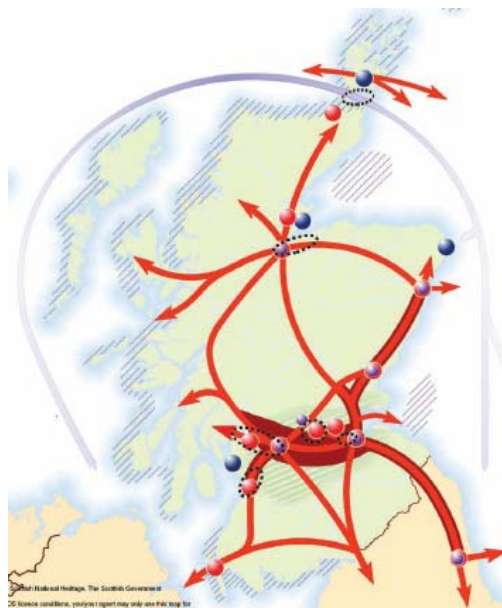
This LDP will also set the context for three Local Development Plans which will follow – one for the Inner Moray Firth area, one for the Caithness and Sutherland area and one for the West Highland and Islands area. Ultimately the aim is to create and retain up-to-date plan coverage on a five year cycle.

The Highland Local Development Plan will set out:

- The spatial strategy and vision for the area;
- Clear policy guidance for all types of development (including reference to Supplementary Guidance where appropriate);
- The development principles of key action areas (including the A96 corridor).

The preparation of the Highland Local Development Plan is an opportunity to put more of the local dimension to the National Planning Framework 2, through the preparation of a spatial strategy and vision for the area.

Whilst it will contain an action programme for certain significant land use proposals to be furthered through the area plans, the Highland Local Development Plan will not deal with specific sites outwith the areas which are the focus of the spatial strategy, these sites will be brought forward through the area Local Development Plans. The spatial strategy will consider broad directions of growth and development and a high level spatial distribution of likely development.



The Highland-wide Local Development Plan will contain policies on the following topic areas;

Sustainable Design	Coastal Development
Design Quality and Place-Making	Aquaculture
Physical Constraints	Trees and Development
Developer Contributions	Principle of Development in Woodland
Affordable Housing	Minerals and Soils
Houses in Multiple Occupation	Accessibility and Transport
Settlement Development Areas	Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
Housing in the Countryside	Species and Habitats
Wider Countryside	Landscape
Ageing Population	Geodiversity
New Settlements	Water Environment
Gypsies/Travellers	Flooding
Retail	Waste Water Treatment
Business and Industrial Land	Surface Water Drainage
Previously Used Land	Renewable Energy Developments
Tourism	Waste Management
Tourist Accommodation	Pollution and Environmental Management
Communications Infrastructure	Air Quality
Siting and Design of Communications Infrastructure	Green Networks, Open Space and Physical Activity
Crofting and Agriculture	Playing Fields and Sports Pitches
Crofting Townships	Access to the Outdoors

The Strategic Environmental Assessment will assess each of the different policies (and where appropriate their alternatives), spatial strategy, area visions, proposed development sites and in addition will assess how Highland may develop without production of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. The vision for the Highlands has been assessed under the SEA for the Highland Council's Corporate Plan. This SEA can be viewed online at:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6C18D819-1CA7-49A0-988B-36D8B6A3FF5D/0/CorporatePlanEnvironmentalReport.pdf>.

The Main Issues Report and the proposed plan can be viewed online at: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/developmentplans>.

Relationship with other PPS and environmental protection objectives

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes an outline of the relationships with other relevant PPS, and how environmental protection objectives have been taken into account in the preparation of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. This section covers these issues and sets the policy and legislative context in which the Highland-wide Local Development Plan will operate. This section also helps to identify the constraints and targets that these PPS' imposes on the Highland-wide Local Development Plan.

As the Highland-wide Local Development Plan covers such a large area and a wide base of topics there is a significant number of other plans, policies and strategies which may affect, or is affected by the Highland-wide Local Development Plan.

It is not practical to include a full detailed list of these and how it affects, and is affected by, other relevant PPS and environmental objectives within the document, therefore this information is included in Appendix 1 - Relevant plans, programmes and Strategies.

This analysis, and that carried out as part of the Monitoring Report for the Highland-wide Local Development Plan, has helped us to identify which policies need to be included in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan.

Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of “the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme”, and “the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected”. This section aims to describe the environmental context within which the PPS operates and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the PPS.

The purpose of this section is to provide enough environmental baseline data to:

- support the identification of environmental problems;
- support the process of assessing the environmental effects;
- provide a baseline against which future monitoring data can be compared.

A table of Baseline information and a series of maps which have been gathered as part of this Strategic Environmental Assessment are included in Appendix 2.

General

The Plan covers an area (including all islands at low water) is 26,484 square kilometres. This is 33% of Scotland and 11.4% of Great Britain. It is 10 times larger than Luxembourg, 20% larger than Wales, and nearly the size of Belgium. This section of the Environmental Report is split by SEA Topic as defined by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. A table and maps showing baseline data can be found in Appendix 1.

Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

Natural heritage designations cover a range of habitats in Highland. In Designated sites there are:

Designation	Number of Sites	Area covered (Hectares)
Site of Special Scientific Interest	361	1041797.9
Special Area of Conservation	91	151347.2
Special Protection Area	51	1310238.7
National Nature Reserve	23	134206.7
Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance	171	3114.5
Local Nature Reserve	1	55.28
RAMSAR	13	167876.7

Source: SNH Site Link December 2011

In addition the Cairngorms National Park lies partly within the authority of the Highland Council.

There are also a number of forestry features in Highland including ancient woodland and long established woodland which covers approximately 15% of Highland, including over 300,000 hectares of commercial forest. While many of these are not covered by statutory designations, it does highlight these areas as potentially high value ecological habitat.

The following habitats occur in Highland and are priority habitats in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK):

Ancient and/or species rich hedgerows
Blanket bog

Maerl beds
Martime cliffs and slopes

Blue mussel beds	Mestotrophic lakes
Calaminarian grasslands	Mountain heaths and willow scrub
Carbonate mounds	Mud habitats in deep water
Cereal field margins	Mudflats
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	Native pinewood
Coastal saltmarsh	Oligotrophic and dystrophic lochs
Coastal sand dunes	Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land (brownfield sites)
Coastal vegetated shingle	Ponds
Deep sea sponge communities	Purple moor grass and rush pasture
Estuarine rocky habitats	Reedbeds
Eutrophic standing waters	Rivers
Fens	Saline lagoons
File shell beds	Seagrass beds
Fragile sponge & anthozoan communities of subtidal rocky habitats	Seamount communities
Inland rock outcrops and scree habitats	Sheltered muddy gravels
Intertidal boulder communities	Tidal rapids
Limestone pavements	Traditional orchards
Lowland calcareous grassland	Upland calcareous grassland
Lowland dry acid grassland	Upland flushes, fens and swamps
Lowland heathland	Upland hay meadows
Lowland meadows	Upland heathland
Lowland wood pasture and parkland	Upland mixed ashwoods
Machair	Upland oakwood
	Wet woodland

The following species are known to occur or could occur in Highland and are priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan:

Brown algae	Mason Bee	Deptford Pink
Wig Wrack or Sea-loch egg	Lesser Searcher	Eyebright <i>Euphrasia heslop-harrisonii</i>
Wrack		Eyebright <i>Euphrasia marshallii</i>
Brown Alga	Zircon Reed Beetle	Eyebright <i>Euphrasia ostentfeldii</i>
Red Seaweed	Oxbow Diving Beetle	Eyebright <i>Euphrasia rotundifolia</i>
Coral Maërl	Violet Oil-beetle	Purple Ramping-fumitory <i>Fumaria purpurea</i>
Common Maërl	Northern Brown Argus Butterfly	Field Gentian <i>Gentianella campestris</i>
Slender Stonewort	Pearl-bordered Fritillary Butterfly	Hawkweed <i>Hieracium insigne</i>
Wilson's Pouchwort	Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary Butterfly	Hawkweed <i>Hieracium kennethii</i>
Joergensen`s Notchwort	Chequered Skipper Butterfly	Hawkweed <i>Hieracium leptodon</i>
Bog paw-wort	Small Heath Butterfly	Hawkweed <i>Hieracium notabile</i>
Pitted Frillwort	Large Heath Butterfly	Wild Candytuft <i>Iberis amara</i>
Northern Prongwort	Small Blue Butterfly	Juniper
Long-leaved Flapwort	Mountain Ringlet Butterfly	Twinflower <i>Linnaea borealis</i> Y
Atlantic lejeunea	Dingy Skipper Butterfly	Floating Water Plantain
Arctic Rustwort	Marsh Fritillary Butterfly	Curved Wood-rush
Petalwort	Grayling Butterfly	Grass-poly
Carrington`s Scalewort	Wall Butterfly	Small Cow-wheat
Snow Rock-moss	Sea-fan Anemone	Pennyroyal
Carrion-moss	Scarce Tube-dwelling Anemone	Mountain Sandwort
Scottish Beard-moss	Tall Sea Pen	One-flowered Wintergreen
Matted bryum	Stalked Jellyfish <i>Haliclystus auricula</i>	Yellow Bird`s-nest
Round-leaved Bryum	Stalked Jellyfish <i>Lucernariopsis campanulata</i>	
Knowlton`s Thread-moss	Fireworks Anemone	Grape-hyacinth
Baltic Bryum	Northern Sea Fan	Slender Naiad
Saltmarsh Thread-moss	Deep-sea Shrimp	Lesser Butterfly-orchid
Sea bryum	White-clawed freshwater crayfish	Wavy Meadow-grass
Green Shield-Moss	Amphipod Shrimp	Glaucous Meadow-grass

Irish Daltonia Y	Crayfish, Crawfish or Spiny Lobster	Whorled Solomon`s-seal
Waved Fork-moss	Pine Hoverfly	Shetland Pondweed
Rusty Fork-moss	Fonseca's Dune Fly	Rock Cinquefoil
Elegant Feather-moss	Aspen Hoverfly	Small-white Orchid
Lesser Squirrel-tail moss	Scottish Yellow Splinter Fly	Corn Buttercup
Aspen bristle-moss	Flies Northern Yellow Splinter	Wooly Willow
Blunt-leaved Bristle-moss	Flies Large Birch Lance Fly	Downy Willow
Blunt-leaved Thread-moss	Flies River-shore Crane-fly	Whortle-leaved Willow
Scottish Pohlia	Flies Mountain Dance-fly	Prickly Saltwort
Brown Mountain	Mayflies Iron Blue Mayfly	Drooping Saxifrage
Rugged Collar-moss	Molluscs Fan Mussel	Tufted Saxifrage
Slender Gland-moss	Molluscs Freshwater pearl mussel	Yellow Marsh Saxifrage
Tooth fungus	Molluscs Native Oyster	Annual Knawel
Black Falsebolete	Narrow-mouthed Whorl snail	Small-flowered Catchfly
Lilac Domecap	Round-mouthed Whorl Snail	Irish Lady`s-tresses Marsh Stitchwort
Blackening Chanterelle	Geyer's Whorl Snail	Common Toad
Big Blue Pinkgill	Cross Whorl Snail	Great Crested Newt
Dark-purple Earthtongue	Grey Dagger Moth	Sky Lark
Tooth fungus <i>Hydnellum aurantiacum</i>	Knot Grass Moth	Tree Pipit
Tooth fungus <i>Hydnellum caeruleum</i>	Flounced Chestnut Moth	Greater
Tooth fungus <i>Hydnellum concrecens</i>	Brown-spot Pinion Moth	Lesser Redpoll
Tooth fungus <i>Hydnellum ferrugineum</i>	Beaded Chestnut Moth	Common Linnet
Tooth fungus <i>Hydnellum peckii</i>	Green-brindled Crescent Moth	Twite
Tooth fungus <i>Hydnellum scrobiculatum</i>	Ear Moth	Corn Crane
Velvet Tooth	Mouse Moth	Common Cuckoo
Ascomyte Fungus	Small Dark Yellow Underwing Moth	Corn Bunting
Earth-Tongue	Dusky Brocade Moth	Yellowhammer
Tooth fungus <i>Phellodon confluens</i>	Garden Tiger Moth	Reed Bunting
Tooth fungus <i>Phellodon melaleucus</i>	Centre-barred Sallow Moth	Black-throated Diver
Black Tooth	Dark Brocade Moth	Red Grouse
Tooth fungus <i>Phellodon tomentosus</i>	Minor Shoulder-knot Moth	Herring Gull
Conifer Scalycap	Mottled Rustic Moth	Black-tailed Godwit
Medusa Brittlestem	Haworth's Minor	Common Grasshopper Warbler
Lousewort Rust	The Crescent Moth	Scottish Crossbill
Alpine Rust	The Streak Moth	Common Scoter
Tooth fungus <i>Sarcodon glaucopus</i>	Broom-tip Moth	Spotted Flycatcher
Tooth fungus <i>Sarcodon scabrosus</i>	Latticed Heath Moth	Eurasian Curlew
Scaly Tooth	Goat Moth	House Sparrow <i>Passer</i>
Conifer Roundhead	Brindled Ochre Moth	Eurasian Tree Sparrow
Robust Knight	Small Square-spot Moth	Grey Partridge
Stalked Puffball	Small Phoenix Moth	Wood Warbler
<i>Alectoria ochroleuca</i>	September Thorn Moth	Hedge Accentor
<i>Anaptychia ciliaris subsp. ciliaris</i>	Grey Mountain Carpet Moth	Balearic Shearwater
<i>Arthonia atlantica</i>	Galium Carpet Moth	Common Bullfinch
<i>Arthonia cohabitans</i>	Autumnal Rustic Moth	Arctic Skua
<i>Arthonia patellulata</i>	The Spinach Moth	Common Starling
<i>Arthothelium dictyosporum</i>	Garden Dart Moth	Black Grouse
<i>LArthothelium macounii</i>	Double Dart Moth	Western Capercaillie
Lichen <i>Aspicilia melanaspis</i>	Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth	Song Thrush
Lichen <i>Bacidia circumspecta</i>	Small Emerald Moth	Ring Ouzel
Lichen <i>Bacidia incompta</i>	Ghost Moth	Northern Lapwing

Lichen <i>Bacidia subincompta</i>	The Rustic Moth	Common sturgeon
Lichen <i>Biatoridium monasteriense</i>	Rosy Rustic Moth	Allis Shad
Lichen <i>Brodoa intestiniformis</i>	Brindled Beauty Moth	Twaite Shad
Forked hair-lichen <i>Bryoria furcellata</i>	Netted Mountain Moth	Lesser Sandeel
Lichen <i>Buellia violaceofusca</i>	V-moth	European eel
Lichen <i>Calicium diploellum</i>	Dot Moth	Portuguese dogfish
Lichen <i>Caloplaca flavorubescens</i>	Broom Moth	Basking Shark
Lichen <i>Caloplaca lucifuga</i>	Rosy Minor Moth	Herring
Lichens Orange-Fruited Elm-lichen	Shoulder-striped Wainscot Moth	Kitefin shark
Lichens a Lichen <i>Candelariella superdistans</i>	Pied Tineid Moth	Common skate
Lichen <i>Catillaria alba</i>	Scarce Long-horn Moth	Cod
Lichen <i>Chaenotheca gracilentia</i>	Lunar Yellow Underwing Moth	Tope Shark
Stump Lichen <i>Cladonia botrytes</i>	Oblique Carpet Moth	Long-snouted Seahorse
Lichens River Jelly Lichen <i>Collema dichotomum</i>	Powdered Quaker Moth	Porbeagle Shark
Lichen <i>Collema fasciculare</i>	Dark Spinach Moth	River lamprey
Lichen <i>Collema fragile</i>	Grass Rivulet Moth	Sandy Ray Sea Monkfish
Lichen <i>Collema fragrans</i>	Cousin German Moth	Whiting
Lichen <i>Diplotomma pharcidium</i>	Argent and sable Moth	Blue Whiting
Lichen <i>Fuscopannaria ignobilis</i>	Shaded Broad-bar Moth	Ling
Lichen <i>Fuscopannaria sampaiana</i>	White Ermine Moth	Sea lamprey
Lichen <i>Gomphillus calycioides</i>	Buff Ermine Moth	Plaice
Lichen <i>Graphis alboscripta</i>	The Anomalous Moth	Blue shark
Elm gyalecta	Hedge Rustic Moth	Atlantic salmon
Lichen <i>Gyalidea roseola</i>	Feathered Gothic Moth	Brown/Sea trout
Lichen <i>Hypogymnia vittata</i>	Pale Eggar Moth	Arctic charr
Lichen <i>Lecania chlorotiza</i> Y	Barred Tooth-striped Moth	Mackerel
Lichen <i>Lecanographa amylacea</i>	The Cinnabar Moth	Sole
Tarn lechanora (Lichen)	Dusky-lemon Sallow Moth	Spiny Dogfish
Lichen <i>Lecanora cinereofusca</i>	The Sallow Moth	Blue-fin Tuna
Lichen <i>Lecanora quercicola</i>	Red Carpet Moth	Water Vole
Lichen <i>Lecidea erythrophaea</i>	Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet Moth	Minke Whale
Lichen <i>Leptogium brebissonii</i>	Heath Rustic Moth	Sei Whale
Lichen <i>Leptogium cochleatum</i>	Northern Dart Moth	Fin Whale
Lichen <i>Leptogium hibernicum</i>	Neglected Rustic Moth	Common Dolphin
Lichen <i>Leptogium saturninum</i>	Sword-Grass Moth	West European Hedgehog
Lichen <i>Megalospora tuberculosa</i>	Slender Scotch Burnet Moth	Wildcat
Arctic kidney-lichen	Foliage spider	Long-finned Pilot Whale
Lichen <i>Parmeliella testacea</i>	Mesh-webbed spider <i>Dictyna pusilla</i>	Risso's Dolphin
Matt felt lichen	Money-spider <i>Monocephalus castaneipes</i>	Northern Bottlenose Whale
Lichen <i>Peltigera venosa</i>	Money-spider <i>Notioscopus sarcinatus</i>	Atlantic White-sided Dolphin
Lichen <i>Pertusaria velata</i>	Crab spider	White-beaked Dolphin
Lichen <i>Phaeophyscia endococcina</i>	Money-spider <i>Saaristoa firma</i>	Brown Hare
Lichen <i>Polychidium dendriscum</i>	Money-spider <i>Semljicola caliginosus</i>	Mountain Hare
Lichen <i>Porina hibernica</i>	Money-spider <i>Silometopus incurvatus</i>	Otter
Lichen <i>Pseudocyphellaria intricata</i>	Northern February Red Stonefly	Pine Marten
Ragged pseudocyphellaria (Lichen)	Marsh Clubmoss Fern	Humpback Whale
Lichen <i>Pseudocyphellaria norvegica</i>	Pillwort Fern	Sowerby's Beaked Whale
Lichen <i>Pyrenula dermatodes</i>	Holly-fern	Polecat

Lichen <i>Pyrenula hibernica</i>	Oblong Woodsia	Noctule
Lichen <i>Ramonia chrysophaea</i>	Pyramidal Bugle	Killer Whale
Lichen <i>Ramonia dictyospora</i>	Arctic Sandwort	Eastern Atlantic harbour seal/ common Seal
Lichen <i>Rinodina isidioides</i>	Norwegian Mugwort	Harbour Porpoise
Lichen <i>Schismatomma graphidioides</i>	Purple Milk-vetch	Sperm Whale
Lichen <i>Sclerophora pallida</i>	Scottish Small-reed	Soprano Pipistrelle
Lichen <i>Stereocaulon delisei</i>	Narrow Small-reed	Brown long-eared bat
Lichen <i>Stereocaulon symphycheilum</i>	Rampion Bellflower	Red Squirrel
Lichen <i>Sticta canariensis</i>	Curved Sedge	Striped Dolphin
Lichen <i>Toninia sedifolia</i>	Caraway	Bottlenosed Dolphin
Lichen <i>Umbilicaria spodothroa</i>	Cornflower	Cuvier`s Beaked Whale
Lichen <i>Usnea florida</i>	Narrow-leaved Helleborine	Slow-worm
Lichen <i>Vulpicida pinastri</i>	Arctic Mouse-ear	Loggerhead Turtle
Lichen <i>Wadeana dendrographa</i>	Chamomile	Leatherback Turtle
Lichen <i>Wadeana minuta</i>		Adder
Tormentil Mining Bee	Basil Thyme	Common Lizard
Great Yellow Bumblebee	Mountain Scurvy-grass	
Moss Carder-bee	Scottish scurvygrass	
Narrow-headed Ant	Frog Orchid	
Shining Guest Ant	Northern Hawk`s-beard	

Population

The current population of Highland is 220,490 and between 1999 and 2009 has grown 5.9%. The population density is 8.6 people per square kilometer. The latest General Register Office - Scotland (GROS) population projection for Highland states that by 2028, the population of Highland will be 251,953 (a 14.8% increase from 2008).

Human Health

Information from the census is one of the best and simplest methods we have of health of our population. In Highland the percentage of total with a long term limiting illness is 18.4% which is below the 20.3% average in Scotland as a whole.

It is considered that additional noise and shadow flicker can be factors related to some on-shore wind development. There is currently no baseline available on the current level of amenity impact that these have in Highland.

Soil

Given the scale of Highland and the diversity of it's land there are a wide range of different soil types in Highland. A map in Appendix 1 shows a map produced by the Macaulay Institute (now James Hutton Institute showing the different types of soils in Scotland. It can be seen from this map that there a number of different types of peat based soils and a large areas of peatland. This information is supplemented by Map 6 of the Land use Strategy for Scotland the depth of peat in Highland especially around Sutherland and Caithness is deeper than most other parts of Scotland, however there is limited peat to be found around the Moray Firth. Peat is important in terms of its carbon storage properties and the habitats (many of which are water dependant) which it provides.

Water

The quality of the freshwater environment is recognised internationally for its importance as a spawning ground for wild salmon and use by whisky distilleries. The many lochs and rivers that characterise the local area are important for local economies and provide the scenic backdrop that encourages so many tourists to the area. The River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) Area Management Plans provide valuable baseline information on the quality of water in Highland. There are four RBMP Area Management Plans coving Highland: [Argyll and Lochaber](#), [North East Scotland](#), [North Highland](#), and [West Highland](#).

Air

Highland is not as affected by air pollution from extensive road networks and heavy industries as the rest of Scotland. The Highland Council undertake annual air quality reviews of their areas to ensure that the national air quality objectives will be achieved. The pollutants that require to be assessed by the local authority are:

- Benzene
- Carbon monoxide
- 1,3-butadiene
- lead
- nitrogen dioxide
- sulphur dioxide
- fine particles

If the objective for a pollutant is exceeded or predicted to be exceeded by the required date for compliance, the local authority must declare the affected area an Air Quality Management Area. The authority must then draw up and implement an Action Plan to reduce pollution levels in the specified area. The Highland Council monitor air quality either manually or automatically in the following locations:

- Telford Street, Inverness
- Fort William
- Strath Viach
- Union Street, Inverness
- Academy Street, Inverness
- Queensgate, Inverness
- Wyvis Terrace, Dingwall
- Station Road, Dingwall
- Kintail Place, Dingwall
- Burns Crescent, Dingwall

Highland at present does not have any Air Quality Management Areas as the pollutant levels are below the national objective values. The 2010 Air Quality Progress Report for the Highland Council Area is available to view [online](#).

Climate Change

In Highland one of the main contributors to climate change is transportation due to the emissions of carbon dioxide. High levels of CO₂ and other “greenhouse gases” in the atmosphere are thought to accelerate the Earth’s natural warming. Warming is predicted to have a variety of environmental consequences including increased frequency and severity of storm events, as well as rises in sea level. Changes in rainfall patterns could lead to increased erosion and pollution associated with surface run-off.

As mentioned earlier in this section there is a significant amount of Peat in Highland and this has carbon storage qualities. The removal and disturbance of peat can mean the stored carbon is released and may contribute to climate change.

Material Assets

For the purposes of this Environmental Report waste, access and transport are considered to be material assets. In terms of waste it is considered that the materials and management of waste as a result of development is a key consideration when assessing planning applications for on-shore wind energy given the location and scale of these types of development.

In terms of access to the outdoors The Highland Council Access Strategy 2008-2011 provides the key information on this valuable material asset including the level of access infrastructure as set out in the table below:

Access Resource	Distance (km)	%
Rights of Way	3362	11.6
Promoted	3959	13.6
Other Paths	8331	28.7

Roads	13401	46.1
Total	29053	100

The Highland area has a diverse transportation network encompassing one of the longest road networks in Scotland. Generally the transport infrastructure comprises of:

- 6730km/4182 miles of locally adopted road;
- 1400 bridges (span greater than 3 metres) and 700 structural culverts (up to 3 metres);
- 951km of trunk road;
- 108 harbours, slipways and piers; and
- 2 airports

Cultural Heritage

There are a number of cultural and built heritage features in Highland. These are set out in the table below:

Designation	Number of Sites
Schedule Monuments	1237
Listed Buildings	A - 186 B - 1667 C(S) – 1161
Entry in Inventory of Gardens Designed Landscapes	51
Conservation Areas	30
Entry in Inventory of Historic Battlefields	6

The Highland Historic Environment Record includes 53677 records of all known archaeological sites, historic buildings and historic landscapes that make up the archaeological and historical heritage of the Highland area.

Landscape

This guidance covers the whole of Highland and therefore it can be expected the landscape varies significantly across the area. Seven Landscape Character Assessments cover the Highland Council area and describe the changes in landscape from the rolling farmland around the Inner Moray Firth Coast to the rocky undulating plateaus of Skye and Lochalsh. The Munro's, Corbett's and other hills and mountains are key features in the landscape and attract visitors to the area year after year.

Wild areas are key features of the Highland landscape and this is recognised by its inclusion within Policy 57 of the Highland wide Local Development Plan as a feature of Local Importance. The detailed mapping of Wild Areas is not available as yet however when it becomes available it will be used to update the baseline and due regard will be had to it in the On-shore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance.

The key facts and the baseline information collated for this environmental report has helped us to identify some environmental problems in the Highland area. Environmental problems that affect the area are identified in Table 2 below. Some of the negative trends highlighted in this table are likely to continue if no on-shore wind energy guidance is brought forward.

Gaps/Unreliability of Baseline Data

Much data and information was available through the Consultation Authorities, the Scottish Government and there was a wealth of information on offer to the Highland Council to inform the

baseline data for this Environmental Report. However, there are a number of factors which can limit the validity of this data:

- Some parts of Highland have been studied more widely than others. Therefore, the quality and accuracy of information for some areas will be greater than for others;
- Collation of data has predominantly been gathered at a Highland wide basis, including the Cairngorms National Park, therefore it proved difficult to disaggregate these to information that covers the Highland Council (planning authority) area; and
- The data relevant to this Report is held in different forms. If information is held in databases and Geographic Information Systems it can be more easily queried than information which is only in the printed form in reports, books or even on websites.

Environmental problems

Schedule 3 paragraph 4 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of existing environmental problems, in particular those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance. The purpose of this section is to explain how existing environmental problems will affect or be affected by Highland-wide Local Development Plan and whether the it is likely to aggravate, reduce or otherwise affect existing environmental problems.

By looking at the baseline data we have been able to identify the following environmental problems which may be effected by the production of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan;

SEA Issue	Potential Environmental Impact resulting from Highland Local Development Plan	Implications for Highland Local Development Plan
Biodiversity, flora, fauna	Stress on biodiversity and loss of habitat resulting from development. Vulnerability of rare and endangered flora and fauna to changes in climate. Loss of native woodland cover. Loss of peat land cover. Disturbance to protected species in the wider countryside. Fragmentation and loss of connectivity of habitats for species movement. Risk of invasive species. Renewable energy developments affecting wildlife. In-direct impact of development on designated sites.	The local development plan needs to ensure a balance between the demand for development while protecting the quality and character of the environments. The local development plan will identify areas of native woodland and ensure that the impact on these areas is fully considered in development proposals. The local development plan will seek to ensure that the impact on areas of important peat land cover is fully considered and that such areas are protected where appropriate. The LDP will seek to ensure both protected and priority species and habitats are considered through inclusion of a policy on the issue. Through the policy on green networks combined with those on habitats and species it is hoped that the risk of fragmentation and loss of connectivity of habitats for species will be avoided. The HwLDP should help to ensure targets in the Highland BAP and LBAPs can be met through provision of a number of policies.
Population	Increasing population putting increased pressure on the natural environment in terms of water supply, energy supply and transport links. Limited quantity, quality and accessibility of open space in Highland. Limited accessibility to core paths in some areas.	The local development plan will identify mitigation measures for development to ensure key infrastructure provision as detailed does not impact on the natural environment to a negative extent. The LDP will need to ensure a key link with the access strategy and core path planning. LDP facilitate the creation of high quality, accessible and fit for purpose open spaces (including allotments and playing fields). Through a policy on green networks recreation connectivity of open spaces should be enhanced by the LDP.
Human health	Ageing population. Loss of land for recreation.	The local development plan will recognise the importance of recreation and seek to put a policy framework in place.
Soil	Erosion. Potential contamination from nuclear decontamination and waste storage. Amount of contaminated land.	The local development plan will address these by having policies to avoid potential areas of erosion (physical constraints

	Amount of waste going to landfill. Potential loss of agricultural land. Potential loss or disturbance to peat land.	policy), previously used land, setting out the Council's position on nuclear waste, encouraging increased recycling facilities and reducing the amount of waste going to landfill (waste management policies) and policy to avoid inappropriate scales of development on peat land and avoidance of further commercial extraction. Agricultural land should be protected in line with national planning policy.
Water	Flooding, drainage and erosion resulting from infrastructure and changing climate. The need to sustain water supply and sewage treatment. Tidal and fluvial flood risk to new and existing development. Reduced quality of watercourses and the coastal environment.	The local development plan will promote the sustainable use of resources, including water. It will seek to put in place a policy framework which takes into account any potential detrimental impact on watercourses or the coastal environment.
Air	Negative impact of development on air quality.	The local development plan should address this by encouraging green travel. It will identify any areas of poor air quality.
Climatic factors	Lack of sustainable design. Potential for risk of landslips, erosion, coastal inundation, flooding. Potential to miss opportunities to facilitate species adaptation, create effective green networks, promote renewable energy, improve energy efficiency of buildings, promote the use of active travel, reduce the need to travel, increase forestry and woodland coverage and protect carbon sinks.	The local development plan should address the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions through renewable energy policy, green travel and promoting sustainable design. LDP should include a suite of policies to ensure risks related to climate change can be avoided and opportunities to reduce the impact of climate change can be taken.
Material assets	Increase travel/energy needs	The local development plan should address green transport issues
Cultural heritage	Stress on the historical environment resulting from development.	The Local development Plan should protect the historic environment.
Landscape	The challenge of managing access to the natural environment. Development of inappropriate new development and infrastructure in sensitive landscape areas. Negative impact of development on traditionalcrofting settlement character. Loss of local landscape character. Renewable energy developments affecting landscape/seascape character and scenic value. Woodland expansion of particular types in sensitive locations. Cumulative landscape impacts	The local development plan should encourage responsible development of the natural landscape and a balanced approach to provision of services and economic development. It must ensure that a policy framework is in place which will ensure development fits with the existing landscape character and protect and enhance landscape and scenic value, including designated areas and areas of wild land.

Likely evolution of the environment without the Highland-wide Local Development Plan

Schedule 3 of the Act requires that the likely evolution of the state of the environment without implementation of the PPS must be included in the Environmental Report.

While to fit with the act the likely evolution of the environment without the HwLDP will be considered however the production of a Local Development Plan for the area is a Statutory Duty of the Council and therefore it is not an option to not produce the plan. The approach that would be taken for Highland if the HwLDP was not taken forward would be to continue relying on the area development plans as there are no provisions to update the Highland Structure Plan through the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006.

Without the Highland-wide Local Development Plan it is considered that the likely future changes to the area will be;

- Potential for a lack of consistency in planning decisions could lead to poor quality development across Highland potentially reducing the quality of townscape and landscape;
- An approach to issues such as air quality may not be taken forward as it is more of a strategic issue therefore having a potentially significant negative effect on climate change;
- Failure to establish a Highland wide approach to the safeguarding and enhancement of the natural heritage;
- Failure to address adaptation to climate change at the regional scale; and
- Risk of increased cumulative impacts, including attrition upon areas of high landscape value including NSAs, SLAs and areas with qualities of wildness.

SEA Objectives

A number of SEA objectives were identified at the Scoping stage and following comment from the consultation authorities these have been refined.

1	Maintain and enhance designated wildlife sites, biodiversity, valuable habitats and protected species, avoiding irreversible losses.
2	Maintain, enhance and create green networks for wildlife and people.
3	Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate nature/natural environments
4	Protect and enhance human health
5	Retain and improve quality, quantity and connectivity of publicly accessible open space.
6	Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths
7	Reduce contamination, safeguard soil quantity and quality
8	Minimise waste
9	Avoid impact to and where possible enhance the water environment
10	Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (inc future capacity)
11	Maintain air quality
12	Reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change
13	Increase proportion of energy from renewable sources
14	Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport
15	Protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment
16	Value and protect the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscapes
17	Conserve and enhance landscape character and scenic value
18	Safeguard wild areas

Assessment of Environmental Effects and measures envisaged for prevention, reduction and offset of any significant adverse effects

The purpose of this section is to predict and evaluate as far as possible the environmental effects of this Local Development Plan and its reasonable alternatives in accordance with Section 14 of the Act and to set out measures envisaged to prevent, reduce, and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment.

The baseline information from the previous sections is applied to consider whether the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and any reasonable alternatives are likely to have significant environmental effects (positive and negative).

Outline of the reasons for selecting alternatives

As part of the production of a Local Development Plan a main issues report must be produced detailing the different areas which will be covered by the Local Development Plan and reasonable alternatives to this approach. This has been the main driver for selecting reasonable alternatives.

A number of the alternatives identified at the Main Issues Report Stage have now been scoped out. This is because either through bringing policies forward, or through public comment it has been determined that the alternative is not reasonable to be brought forward. This has given the Council an opportunity to concentrate on assessing policies where there are likely to be significant affects and also consider, in more detail, potential reasonable alternatives that may exist. The alternatives identified at the Main Issues Report Stage and assessed in the associated Environmental Report will remain as alternatives however, they will not form part of this Finalised Environmental Report. You can view the Environmental Report and the Revised Environmental Report online at:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/HWLDPOtherAssessmentsandInformation.htm>.

For the purpose of the Strategic Environmental Assessment the Council will also look at the alternative of not producing a Highland-wide Local Development Plan as a reasonable alternative, this has already been considered to an extent in the section on Likely evolution of the environment without the Highland-wide Local Development Plan.

Alternatives to which SEA was applied

The reasons for selecting the alternatives below have been born out analysis of the current policies contained in both the findings of the Monitoring Report, Highland Structure Plan (2001), the existing local plans, emerging local plans and national policy and guidance. This section will detail if an alternative has been identified and if not why not. For a full list of policies and alternatives please see Appendix 3. The assessment of these alternatives is included in Appendix 4 (vision/spatial strategy and sites) and Appendix 5 (land allocations).

Vision/Policy Number	Alternative (Y/N – if N include reasons)
Highland wide Vision	N – This vision is The Highland Council’s Corporate Vision for the area and therefore it is considered that there are no alternatives other than to adopt this vision for the HwLDP in order to ensure it can effectively link to other corporate plans, programmes and strategies of the Council. This vision has been assessed through the SEA for the Corporate Plan and this has not been repeated within this RER.
Caithness and Sutherland Vision	N – It is considered that the vision presented in the plan offers a comprehensive approach to the support the ongoing regeneration and economic growth of the area. The vision is supported by the land allocations in the existing Sutherland and Caithness Local Plans, but elements of the Caithness local plan will be updated to facilitate the delivery of the vision through this plan and these are assessed elsewhere in this RER. It is not considered that any alternative to this vision would be reasonable.
West Highland and Islands Vision	N – It is considered that the vision presented in the plan is supported by land allocations the recently adopted West Highland and Islands and Wester Ross Local Plans and is able to meet the needs of the community. It is not considered that any alternative to this vision would be able to meet the needs of the area effectively.
Inner Moray Firth Vision	N – It is considered that the vision presented in the plan will ensure appropriate levels of growth across the area and balance this with the needs of both people and the natural environment. Given the development pressure and the need for balance it is not anticipated that there would be an alternative to this vision, however there may alternatives to elements of the spatial strategy which support the delivery of this vision eg dispersed growth.
1	N – It is considered that completing the unconstrained expansion areas of the city is a priority to ensure a compact city which recognises its landscape surroundings can be consolidated first and contribute towards the city’s infrastructure, before significant expansion of the city commences.
2	N – This policy offers a hook to the Inverness City Vision to enable it to be adopted as a statutory part of the development plan. Therefore it is not considered an alternative to not have a policy on this matter as it would inhibit the delivery of the Inverness City Vision.
3	N – This policy ensures growth is directed towards the City Centre to ensure its ongoing renewal, it is not considered that any alternative to this policy approach would be feasible.
4	N – This is an area of the city which is in continual change. This policy ensures appropriate development in this area is supported to ensure improved townscape and connectivity by active travel. The policy also provides a hook for a development brief to be prepared and to be adopted as supplementary guidance to facilitate the appropriate development of the area. It is not considered that any alternative to this policy approach would be feasible.
5	N – This site is allocated in the Inverness Local Plan and the HwLDP offers an updated context on how the site could be developed including the creation of a development brief for the site. It is not anticipated that another option for this site is appropriate at this time, alternatives may be identified as part of the Development Brief for the site.
6	N – This area is allocated for a mixture of uses in the Inverness Local Plan. This policy offers an updated context for the development of the area with a focus on the need to deliver infrastructure improvements. It is not anticipated that another option for this site is appropriate at this time, alternative may be identified as part of the development brief for the site.
7	N – This area is allocated for a mixture of uses in the Inverness Local Plan. This policy offers an updated context for the development of the area with a focus on the need to deliver infrastructure improvements. It is not anticipated that another option for this site is appropriate at this time, alternative may be identified as part of the development brief for the site.

8	N – These areas are allocated for expansion in the Inverness Local Plan. This policy offers an updated context for the development of the area with a focus on the need to deliver infrastructure improvements. It is not anticipated that another option for these site is appropriate at this time, as these sites form a key part of the strategy to consolidate the city and ensure that provisions for delivery of a canal and river crossing is made.
9	Y – The alternative to this policy is to promote a dispersed growth option, utilising sites already designated for development in existing local plans covering the area. This is unlikely to ensure delivery of development to ensure the housing need and demand is met however it would provide an opportunity to ensure growth of the City is consolidated prior to any future expansion.
10	N – This policy promotes the delivery of the Beechwood Campus for a mix of campus related uses. No reasonable alternative has been identified as this site in time will be well connected by a number of modes of transport and provide significant opportunity to provide economic growth of the City of Inverness and the Highlands as a whole.
11	N – This policy promotes expansion of the retail park in a specific location. No alternative has been identified to this policy as expansion of this retail park would be in line with national policy on retail development.
12	Y – The alternative to this policy is to promote a dispersed growth option, utilising sites already designated for development in existing local plans covering the area. This is unlikely to ensure delivery of development to ensure the housing need and demand is met however it would provide an opportunity to ensure growth of the City is consolidated prior to any future expansion.
13	Y – The alternative to this policy is to promote a dispersed growth option, utilising sites already designated for development in existing local plans covering the area. This is unlikely to ensure delivery of development to ensure the housing need and demand is met however it would provide an opportunity to ensure growth of the City is consolidated prior to any future expansion.
14	N – This site already has planning permission for a mix of uses and the policy also identifies an alternative use if the housing element is not brought forward. As the alternative approach to development of this site is addressed through the policy it is not anticipated that any other reasonable approach could be brought forward.
15	N – This site already has planning permission for residential development and much of the site has been built out. There is not a reasonable alternative to this policy given the level of development which has already occurred on this site.
16	N – The site referred to in the policy already has support in the Nairnshire Local Plan. The policy requires a masterplan to be produced addressing the needs and potential impacts of any development on this site. As the site is already allocated in the Nairnshire Local Plan the development of the site may progress with or without this policy, however the policy in HwLDP offers an updated context on the development of the site, reflecting a recent reporters decision on development. Given the above it is not considered that a reasonable alternative to this policy is appropriate.
17	Y - The alternative to this policy is to promote a dispersed growth option, utilising sites already designated for development in existing local plans covering the area. This is unlikely to ensure delivery of development to ensure the housing need and demand is met however it would provide an opportunity to ensure the existing development in Nairn is consolidated prior to any future expansion.
18	Y - The alternative to this policy is to promote a dispersed growth option, utilising sites already designated for development in existing local plans covering the area. This is unlikely to ensure delivery of development to ensure the housing need and demand is met however it would provide an opportunity to ensure the existing development in Nairn is consolidated prior to any future expansion.
19	Y – The alternative is to not have a policy as these sites are expansion areas which have existing local plan support.
20	Y – The alternative is to have no policy as the site is allocated as an expansion area in the existing local plan. However, the policy in the Highland-wide Local

	Development Plan will ensure that an updated context is brought forward recognising the constraints on development of this particular site with tailored developer requirements related to the SEA site assessment carried out for the site.
Please note following examination of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan the original Policy 21 (Culloden Moor) was deleted. Therefore all of the policy numbers following this were renumbered.	
21	Y – The alternative is to have no policy as the site is allocated as an expansion area in the existing local plan. However, the policy in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan will ensure that an updated context is brought forward recognising the constraints on development of this particular site with tailored developer requirements related to the SEA site assessment carried out for the site.
22	Y - The alternative to this policy is to promote a dispersed growth option, utilising sites already designated for development in existing local plans covering the area. This is unlikely to ensure that opportunities to utilise the spare infrastructure capacity or meet housing need and demand in the village.
23	N – This policy supports the development of a site recognised as nationally important. The Nigg Masterplan sets out alternatives and these are recognised by the plan. The Council do not see there being an alternative to the development of this site for the aforementioned reasons.
24	N – This policy supports the ongoing de-commissioning of Dounreay and it is not believed that a reasonable alternative to this policy is available given the strategic nature of the operations on this site.
25	N – Given the need for regeneration and the need to ensure weight is given to the John O' Groats masterplan in the decision making process it is not considered that there is an alternative to this policy.
26	Y – This policy could be taken out and covered by the Masterplanned Proposals in Caithness Policy. This would mean that this significant proposal may be judged to be contrary to the Development Plan if it is brought forward as a planning application. While consideration of the planning application would be treated the same, The Council believe that it is important to recognise the progress made to date on development of this proposal.
27	N – Given that the Caithness Local Plan is becoming out of date it is necessary to make provisions for comprehensively planned new development in the area to meet the housing need and demand in the area. As this policy is not site specific it ensures comprehensively planned developments can be balanced across the area to ensure localised needs are met.
28	Y – The alternative is to not have a policy on sustainable design and simply rely on linkages to other policies within the plan which have a sustainable design element. This may have a detrimental impact on the quality of development in Highland as some issues may not be covered.
29	Y – the alternative is to not have a policy but rely on national policy on design in the form of Designing Places.
30	N – This policy creates a linkage to physical constraints supplementary guidance which will include a comprehensive list of all physical constraints in Highland. Without this it may be more difficult for the community, development industry, agencies and the local authority to recognise and interpret physical constraints when determining a planning application.
31	N – This policy follows the approach set out at a national level and accompanied by the supporting text offers a local interpretation of the national planning policy. As the policy follows national policy it is not believed that a departure from national policy would be a reasonable alternative.
32	N – There is a need to deliver affordable housing across Highland and address a backlog of need. It is not considered that any reasonable alternative to this policy could do this without inhibiting the housing market.
33	N – This policy reflects local circumstance of national policy on the issue of HMO, therefore it would not be reasonable to have an alternative to this policy which may conflict with national guidance on the issue. The supplementary guidance which accompanies this policy, containing the same provisions as this policy, has been

	determined to not require an SEA.
34	N – It is national policy to direct growth towards existing settlements. This policy does that and offers the opportunity to ensure other policies of the plan are fully considered.
35	Y – An alternative would be to have a single tier approach to housing in the Countryside. This would also be an alternative to policy 37.
36	Y – An alternative would be to have a single tier approach to housing in the Countryside. This would also be an alternative to policy 36.
37	N – It is not considered that there is an alternative to this policy as housing needs to be identified for an ageing population in the short, medium and long term and without this policy as it sets the context for its consideration at a local development plan stage.
38	Y – It is not considered that there would be a reasonable alternative to this policy. The only alternative would be to not have a policy however this may result in any new settlement brought forward between local development plan reviews not being fully assessed against housing need and demand, relying solely on other policies of the plan. This would leave the Council in a position where it may need to delay development until the local development plan is produced as an appropriate policy is in place to assess proposals for new settlements.
39	N – It is not considered that there is an alternative to this policy as it reflects national policy/guidance and it would not be reasonable to identify an alternative contrary to national policy/guidance.
40	N – It is not considered that there is an alternative to this policy as it reflects national policy/guidance and it would not be reasonable to identify an alternative contrary to national policy/guidance.
41	Y – It is not considered there is an alternative to this policy as it offers a flexible approach to development of business and industry land to facilitate economic growth of Highland, while ensuring development is existing areas of business and industrial land. It is not considered an alternative approach would offer the level of flexibility required for business and industry in Highland.
42	N – It is not considered that there is an alternative to this policy as it reflects national policy/guidance and it would not be reasonable to identify an alternative contrary to national policy/guidance.
43	N – It is not considered that there is an alternative to this policy as it seeks to grow the tourist industry in Highland while ensuring appropriate provisions are made to encourage improvements to existing facilities and the protection of the reasons why the area is so attractive to tourists.
44	Y – An alternative to this policy would be to not have a policy and any proposal for new tourist accommodation would be assessed against other policies of the plan.
45	N – It is not considered that there is an alternative to this policy as the support for development of communications infrastructure is required to ensure the economic and social wellbeing of the Highlands.
46	N – It is not considered that there is an alternative to this policy as it reflects national policy/guidance and it would not be reasonable to identify an alternative contrary to national policy/guidance.
47	Y - No further development on inbye land is the most effective approach for preserving the best croft land. However, particularly outwith our Hinterland of Towns where development prospects are marginal, and large estates control a large percentage of the land, this could have a negative impact on effective land supply.
48	Y - Proposals must always come through and be considered as part of an Area Local Development Plan review or not consider proposals within the Hinterlands of Towns (pressured areas for housing). This provides scope within the more fragile areas, but would not support new entrants within the Hinterland of Towns
49	N – It is considered that there is no reasonable alternative to this policy as it ensures appropriate levels of development can occur in coastal areas as long as it does not adversely affect other interests such as conservation or amenity value.
50	N – The approach in the policy ensures the growth of the aquaculture industry in Highland while seeking to avoid adverse impact on the natural, built and cultural

	heritage.
51	N – It is considered that there is no reasonable alternative to this policy as it supports the protection of existing hedges, trees and woodlands and where necessary seeks mitigation.
52	Y – The alternative to this policy is to not include it in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan but to rely on other policies of the plan. This may not lead to clarity in position offered by this policy.
53	Y – This policy could be augmented to include provision to identify new mineral extraction areas in area local development plans.
54	N – It is not considered that there is a reasonable alternative to this approach as mineral waste needs to be addressed at an early stage in a proposal and this policy ensures it is a key consideration in the decision making process.
55	N – It not considered that there is a reasonable alternative to this policy as it is necessary to avoid unnecessary disturbance, degradation or erosion of peats and soils and set out the Council's position on commercial peat extraction.
56	N – It is not considered that there is a reasonable alternative to this policy as it addresses the most significant travel related issues to facilitate a modal shift towards more sustainable transport methods.
57	N – This policy comprehensively addresses the protection and enhancement of the natural, built and cultural heritage features present in Highland, therefore it is not considered that there is a reasonable alternative to this policy.
58	Y – Creation of a single tier approach to protection of habitats and species.
59	Y – Creation of a single tier approach to protection of habitats and species.
60	Y – Creation of a single tier approach to protection of habitats and species.
61	N – It is not considered that there is a reasonable alternative to this approach as it seeks to ensure developments are related to the landscape and consider potential cumulative impacts. Any alternative would not offer any additional benefit.
62	N - This policy seeks to promote measures which protect and enhance important geodiversity features which are not part of an existing designation and encourage improved access and interpretation of such features. It is considered that any alternative approach would not offer any additional benefit.
63	Y – Creation of a single comprehensive water environment policy addressing all of the water environment related issues such as SuDS, Flooding, Waste Water Treatment.
64	Y – Creation of a single comprehensive water environment policy addressing all of the water environment related issues such as SuDS, Flooding, Waste Water Treatment.
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66	Y – Creation of a single comprehensive water environment policy addressing all of the water environment related issues such as SuDS, Flooding, Waste Water Treatment.
67	N – This policy sets out a comprehensive approach to the issues related to renewable energy developments and aims to mitigate potential adverse affects including cumulatively. An alternative of having separate policies for each type of renewable development would lead to repetition of policy and therefore is not considered an alternative.
68	Y – As an alternative community renewable energy developments could be assessed the same as commercial renewable energy developments.
69	N – In order to encourage sustainable growth of the renewable energy sector in Highland it needs to be supported by appropriate transmission infrastructure. The policy sets out alternatives and directs proposals to the most appropriate approach for the surrounding area.
70	N – This policy ensures a strategic view is taken on the future of waste management in Highland. Any alternative to this policy may not facilitate the achievement of this strategic vision.
71	N – This policy ensures a strategic view is taken on the future of waste

	management in Highland. Any alternative to this policy may not facilitate the achievement of this strategic vision.
72	Y – This policy could not be included in the plan and the regulatory role of SEPA could be relied on to address the issues. This may mean that issues are not addressed at an early stage in the planning process.
73	Y – This policy could not be included in the plan and the regulatory role of SEPA could be relied on to address the issues. This may mean that issues are not addressed at an early stage in the planning process.
74	Y – This policy could encompass all elements of the green network in a single policy approach. This would offer a consolidated approach but not offer comprehensive detail on each element of the network.
75	Y – This policy could encompass all elements of the green network in a single policy approach. This would offer a consolidated approach but not offer comprehensive detail on each element of the network.
76	Y – This policy could encompass all elements of the green network in a single policy approach. This would offer a consolidated approach but not offer comprehensive detail on each element of the network.
77	Y – This policy could encompass all elements of the green network in a single policy approach. This would offer a consolidated approach but not offer comprehensive detail on each element of the network.
78	Y – This policy could encompass all elements of the green network in a single policy approach. This would offer a consolidated approach but not offer comprehensive detail on each element of the network.

Assessment Methodology

The reasonable alternatives described above have been assessed against the range of environmental issues set out in Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Comments from the Consultation Authorities (SNH, SEPA and The Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland)) have been taken into account regarding the methods, scope and level of detail as part of the work to produce the Environmental Report which accompanied the Main Issues Report of August 2009.

Assessment of Vision/Spatial Strategy/Policy

As described in the scoping report for the Highland-wide Local Development Plan we will be using an assessment matrix for the assessment of the policy options. This has been adjusted following comment from the consultation authorities both at the Scoping Report stage and the during the SEA Workshop held on the 2nd June 2009.

Following comments from Consultation Authorities and members of the public we have further refined our assessment methodology following the Environmental Report and incorporated these into this Finalised Environmental Report, to ensure a clearer path to the final decision on the policy approach which can be found in the proposed plan. The two major revisions are:

- Inclusion of an additional SEA objective
- Inclusion of a +/- score where it is likely that there may be positive and negative affects on the SEA objective.

Minor amendments have also been made to the considerations for each SEA objective to ensure that a more balanced score for each SEA objective can be apportioned.

Assumptions may be made when assessing each of the vision/strategy/policy and alternatives and these will be identified and recorded through the matrix again to make it clearer how the assessment has been carried out and the reasoning behind the final scores.

While the consideration of a number of questions/issues will be undertaken as part of the assessment and a score will be attributable to each of the sections of the matrices.

Assessment of Spatial Strategy Sites

In addition we will be assessing specific site allocations, which have been allocated to contribute to the vision and spatial strategy of this Local Development Plan. While all sites allocated in the Local Development Plan have been assessed we have also identified reasonable alternatives to these. These have mainly been born out of submissions to the Main Issues Report and where sufficient information has been submitted (i.e. red line boundary of the site) an assessment of these reasonable alternatives has been carried out using the same matrix based approach.

Given previous experience of Strategic Environmental Assessment and following discussion with the consultation authorities we have adjusted our template to have a greater emphasis on the justification for our assessment score to ensure we can describe our reasoning for our assessment more clearly and in a more robust manner.

Mitigation opportunities will not be identified in the matrices but in a separate section of this Environmental Report. This will again be done topic by topic where it is related to a policy or in the form of developer requirements identified through the SEA assessment.

Through carrying out assessments of policy/vision/strategy at the Main Issues Report stage it has been possible to change the policy/vision/strategy to either have less of a

negative affect on the environment or a more positive affect on the environment. Also by using this approach it is easier to track how the mitigation measures have been integrated into the proposed plan when that stage of plan preparation is reached.

The matrices can be found in Appendix 4 (Vision/Strategy/Policy) and Appendix 5 (Proposed Site Allocations).

Results of the Assessment

In order to provide a more conclusive Finalised Environmental Report this section of the report will contain an interpretation of the results of the assessments. The section will be broken down into the following three areas:

- Spatial Strategy;
- Policy Approaches; and
- Strategic Site Allocations.

In doing this we hope to make it clear why decisions have been made on particular topics. This information is drawn from Appendix 4 and the commentary for each assessment which has been carried out.

Vision

Highland wide Vision

This was assessed as part of the SEA for The Highland Council's Corporate Plan which is available online.

Caithness and Sutherland Vision

The vision sets out a comprehensive approach to ensuring the heritage of the area is safeguarded and, while not a consideration of SEA, demonstrates how economic growth of the area can be brought forward ensuring limited impact on the environment. It is anticipated that the vision would have little/no negative impacts on the environment but have significant positive effects in especially in terms of SEA Objectives 1 and 13. While this is the case it is important to note that the vision can not be delivered and considered in isolation. Careful consideration of all policies within the Highland-wide Local Development Plan should be taken when assessing proposals which relate to the vision for the area.

West Highland and Islands Vision

The vision sets out a comprehensive approach to ensuring the heritage of the area is safeguarded, provides opportunities for improving human health and, while not a consideration of SEA, demonstrates how economic growth of the area can be brought forward ensuring limited impact on the environment. It is anticipated that the vision would have little/no negative impacts on the environment but have significant positive effects in especially in terms of SEA Objectives 1 and 13. While this is the case it is important to note that the vision can not be delivered and considered in isolation. Careful consideration of all policies within the Highland-wide Local Development Plan should be taken when assessing proposals which relate to the vision for the area.

Inner Moray Firth Vision

The vision sets out a comprehensive approach to ensuring the heritage of the area is safeguarded and, while not a consideration of SEA, demonstrates how economic growth of the area can be brought forward ensuring limited impact on the environment. It is anticipated that the vision would have little/no negative impacts on the environment but have significant positive effects in especially in terms of SEA Objectives 2, 4 and 14. While this is the case it is important to note that the vision can not be delivered and considered in isolation. Careful consideration of all policies within the Highland-wide Local Development Plan should be taken when assessing proposals which relate to the vision for the area.

Spatial Strategy

Policy 1

The policy sets out an approach which will ensure the development of a compact city recognising its natural boundaries, and facilitating the delivery of infrastructure which would help enhance the green network, reduce the need to travel, enhance public open space, paths and trails. It is anticipated that the vision would have little/no negative impacts on the environment but have significant positive effects in terms of SEA Objective 2 in the longer term.

A site specific SEA Assessment will be carried out for the sites identified as city expansion sites and these will be included in the relevant appendix of this Finalised Environmental Report.

While this is the case it is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation. Careful consideration of all policies within the Highland-wide Local Development Plan should be taken when assessing proposals which relate to the development of the city expansion sites.

Policy 2

The policy sets out support for proposals inline with the strategy set out in the Inverness City Vision. This document has been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and it was determined that an SEA was not required. The Determination Notice was published on the 19th June 2009. While this is the case it is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation. In addition any proposal which delivers development in line with the strategy set out in the Inverness City Vision will also need to meet the requirements of the relevant policies in this plan and the Inverness Local Plan.

Policy 3

The policy sets out support for development within the boundaries of Inverness City Centre. It is anticipated that this policy will have a significantly positive impact on SEA Objectives 7 and 14. It is anticipated that there would be no or limited negative impacts of this policy. Where approaches are anticipated to have a slight positive impact it is likely that a significantly positive affects will be achieved through the use of this policy in conjunction with other appropriate policies of this plan and the Inverness Local Plan. While this is the case it is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 4

The policy sets out support for development within the Longman Core area of the City. It is anticipated that this policy will have a significantly positive impact on SEA Objectives 7 and 14 in light of the site being close to the City Centre and comprise of much previously land. It is anticipated that there would be no or limited negative impacts of this policy. Where approaches are anticipated to have a slight positive impact it is likely that a significantly positive affects will be achieved through the use of this policy in conjunction with other appropriate policies of this plan and the Inverness Local Plan. While this is the case it is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 5

The policy sets out support for development within the Longman Core area of the City. It is anticipated that this policy will have a significantly positive affect on SEA Objectives 5, 7, and 8. This is in the light of the potential for significant provision of open space on the site in the longer term related to other uses, significant re-use of one of Inverness' largest areas of previously used land and as the policy is promoting the use of the site for uses including energy from waste plant it is likely to have a significant impact in the longer term on minimisation of waste going to landfill. In addition as the site is relatively close to the city centre linkages could be made to encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel. Where approaches are anticipated to have a slight positive impact it is likely that a significantly positive affects will be achieved through the use of this policy in conjunction with other appropriate policies of this plan and the Inverness

Local Plan this would include on SEA objective 2, 6, and 13. While this is the case it is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 6

The policy sets out support for development within the Muirtown and South Kessock area of the City. It is anticipated that this policy will have a significantly positive affect on SEA Objectives 7 and 14 given the significant use of large vacant sites and smaller scale use of previously used land and proximity to the city centre. Where approaches are anticipated to have a slight positive impact it is likely that a significantly positive affects will be achieved through the use of this policy in conjunction with other appropriate policies of this plan and the Inverness Local Plan this would include on SEA objective 4 and 11 given the potential renewable of the area improving the social wellbeing of the area and improvements to infrastructure reducing the potential issues related to poor air quality related to traffic congestion. While this is the case it is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 7

The policy sets out support for re-development within the Raigmore and Inshes areas of the City. It is anticipated that this policy will have a significantly positive affect on SEA Objectives 7 given the cumulative affect of small scale regeneration of previously used land. Where approaches are anticipated to have a slight positive impact it is likely that a significantly positive affects will be achieved through the use of this policy in conjunction with other appropriate policies of this plan and the Inverness Local Plan this would include on SEA objective 4 and 14 given the potential renewable of the area improving the social wellbeing of the area and proximity to the city centre and major employments. While this is the case it is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 8

The policy sets out support for development of the remaining city expansion areas as allocated in the Inverness Local Plan. While it is not anticipated that this policy will have any significantly positive or negative affects on the SEA objective it is considered that some of the less significant positive affects may become significantly positive affects through the use of this policy in conjunction with other appropriate policies of this plan and the Inverness Local Plan this would include the positive affects on SEA objective 4, 5 and 14. In addition this approach may have a slight negative affect on the uptake of previously used land. While this is the case it is not feasible to only identify brown field sites for development. Suitable phasing should be utilised to ensure that brown field sites have been considered before the use of greenfield sites. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 9

The policy sets out support for development of phased growth in the A96 Corridor subject to infrastructure improvements. It is anticipated that there will be a significantly positive affect on SEA objectives 2, 8 and 14 given that the policy requires the provision of interim infrastructure improvements which will pave the way for further improvements to be made to infrastructure such as the green network, waste management and transport in the medium to longer term. There are also a number of other less significant positive affects including on SEA objectives 5, 4,6,9 and 10. These may become more significant in the longer term if considered cumulatively with other policies of the plan. It is anticipated that there may be a slight negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the use of brownfield land is not being directly promoted but given that development is likely to be phased over longer periods it is unlikely to have a significant impact as renewal of the area may occur over time. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 10

This policy seeks a land allocation at Beechwood for the development of a campus and campus related uses. It is not anticipated that there will be any significantly positive or negative affects

arising from this proposal however a number of SEA objectives may be positively affected including objective 2, 5, 6, and 14. It is anticipated that there may be a significantly positive affect when cumulative affects of other policies are taken into consideration. It is anticipated that there will be a negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the policy seeks development of greenfield land, this needs to be balanced against the need for a site for this type of use for sustainable economic growth which we understand is not a matter for SEA but a wider matter for consideration in the planning process. Appropriate mitigation will be identified through the site SEA assessment. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 11

This policy seeks a land allocation at Inverness Retail and Business Park for bulk goods retail. It is not anticipated that there will be any significantly positive or negative affects arising from this proposal however a number of SEA objectives may be positively affected including objective 2, 6, and 14. It is anticipated that there may be a significantly positive affect when cumulative affects of other policies are taken into consideration. It is anticipated that there will be a negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the policy seeks development of greenfield land, this needs to be balanced against the need for a site for this type of use for sustainable economic growth which we understand is not a matter for SEA but a wider matter for consideration in the planning process. Appropriate mitigation will be identified through the site SEA assessment. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 12

This policy seeks a land allocation at Stratton for mixed use. It is anticipated that there will be significant positive affects on SEA objective 14 given the improvements to existing infrastructure to alleviate current issues and provision of new infrastructure to alleviate current issues and also prevent future transport infrastructure constraints related to the wider development of the area. A number of other SEA objectives may be positively affected including objectives 2, 5, 8 and 6. It is anticipated that there may be a significantly positive affect when cumulative affects of other policies are taken into consideration. It is anticipated that there will be a negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the policy seeks development of mainly greenfield land, this needs to be balanced against the need for a site for this type of use for sustainable economic growth and to meet housing need which we understand is not a matter for SEA but it is a wider matter for consideration in the planning process. Appropriate mitigation will be identified through the site SEA assessment and has been included as part of this policy. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 13

This policy seeks a land allocation at Tornagrain for mixed use. It is anticipated that there will be significant positive affects on SEA objective 14 given the improvements to existing infrastructure to alleviate current issues and provision of new infrastructure to alleviate current issues and also prevent future transport infrastructure constraints related to the wider development of the area. In terms of this specific proposal there will also be new employment opportunities, community facilities and other uses within the allocation leading to a walkable new settlement which should ensure a modal shift to more sustainable transport methods. A number of other SEA objectives may be positively affected including objectives 2, 4, 5, and 6. It is anticipated that there may be a significantly positive affect when cumulative affects of other policies are taken into consideration. It is anticipated that there will be a negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the policy seeks development of greenfield land, this needs to be balanced against the need for a site for this type of use for sustainable economic growth and to meet housing need which we understand is not a matter for SEA but it is a wider matter for consideration in the planning process. Appropriate mitigation will be identified through the site SEA assessment and has been included as part of this policy. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 14

This policy seeks a land allocation at Whiteness for mixed use. It is anticipated that there will be significant positive affects on SEA objective 14 given the improvements to existing infrastructure to alleviate current issues and provision of new infrastructure to alleviate current issues and also prevent future transport infrastructure constraints related to the wider development of the area. Also significant positive affects are anticipated on SEA objective 7 as there will be significant re-use of brownfield land as part of this allocation. A number of other SEA objectives may be positively affected including objectives 2, 5, and 6. It is anticipated that there may be a significantly positive affect when cumulative affects of other policies are taken into consideration. The policy aims to deliver sustainable economic growth and to meet housing need which we understand is not a matter for SEA but it is a wider matter for consideration in the planning process. Appropriate mitigation has been identified through the site SEA assessment and but has not been included as part of the policy as the site already has outline consent and the mitigation identified has been carried out or has been secured through condition. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 15

This policy supports the ongoing development of the land allocation at Lochloy for residential use. Given the site is largely built out or extant planning consent is in place with set conditions, it is not anticipated that this policy will have any significant impacts on the environment. The need to secure any additional mitigation has been assessed through the site SEA assessment and will be considered if a revised planning application is submitted following any lapse of the extant consent.

Policy 16

This policy seeks a land allocation at Sandown for mixed use. It is not anticipated that there will be any significant affects on the SEA objectives. A number of other SEA objectives may be positively affected including objectives 2, 5, 6, and 14. It is anticipated that there may be a significantly positive affect when cumulative affects of other policies are taken into consideration. It is anticipated that there will be a negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the policy seeks development of mainly greenfield land, this needs to be balanced against the need for a site for this type of use for sustainable economic growth and to meet housing need which we understand is not a matter for SEA but it is a wider matter for consideration in the planning process. Appropriate mitigation will be identified through the site SEA assessment and will be brought forward as part of any development brief for the site. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 17

This policy seeks a land allocation at Delnies for mixed use. It is not anticipated that there will be any significant affects on SEA objectives A number of other SEA objectives may be positively affected including objectives 2, 5, 6 and 14. It is anticipated that there may be a significantly positive affect when cumulative affects of other policies are taken into consideration. It is anticipated that there will be a negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the policy seeks development of greenfield land. The policy aims to deliver sustainable economic growth and to meet housing need which we understand is not a matter for SEA but it is a wider matter for consideration in the planning process. Appropriate mitigation has been identified through the site SEA assessment and has been included as part of the policy to ensure appropriate mitigation can be secured. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 18

This policy seeks a land allocation at Nairn South for mixed use. It is anticipated that there will be significant positive affect on SEA objective 14. This is due to the requirements for improved transport infrastructure which will alleviate existing traffic problems and prevent future traffic problems in the longer term. A number of other SEA objectives may be positively affected including objectives 2, 5, and 6. It is anticipated that there may be a significantly positive affect when cumulative affects of other policies are taken into consideration. . It is anticipated that

there will be a negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the policy seeks development of greenfield land. The policy aims to deliver sustainable economic growth and to meet housing need which we understand is not a matter for SEA but it is a wider matter for consideration in the planning process. Appropriate mitigation has been identified through the site SEA assessment and has been included as part of the policy to ensure appropriate mitigation can be secured. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 19

The policy sets out support for the re-allocation and early completion of expansion sites identified in the adopted plans subject to masterplanning. It is anticipated that there will be a significantly positive affect on SEA objectives 2, and 8 given that the policy requires the comprehensive masterplanning to address the community needs which will include contributions toward the green network and waste infrastructure which will facilitate in the minimisation of waste as in some of these smaller settlements these facilities do not already. There are also a number of other less significant positive affects including on SEA objectives 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 14. These may become more significant in the longer term if considered cumulatively with other policies of the plan. It is anticipated that there may be a slight negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the use of brownfield land is not being directly promoted but given that development is likely to be phased over longer periods. It is also important that growth happens in these smaller areas to balance the against the growth of the larger surrounding settlements to ensure they can continue to thrive. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 20

This policy seeks to allocate land for mixed use expansion of Croy. While it is not anticipated that there will be any significant environmental affects, there will be a number of environmental affects including on SEA objective 2, 5, 6 and 14. In the longer term and in use with other policies of this plan it is anticipated that these may become significantly positive affects. It is anticipated that there may be a slight negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the development is on greenfield land. While this is the case there are no opportunities for the growth of this settlement which could be accommodated on previously used land. An SEA site assessment has been carried out and mitigation identified through this has been included in the policy covering this allocation. Given the allocation is phased over a longer period it is not anticipated that there will be a significant negative affect. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Please note following examination of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan the original Policy 21 (Culloden Moor) was deleted. Therefore all of the policy numbers following this were renumbered.

Policy 21

This policy seeks to allocate land for mixed use expansion of Ardersier. While it is not anticipated that there will be any significant environmental affects, there will be a number of environmental affects including on SEA objective 2, 5, 6 and 14. In the longer term and in use with other policies of this plan it is anticipated that these may become significantly positive affects. It is anticipated that there may be a slight negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the development is on greenfield land. While this is the case there are no opportunities for the growth of this settlement which could be accommodated on previously used land. Given the allocation is phased over a longer period it is not anticipated that there will be a significant negative affect. An SEA site assessment has been carried out and mitigation identified through this has been included in the policy covering this allocation. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 22

This policy seeks to allocate land for mixed use masterplanned expansion of Cawdor. It is anticipated that there will be significant environmental affect on SEA objective 14. This is due to

significant improvements to the transport infrastructure (including sustainable transport infrastructure) in and around the settlement which will be required to be brought forward as mitigation for any development in this area, leading to localised significantly positive affects in the longer term. There will also be a number of lesser environmental affects including on SEA objective 2, 5 and 6. In the longer term and in use with other policies of this plan it is anticipated that these may become significantly positive affects. It is anticipated that there may be a slight negative affect on SEA objective 7 as the development is on greenfield land. While this is the case there are limited opportunities for the growth of this settlement which could be accommodated on previously used land, however it is anticipated that these will be utilised in the masterplanning of the proposal. Given the allocation is phased over a longer period it is not anticipated that there will be a significant negative affect. An SEA site assessment has been carried out and mitigation identified through this has been included in the policy covering this allocation. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 23

This policy seeks to allocate land to facilitate the delivery of the Nigg Masterplan (subject to a separate SEA process). It is anticipated that there will be significant positive affects on SEA objectives 7 and 14. This is due to the significant re-use of previously used land and the provision of a significant employment opportunity in the easter ross area reducing the need for travel longer distances for employment. It is anticipated that there will be lesser positive affects on objective 13 as well as the allocation has potential to provide a base for production for renewable energy infrastructure which may lead to a positive impact on the production of energy from renewable sources in the longer term. An SEA site assessment has been carried out but mitigation identified through this has not been included in the policy covering this allocation as it has been addressed through the Nigg Masterplan. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 24

This policy supports the ongoing decommissioning work at Dounraey, facilitated by a framework plan. It is not anticipated that this policy will have any significant environmental affects but is likely to have a positive affect on SEA objective 7, as brownfield land is being decommissioned and being potentially brought back for reuse and SEA objective 15, as part of the policy and the emerging update to the Dounraey Development Framework seeks to ensure the historic and cultural elements of the former nuclear site are retained. An SEA site assessment has been carried out and mitigation identified through this is addressed in detail in the Dounraey Development Framework. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 25

This policy supports the ongoing masterplanning work at John O'Groats, which has had contribution from the Council. It is not anticipated that this policy will have any significant environmental affects but is likely to have a positive affect on SEA objective 7, as brownfield land is being reused to facilitate the regeneration of place and SEA objective 15, as the masterplan will play a role in conserving the built and cultural heritage of the area given its status as a national destination. An SEA site assessment has been carried out and mitigation identified through this will be addressed in detail in the adopted version of the John O'Groats Masterplan. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation

Policy 26

This policy supports the ongoing masterplanning work at Castletown, which has had contribution from the Council. It is not anticipated that this policy will have any significant environmental affects but is likely to have a positive affect on a number of SEA objectives including 2 ,5, 6 and 14. It is anticipated that brownfield land will be redeveloped alongside greenfield land which ensures a significantly adverse affect on SEA objective 7 is avoided. An SEA site assessment has been carried out and mitigation identified through this will be a key consideration in

determining any planning application within this area. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 27

This policy seeks to support comprehensively masterplanned proposals in Caithness. This policy seeks to ensure sustainable growth can happen in this area given that the plan is significantly out of date and does not meet the needs of the area. It is likely that this policy will have a number of positive affects which when used in conjunction with other policies of this plan may have a significantly positive cumulative affect. This includes SEA objective 2, 5,6, 8, 9 and 10 where the policy seeks to ensure that through the masterplanning process improved infrastructure can be delivered to address local needs. It is anticipated that there may be both positive and negative affects on SEA objective 7 as it is unknown where the proposals will be and they may be brought forward on brownfield or greenfield land.

General Policies

Policy 28

This policy seeks to support proposals which promote and enhance the Highlands in terms of sustainable design. It is anticipated that the policy will have a significantly positive affect on SEA objective 12 given the range of different criteria proposals will be assessed against it will ensure that measures are included to reduce the vulnerability to climate change. There will also be a number of lesser positive affects of this policy including those on SEA objective 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. In isolation these affects may not be significant but in using this policy in conjunction with others in the plan and, where applicable, land allocations it is likely that there will be significantly positive affects in the longer term. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 29

This policy seeks to ensure proposals make a positive contribution to the creation of place. While it is not anticipated that this policy will have significantly positive affects, there will be a number of lesser positive affects of this policy including those on SEA objective 4, 5, 12, and 14. In isolation these affects may not be significant but in using this policy in conjunction with others in the plan and, where applicable, land allocations it is likely that there will be significantly positive affects in the longer term. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 30

This policy seeks to ensure proposals consider the physical constraints that may be present on a site. It is not anticipated that this policy will have a significantly positive or negative affect on any of the SEA objectives. However, there will be a number of lesser positive affects of this policy including those on SEA objective 4, 7 and 12. In isolation these affects may not be significant but in using this policy in conjunction with others in the plan and, where applicable, land allocations it is likely that there may be significantly positive affects in the longer term. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation. Further guidance on this policy will be provided in associated supplementary guidance.

Policy 31

This policy seeks to ensure proposals deliver developer contributions to address shortfalls in infrastructure where they may be appropriate. It is not anticipated that this policy will deliver an affect on any of the SEA objectives in isolation. However, when working in conjunction with other policies of this plan and supplementary guidance then a positive affect may become apparent. This will potentially facilitate delivery of improved infrastructure which may have a positive affect on a number of the SEA objectives which are related to infrastructure. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation. Further guidance on this policy will be provided in associated supplementary guidance.

Policy 32

This policy seeks to ensure the delivery of affordable housing to meet the projected affordable housing need and demand and also meet the backlog. It is not anticipated that this policy will have a significantly positive or negative affect on any of the SEA objectives. However, there will be a number of lesser positive affects of this policy including those on SEA objective 4. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation. Further guidance on this policy will be provided in associated supplementary guidance.

Policy 33

This policy seeks to ensure proposals for HMO are considered appropriately against the impact they may have on the amenity value of an area. While the policy is mainly defines when planning permission will be required its associated supplementary guidance looks in detail at the impact HMO may have on amenity of an area. Given the usual location of HMO it is considered that there may be a slight positive affect on SEA objective 14 as there will be reduced need to travel however it has been scored as mixed because HMO may locate in a number of locations and are not fixed next to settlement centres, or close to areas of study or major employers. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 34

This policy seeks to direct growth towards settlement areas in the first instance and works in conjunction with the housing in the countryside and wider countryside policies of the LDP. While there are a number of positive affects anticipated through this plan (including on SEA objectives, 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16 and 17), it is not anticipated that there will be any significant affects on any SEA objective. These lesser affects may become significantly positive when used in conjunction with other policies in the plan. It is important to note that this policy should not be read and considered in isolation.

Policy 35

This policy sets out the Councils presumption against housing in the open countryside in hinterland areas. While the policy encourages the reuse of traditional buildings or derelict land, it is inevitable that in the longer term there will be a loss of green field land due to a policy of this nature when there are no longer buildings or derelict land to reuse having an affect on SEA objective 7. It is also anticipated that there may be a negative affect on SEA objective 8 and 9 given the location of houses in the open countryside making it more difficult to deliver services and in turn this may have an impact on these SEA objectives. Also given the location of houses in the open countryside there will be a need to travel by private transport and a modal shift to private transport will not be facilitated by this policy having a detrimental affect on SEA objective 14. While there will be negative affects because of this policy it is necessary to have a policy such as this to ensure that more significant environmental affects are not felt where housing is proposed in open countryside of the hinterland around towns.

Policy 36

This policy sets out the Council's criteria for assessing application in the wider countryside (outwith the hinterland). It is inevitable that in the short, medium and longer term there will be a loss of green field land due to a policy of this nature as there are limited opportunities to deliver housing on previously used land in the wider countryside. It is also anticipated that there may be a negative affect on SEA objective 8 and 9 given the location of houses in the open countryside making it more difficult to deliver services and in turn this may have an impact on these SEA objectives. Also given the location of houses in the open countryside there will be a need to travel by private transport and a modal shift to private transport will not be facilitated by this policy having a detrimental affect on SEA objective 14, this has not been marked significantly negative as through the protection of community facilities in fragile areas it offers the opportunity to ensure the need to travel is not increased. While there will be negative affects because of this policy it is necessary to have a policy such as this to ensure that more significant environmental affects are not felt where housing is proposed in the wider countryside. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 37

This policy sets out the Council's approach to housing for an ageing population. It is anticipated that there will be positive affects on SEA objectives 4 and 14 given the balance it brings to the social wellbeing of a community and the reduced need to travel as it encourages the development of facilities for an ageing population to be located close to appropriate amenities. Through use of this policy in conjunction with other policies it is anticipated that these positive affects may become significant in the longer term. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 38

This policy sets out the Council's preferred approach to dealing with proposals for new settlements. While the policy is anticipated to have a positive affect on SEA objectives 9 and 14 due to the improved infrastructure these proposals will bring it is not anticipated that there would be any significant affects. As most new settlements will be located on greenfield sites it is anticipated that there will be a negative affect on this SEA objective but there may be some instances where previously used land will be utilised in the development of a new settlement. It is necessary to have a policy such as this as it ensures an appropriate framework for assessing proposals for new settlements is in place to ensure it can be assessed outwith the LDP process, if appropriate. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 39

This policy sets out the Council's approach to identifying new sites and also how an application will be assessed. It is anticipated that there will be a positive affect on SEA objective 4 but there will not be any significant positive affects of this policy. This policy has been included in the plan to meet the needs of the gypsy/traveller community in Highland and facilitate social inclusion. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 40

This policy sets out the Council's approach to new retail development. It is anticipated that the policy will have a positive affect on SEA objectives 4, 7, 9 and 14. This is mainly due to the policy directing new retail developments towards settlement centres. It is considered that if development continues to be directed toward settlement centres that a significant affect may be felt on these SEA objectives, especially 4 and 14 in the longer term. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 41

This policy sets out the Council's approach to assessing proposals for new business and industry. While no significant affects are anticipated from this policy there is a number of lesser affects of this policy including on SEA objectives 9 and 14 where it is anticipated there will be a positive affect given the policy directs new business and industry proposals to existing sites of these uses. It is anticipated that there may be a mixed affects on SEA objective 7 as it directs growth to existing sites before looking at other areas, but it also recognises that the locational needs of emerging industries are unknown and it is likely that these uses may not be able to utilise these existing sites. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation. It is considered that a policy such as this is needed to enable a flexible approach to facilitate growth while recognising the impact on the environment, which is covered in more detail by other policies of this plan.

Policy 42

This policy sets out the Council's approach to development of previously used land. Given that the policy actively encourages the re-use of previously used land it is anticipated that there will be a significantly positive affect on SEA objective 7. It is also anticipated that there will be lesser positive affects on SEA objective 4 given the need for suitable site investigations to be undertaken to establish level of contamination to avoid any adverse impact on human health. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to try and reduce the amount of under utilised

previously used land in highland but also to ensure the appropriate issues are considered when an application is being assessed.

Policy 43

This proposals sets out how the Council will assess proposals for new tourist facilities. It is anticipated that there will be positive affects on a number of SEA objectives including 3, 6, 9, 14 and 15. The positive affects on 3, 6, 15 are due to the policy assessing proposals against improvement in access to/interpretation of natural/built/cultural heritage. Where as the improvements to infrastructure which will be required for new facilities may lead to a positive affect on SEA objective 9, and encouraging proposals towards location of existing facilities should reduce the need to travel which may have a positive affect on SEA objective 14. It is considered necessary to have a policy such as this to facilitate growth in the tourist industry in Highland while ensuring better access to and understanding of the heritage of the area can be gained by both visitors to the area and those living in the area.

Policy 44

This policy seeks to support proposals for new tourist accommodation in a hierarchy based approach based upon locations with stricter controls out with the settlement boundaries. This should ensure no adverse impacts on the SEA objectives but this can only be achieved where it is used in conjunction with other policies of this LDP. It is necessary to have a policy such as this as it ensures that tourist accommodation does not have any adverse impacts on the area (including on housing land supply) while also supporting the growth of the tourist industry.

Policy 45

This policy supports proposals which may improve the electronic communications network in Highland. Through doing this it is anticipated that the policy will have a significantly positive affect on SEA objective 14 in the long term as it will lead to indirect impacts such as improved opportunity for home working, reducing the need to travel to places of employment. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to ensure the socio-economic potential of the Highland area can be realised in the longer term, it is recognised that this is not an SEA consideration but it is a wider planning consideration.

Policy 46

This policy reflect national guidance on the siting and design of communications infrastructure such as mobile phone masts. It is anticipated that there will be a neutral affect on SEA objective 16 and 17 as the policy ensures that the siting and design of communications infrastructure does not have an adverse impact on the landscape/townscape character. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to avoid adverse impacts of this necessary infrastructure on the landscape and wider amenity of an area.

Policy 47

This policy seeks to minimise the loss of in-bye/apportioned croft land. The main negative affect is on SEA objective 7, although it is considered that there may be a negative impact on SEA objective 14 also. This is due to the potential loss of soil function however it is considered that overall the environmental impacts of being able to consider inbye land (including that on SEA objective 1, 6, 15, 16 and 17) if necessary outweighs this negative. The SEA of these options is crucial to deciding on the correct approach to development on in-bye land however consideration has also been given to the needs of the community alongside the need to protect crofting.

Policy 48

This policy sets out the Council's approach to assessing proposals for new crofting townships. It is anticipated that there will be a number of positive affects including on SEA objective 1, 3, 4, 7 and 17. It is also anticipated that there will be a significantly positive affect on SEA objective 16 as this policy promoting a traditional land use which is key to the character of the Highland area and is likely to continue to help define the landscape in the area. The lesser positive affects may

become significant in the longer term if applied in conjunction with the appropriate other policies of this LDP. It is necessary to have a policy framework to assess proposals such as these as they can help to preserve the heritage of an area (both natural and cultural) while also providing opportunities for economic growth and diversification in more rural areas.

Policy 49

The policy seeks to support coastal development where mitigation has been put in place to avoid adverse impacts. This policy relates to both the landward and seaward elements of development. It is anticipated that there will be a number of positive affects on a number of SEA objectives including 1, 7, 12, 13, 16 and 18 which cumulatively may lead to a more significant positive affect in the longer term. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation and specific reference should be made to policy 58 and policy 37.

Policy 50

This policy sets out the Council's support for the sustainable development of aquaculture subject to criteria. It is anticipated that there may be a number of positive affects, including on SEA objectives 6, 16 and 17 however no significantly positive affects have been identified. It is anticipated that there will also be some mixed affects on the SEA objectives, for example SEA objective 9. In this instance it is because of the potential impact there may be on the water environment through aquaculture related activities but the policy gives opportunity to mitigate these through the criteria set out in this policy.

Policy 51

The policy seeks to promote the protection of existing trees, hedges and woodland. It is anticipated that there will be significantly positive affects on SEA objective 2 as it woodlands etc from key elements of the green network allowing for species movement and offers opportunity to avoid fragmentation of these. It is also anticipated that there may be a lesser positive affect on SEA objective 16 as woodlands etc help to define the local landscape. It is necessary to have such a policy as not all trees and woodland are protected through designations which are considered through other policies of this plan as there is not a statutory designation to allow this.

Policy 52

This policy sets out the Council's approach to development in woodland. It is anticipated that this policy will have a positive affect on a number of SEA objectives including 1, 2, 13, and 16, however it is also recognised that this policy may have mixed affects on SEA objectives 3 (allowing access to woodland but also may lead to disturbance of habitats) and 9 (limited opportunity to connect to public water and waste water systems – but private systems may be sufficient) for very different reasons. This policy should be read in conjunction with policy 52 and the other appropriate policies of the plan and should not be read in isolation. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 53

This policy sets out the Council's approach to minerals development. It is anticipated that the policy will have a positive affect on SEA objectives 1 and 7 given that the policy seeks to protect geodiversity when mineral proposals are brought forward. It is anticipated that there will be significantly positive affects on SEA objective 16 in the long term, as despite minerals developments having a detrimental impact on the local landscape in the time when the extraction is live, once the workings have finished the policy requires the proposals to be brought forward with and subsequently implemented restoration plans which can have significantly positive affects on the local landscape in the longer term. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to make clear the council's approach to mineral extraction and also to set down what types of minerals development will be acceptable.

Policy 54

This policy sets out the Council's proactive approach to mineral wastes. It is anticipated that this policy will have a significant positive impact on SEA objective 8 as it actively encourages the use

of the waste hierarchy in dealing with mineral wastes and requires a waste management plan to be submitted and approved as part of any planning application related to mineral development. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to ensure a legacy of mineral waste does not have a detrimental impact on the landscape and wider environmental interests in the longer term. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 55

This policy sets out how developments should demonstrate unnecessary disturbance, degradation or erosion of peats and soils. It is anticipated that there will be a significantly positive affect on SEA objective 7 as it directly addresses this SEA objective ensuring that soil and peat functions are not adversely affected and further commercial extraction of peat does not occur except in exceptional circumstances. It is necessary to have a policy such as this given the long time it takes for peats and soils to be restored.

Policy 56

This policy comprehensively addresses travel issues related to development and encourages a modal shift towards sustainable transport. It is anticipated that there will be a positive affect on SEA objective 2 (given the promotion of walking and cycling routes which form a key part of the green network) and SEA objective 11 (improvement to infrastructure and a modal shift will in time improve air quality). Significant positive affects are anticipated on SEA objective 14 given the comprehensive approach the policy takes to the general reduction in travel and promotion of a modal shift to sustainable transport. It is essential to have a policy such as this to ensure sustainable travel is fully considered when assessing an application but also to ensure appropriate consideration is given to the Local Transport Strategy.

Policy 57

This policy sets out the Council's comprehensive approach to the protection and enhancement of the outstanding natural, built and cultural heritage of the area. It is anticipated that there will be significant positive affects on SEA objectives 1, 15, 16, 17 and 18 due to the protection given to features which make a contribution to these SEA objectives. It is also anticipated that there will be lesser positive affects on SEA objectives 2 and 3 given that the features protected and enhanced through this policy make contributions towards these SEA objectives indirectly. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to ensure the natural, built and cultural heritage of the Highlands is protected in planning policy terms as well as in a statutory basis. Through having a policy such as this it also makes it easier to interpret the constraint different features may have on development. It should be noted that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 58

This policy sets out how the Council will deal with proposals which may affect protected species. It is anticipated that there may be significantly positive affect on SEA objective 1 as the policy seeks to maintain and enhance valuable protected species through a criteria based policy approach. It is also anticipated that there may be an indirect positive affect on SEA objective 3 given the protection of these species will continue to ensure that there will be opportunity to come into contact and understand these species in the Highland area. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to make it clear when proposals affecting protected species may be need mitigation or in some cases may not be permitted at all. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 59

This policy sets out how proposals for other important species, which are not protected, will be considered. It is anticipated that there would be a positive affect on SEA objective 1 as it seeks to maintain and enhance important species as defined in EC directive and biodiversity action plans. It is also anticipated that there will be a positive affect on SEA objective 3. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 60

This policy sets out how proposals for other important habitats, which are not protected, will be considered. It is anticipated that there would be a positive affect on SEA objective 1 as it seeks to maintain and enhance important species as defined in EC directive and biodiversity action plans. It is also anticipated that there will be a positive affect on SEA objective 3 and 17. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 61

This policy sets out how proposals should relate to the landscape and its characteristics. It is anticipated that there will be significantly positive affects on the two landscape related SEA objectives 16 and 17. Through having a policy such as this it should ensure that proposals appropriately consider their surroundings and when used in conjunction with other policies of the plan such as policy 29 (sustainable design) and policy 30 (design quality and place making) there should be further benefits from this policy especially in relation to larger developments out with urban areas.

Policy 62

This policy sets out the council's approach to geodiversity. It is anticipated that there will be positive affects on SEA objective 1 and 7 with significantly positive affects on SEA objective 3 as through the policy geodiversity is afforded a level of protection and will be a key consideration in the determination of applications thus ensuring it is accessible for future generations to gain a better understanding of its importance to their local area. It is necessary to have such a policy as to ensure protection is afforded to sites which may be rich in geodiversity but not covered by any statutory designations such as SSSI and ensure that the geodiversity of an area can be better understood as to ensure future generation may act as custodians of it. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation.

Policy 63

This policy sets out the Council's high level approach to ensuring protection and enhancement of the water environment with other policies going into detail on particular issues. It is anticipated that the policy will have a significantly positive affect on SEA objective 9 by ensuring that when assessing proposals there will be appropriate consideration of all of the relevant issues covered in the local RBMP. This will ensure that the main provision of the RBMP to avoid degrading of water body quality. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to set out how the council will use RBMP to put a localised context to the implementation of the water framework directive, however this policy can not be applied in isolation and must consider other water environment policies including policies, 65, 66 and 67.

Policy 64

This policy sets out the council's approach to dealing with proposals which may potentially be at risk from flooding. This approach is inline with national policy on the issue. It is anticipated that there would be a positive affect on SEA objective 9 given the general improvement to the water environment. Most significant positive affects will be on SEA objective 10 (due to the policy requiring appropriate mitigation to be identified and implemented) and 12 (as consideration will be given to flood risk to lower the vulnerability to climate change). It is important to note that the most significant affects of this policy will only be achieved if read and applied in conjunction with other policies of this plan especially policy 66 and 67.

Policy 65

This policy sets out how that the Council, in partnership with SEPA, will seek that all new developments connect to the public sewer in the first instance and then how proposals will be considered that are unable to do this. It is anticipated that the policy will have a positive affect on SEA objective 4 given the avoidance of potential adverse impact on public health. The policy is likely to have a significantly positive affect on SEA objective 9 by ensuring new developments are supported by appropriate drainage infrastructure avoiding negative affects on the water environment.

Policy 66

This policy sets out the Council's requirement for all proposed developments to be drained by SuDS. It is anticipated that this policy will have a positive affect on SEA objective 9 due to the avoidance of adverse impacts on the water environment. Significant affects are likely on SEA objective 10 due to the benefits of SuDS in new developments on maintaining run-of within carrying capacity. Significant affects are also anticipated on SEA objective 12 as the inclusion of SuDS in new developments will ensure that the vulnerability to the risks of climate change, in this case flooding, can be reduced through appropriate mitigation being built into new developments from the outset.

Policy 67

This policy sets out the Council's approach to renewable energy developments and sets out a series of considerations for renewable energy proposals. Given this series of considerations is set out clearly in the policy it is envisaged that there will overall be a number of positive affects on SEA objectives 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 15 and 16. It is also considered that there may be significantly positive affects of this approach including on SEA objective 13 as this proposal should provide opportunity to significantly increase the proportion of energy from renewable sources. It is also anticipated that this policy should have a significantly positive affect on SEA objective 17 by ensuing that proposals consider the visual impact of their proposal and cumulative impact of other proposals while also respecting the scale and character of the wider area. While this policy is anticipated to have a number of positive affects there may still be localised detrimental impacts of individual proposals, this policy however ensures that these are considered at the planning application stage. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applies in isolation.

Policy 68

The policy sets out how the council will assess proposals for community renewable energy developments. As this policy does not differ from the approach which will be taken for commercial proposals there is little/no variation in the outcomes of the assessment, with positive affects anticipated for SEA objectives 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 15, 16 and significantly positive affects likely on SEA objective 13 and 17. This policy should not be read or applied in isolation and special consideration should be given to Policy 68 given the clear linkage to that policy.

Policy 69

This policy sets out the Council's support for electricity transmission infrastructure and how they can be suitably located in relation to specific circumstances. It is anticipated that there will be positive affects on SEA objectives 1 due to the policy seeking additional mitigation in sensitive areas, and SEA objectives 16 and 17 as the policy addresses how landscape impact of infrastructure can be mitigated. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation. It is necessary to have a policy such as this as it needs to be clear that there is impacts of infrastructure related to energy developments and these should be assessed as rigorously as the proposal for the energy development itself.

Policy 70

This policy seeks to ensure a fit for purpose network of waste management facilities can be created in Highland. It is anticipated that there will be positive affects on SEA objective 4 (due to policy requiring waste management proposals being assessed against impact on public health) and SEA objective 13 (as the policy has the potential to deliver waste management facilities which can act as a sustainable source of heat/power). It is anticipated that this policy will have a direct and significant affect on SEA objective 8 as it seeks to ensure less waste is sent to landfill and waste is managed more effectively within the Council area. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to ensure this network of fit for purpose waste management facilities can be created. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation. Each new site has been subject to a site SEA assessment where mitigation has been identified where appropriate.

Policy 71

This policy seeks to protect the existing elements of the Highland waste management network. It is anticipated that there will be positive affects on SEA objective 4 and SEA objective 8. The positive affect on SEA objective 8 is not significant as the existing network provides limited opportunity to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill but only manages it. When applied in conjunction with Policy 71 it is likely to have significant positive affects, therefore it is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation. It is important to have a policy protecting existing waste management facilities in Highland as with out these it would be difficult to effectively and sustainably manage waste in Highland.

Policy 72

This policy sets out how the Council will consider pollutants when considering and determining planning applications. The policy is likely to have a positive affect on SEA objectives 4, 9 and 11 as it directly addresses potential adverse affects on these objectives and requires developers to clearly set out how any adverse affects will be mitigated. Through also including a requirement for major developments to follow a project environmental impact assessment, it ensures that potential pollutants can be addressed at all stages of development. It is important to note that this policy should not be applied in isolation and where air quality issues are expected policy 74 will be particularly relevant.

Policy 73

This policy gives additional policy on air quality above that covered by policy 73. It is anticipated that there will be positive affects on SEA objectives 1 and 4, however most significant positive affects will be noticed on SEA objective 11. This is due to the policy specifically addressing this SEA objective through requiring mitigation and seeking that future proposals do not introduce inappropriate receptors to existing uses which have a localised detrimental affect on air quality. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation with policy 74 being of particular relevance.

Policy 74

This policy sets out the Council's approach to protection and enhancement of green networks in line with national policy. It is anticipated that given the broad ranging nature of green networks that there will be positive affects on a range of SEA objectives including 1 (a key component of the green network), 3 (green networks provide opportunities for people to come into contact with nature/natural environments), 4 (provide opportunities to take part in physical activity), 5 (open space is a key component of the green network), 6 (paths and trails are key components of the green network), 14 (can improve active travel linkages between places and spaces), 15 (can facilitate the protection of built and cultural heritage of the area), 16 (can help to protect the local diversity of the landscape) and 17 (can make a contribution to the protection of the character of the wider landscape). However this policy directly addresses and has a significantly positive affect on SEA objective 2 and ensures that green networks can be protected and enhanced through out highland, avoiding fragmentation and where possible improving connectivity of the network. As demonstrated by the number of SEA objectives that this policy addresses it is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation in order to gain maximum benefit from the policy. It is important to have a policy on green networks to ensure these issues can be addressed comprehensively, however it is necessary to deal with elements of the green network through separate policies to ensure a robust approach each element of the network is made.

Policy 75

This policy sets out the Council's approach to planning applications which may affect open space. The policy is likely to have a positive affect on a number of SEA objectives including 1, 3, 6,10 12, 14 and 16. Where the policy is likely to have the most significant affect is on SEA objectives 2 (given the contribution open space makes to green networks esp. within settlement

boundaries) 4 (as protection and enhancement of open space will ensure opportunities are present to facilitate a healthier highland) and 5 (as the policy seeks to increase the proportion of high quality, accessible and fit for purpose open spaces). It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation with particular attention being paid to policy 75 and 77. It is necessary to have a framework for assessing open space provision in Highland to reflect national policy but also to meet the needs of the local area.

Policy 76

This policy sets out the Council's approach to development on playing fields in line with national policy on the matter. It is anticipated that the policy will have positive affects on SEA objectives 2 (as playing fields provide important elements of both the environmental and social elements of the green network) and 4 (as playing fields are key in facilitating a healthier highland). It is expected that the most significant affect will be on SEA objective 5 in the long term as the policy requires rigorous assessment of any proposal on a playing field and if it is to be built upon then new provision will be required. It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation with particular attention paid to policies 75 and 76. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to reflect national policy and ensure that the most relevant issues are considered at a planning application stage to avoid detrimental affect on the amenity of an area.

Policy 77

This policy sets out how the council will assess applications which may have a detrimental affect on access to the outdoors. It is anticipated that this policy will have a positive affect on SEA objectives 2, 3 and 4 with significant affects on SEA objective 6 (as the policy ensures access is a key consideration and offers opportunities to mitigate and potential issue and where possible improve access) and 14 (as through the provision of improved public access it may encourage people to use active travel in the longer term to commute to a place of work/study/leisure). It is important that when applying this policy that the core path plans are taken into consideration and the policy should not be read or applied in isolation. It is necessary to have a policy such as this to ensure access rights are not ignored when development proposals are brought forward.

Policy 78

This policy aims to protect and enhance long distance routes and their settings. The policy is anticipated to have a positive affect on a number of SEA objectives including 3 (given these routes provide valuable opportunities to come into contact with nature/natural environments), 6 (as long distance routes play a significant part in providing access to the outdoors), 16 (as the policy seeks to protect the setting of long distance routes helping to maintain the diversity of local landscapes) and 18 (as the policy aims to protect and enhance both the paths themselves and the setting of long distance routes it should have a positive affect on allowing people to experience qualities of wildness). It is important to note that this policy should not be read or applied in isolation. It is important to have a policy such as this to safeguard these access opportunities which have a significant economic benefits to the area.

Assessment of alternatives - cumulative and synergistic effects

Having identified the preferred policy approach through the SEA Assessments, in some cases balancing these with social and economic factors, and taking on board comments received at the Main Issues Report Stage, the potential for cumulative and synergistic effects must be considered. This will look at how as a whole the plan may have a more significant affect as a whole rather than in part.

We believe that it is beneficial to assess the cumulative impacts of the Vision, Spatial Strategy and general policies of the HwLDP separately to distinguish on which SEA objective the plan is likely to have most affect. This is because the policy approaches aid in delivery of the vision and spatial strategy. While they are inter-related assessing the vision and spatial strategy together with the policy approaches may lead to confusion and not allow for the cumulative affects to be highlighted.

How the tables have been compiled

To complete these tables we have used the assessment matrices (found in appendix 4) where the long term affect of each policy approach has been identified. The score given in the assessment matrix correlates with what is contained in the cumulative affects tables.

To work out the cumulative affect on each SEA objective, the following score has been assigned:

From assessment matrix	Score attributed
++	2
+	1
=	0
+/-	0
-	-1
--	-2

Once these scores have been attributed and calculated horizontally within the table the following grouping has been carried out to gauge the cumulative affect on the SEA objective (number in brackets is score for Vision):

Calculated Score	Cumulative affect
20+ (3+)	++
10-19 (1-3)	+
0-9 (0-1)	=
-1 - -9 (-1 - -2)	-
-10+ (-3+)	--

How to read the table

The below table read horizontally will aid in identifying the cumulative effects of the approaches which will be present in the proposed Highland-wide Local Development Plan. The pages following these tables will highlight how this cumulative affect has been identified and if it is likely to be a negative affect how this can be mitigated.

Assessment of Cumulative Effects – Vision

SEA objective	Vision		
	Caithness and Sutherland	West Highland and Islands	Inner Moray Firth
1	+	+	++
2	+	+	++
3	+	+	+
4	+	+	+
5	=	=	+
6	=	=	+
7	+	+	+
8	=	=	+
9	=	=	=
10	=	=	+
11	=	=	+/-
12	+	+	++
13	+	+/-	+
14	+	+	++
15	+	+	+
16	+	+	+
17	+	=	+
18	+/-	+	+/-

Assessment

Following is an assessment of the cumulative impacts on each SEA Objective if the area visions in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan are adopted.

SEA Objective 1

Maintain and enhance designated wildlife sites, biodiversity, valuable habitats and protected species, avoiding irreversible losses.

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. This is due to all visions seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment in Highland.

SEA Objective 2

Maintain, enhance and create green networks for wildlife and people.

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. This is due to all visions making a contribution toward the green network, with the Inner Moray Firth vision making specific reference to it and have further guidance available on its delivery through other guidance.

SEA Objective 3

Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate nature/natural environments

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. This is due to all visions making provision to provide opportunities for people to come into contact with

nature/natural environments. While this is the case, significant positive affects have not been achieved as the visions do not address this objective directly only indirectly.

SEA Objective 4

Protect and enhance human health

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. This is due to all visions making some provision towards protection and enhancement of human health, this has mainly been through indirect affects such as within the West Highland and Islands vision of having a greater and more diverse age profile of population which may lead to improved social wellbeing and mental health.

SEA Objective 5

Retain and improve quality, quantity and connectivity of publicly accessible open space.

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. While two of the areas visions do not make a contribution toward this SEA objective, the vision for the Inner Moray Firth makes indirect provision towards the protection and enhancement of public open space.

SEA Objective 6

Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. While two of the areas visions do not make a contribution toward this SEA objective, the vision for the Inner Moray Firth makes indirect provision towards the protection and enhancement of access rights.

SEA Objective 7

Reduce contamination, safeguard soil quantity and quality

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. All of the area visions make some form of direct provision towards this SEA objective, with directing growth towards existing or former industrial sites and where previously used land can be utilised while also balancing this with growth of other sites.

SEA Objective 8

Minimise waste

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. The area visions do not directly contribute towards this SEA objective. However the Inner Moray Firth Vision indirectly makes provision to address this objective through seeking to address the areas infrastructure constraints.

SEA Objective 9

Avoid impact to and where possible enhance the water environment

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. The area visions do not directly contribute toward this SEA objective, however through some provisions of the visions there may be some slight positive affects of the visions.

SEA Objective 10

Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (inc future capacity)

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. The area visions do not directly contribute

toward this SEA objective, however through some provisions of the visions there may be some slight positive affects of the visions.

SEA Objective 11

Maintain air quality

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. The area visions do not directly contribute toward this SEA objective, however through some provisions of the visions there may be some affects of the visions ie through seeking improved transport infrastructure there is likely to be reduced localised issues with air quality related to traffic congestion.

SEA Objective 12

Reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. The area visions make specific provisions to address this SEA objective, with the Inner Moray Firth Vision specifically seeking development of the area to sit within its environmental limits and recognise the affect climate change will have on development especially in coastal areas.

SEA Objective 13

Increase proportion of energy from renewable sources

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. All of the the area visions make provision for an increase in proportion of energy from renewable sources, whether it is the potential for sites within an area to growth the renewable energy sector or through identifying areas for renewable energy development utilising new technologies.

SEA Objective 14

Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. All visions make provision to improve infrastructure to provide greater sustainable travel opportunities and imprpved transprot infrastructure. In addition through safeguarding of local facilities through the West Highland and Islands Vision there is reduced need to travel ot facilities as they will be located locally.

SEA Objective 15

Protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. This is due to all of the area visions seeking due consideration to be given to the heritage of the area.

SEA Objective 16

Value and Protect the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscapes

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. This is due to all of the area visions seeking due consideration to be given to the heritage of the area and that development takes place within environmental limits.

SEA Objective 17

Conserve and enhance landscape character and scenic value

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. This is due to all of the area visions seeking due consideration to be given to the heritage of the area (including landscape).

SEA Objective 18

Safeguard wild areas

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's area visions are considered cumulatively. This is due to none of the visions specifically addressing this SEA objective but through seeking due consideration is given to the heritage of the area infers safeguarding of wild areas.

Assessment of Cumulative Effects – Spatial Strategy

Please note following examination of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan the original Policy 21 (Culloden Moor) was deleted. Therefore all of the policy numbers following this were renumbered.

SEA Objective	Spatial Strategy of Highland-wide Local Development Plan																											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
1	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+/-	=	=	+/-	+/-	=	=	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	
2	++	=	=	=	+	=	=	=	++	+	+	+	+	+	=	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	+/-	=	=	+	+	
3	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	=	=	+/-	+/-	+/-	=	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	=	=	+/-	=	
4	+	=	+	+	=	+	+	+	+	=	+/-	+/-	+	=	=	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	=	=	+/-	+/-	
5	+	=	=	=	++	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+	=	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+/-	=	=	+	+	
6	=	=	=	=	+	=	=	=	+	+	+	+	+	+	=	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+/-	=	=	+	+	
7	=	=	+	++	++	++	++	-	-	-	-	-	-	++	+/-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	++	+	+	-	=	
8	=	=	=	=	++	=	=	=	++	=	=	+	=	=	+/-	=	=	=	++	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+	
9	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+	+/-	+/-	=	+/-	=	=	=	+	
10	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+	
11	=	=	+	+/-	=	+	=	+/-	=	=	=	+/-	=	+/-	=	+/-	+/-	+/-	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+/-	=
12	+	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=
13	=	=	=	=	+	=	=	+/-	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+	=	=	=	=	=
14	+	=	++	++	+	++	+	+	++	+	+	++	++	++	+/-	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	++	+/-	+/-	+	+	
15	=	=	+	+	=	=	=	+/-	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	+	+	+/-	=
16	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=
17	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=
18	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=

Assessment

Following is an assessment of the cumulative impacts on each SEA Objective if the area visions in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan are adopted.

SEA Objective 1

Maintain and enhance designated wildlife sites, biodiversity, valuable habitats and protected species, avoiding irreversible losses.

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. While all proposals in the spatial strategy will seek to have no detrimental impact on designated sites through appropriate mitigation written into the policies, there are no specific elements of the spatial strategy which seek to enhance designated sites.

SEA Objective 2

Maintain, enhance and create green networks for wildlife and people.

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Many of the proposals of the spatial strategy make significant provision for the protection and enhancement of the green network. All proposals within the A96 Corridor are required through the spatial strategy to make a contribution towards the delivery of the green network which has been identified in the area. Out with these areas the spatial strategy seeks to ensure that the green network is not fragmented.

SEA Objective 3

Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate nature/natural environments

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Through making provision towards SEA objective 2 many of the proposals of the spatial strategy indirectly make contribution toward this SEA objective as the green network can provide significant opportunities to come into contact with and appreciate nature. However, as the proposals in the spatial strategy largely make indirect provision towards this SEA objective it has been deemed there will be a neutral cumulative affect on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 4

Protect and enhance human health

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. While many of the proposals of the spatial strategy make provision for protection and enhancement of human health there are a number of elements which may have mixed affects due to the need for mitigation, and without the mitigation there may be a negative affect. Where the mitigation is required it is written into the relevant policy.

SEA Objective 5

Retain and improve quality, quantity and connectivity of publicly accessible open space.

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Given that a number of the proposals of the spatial strategy seek to increase the proportion of publically accessible open space through compliance with the open space policies within the plan and the Council's Open Space in New Residential Development: Supplementary Guidance it is considered that there will be a cumulative positive affect on this SEA objective. With a number of proposals in the spatial strategy not being residential, it has meant that there are limited other opportunities to seek recreational open space in delivering these other sites, ie Nigg, Dounreay etc, therefore it has not been possible to have a cumulative significantly positive affect on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 6

Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Given that a number of the proposals of the spatial strategy seek to increase the opportunities to access the outdoors through compliance with the access to the outdoors policies within the plan and the Council's Access Strategy.

SEA Objective 7

Reduce contamination, safeguard soil quantity and quality

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. A significant proportion of proposals within the spatial strategy offer opportunities to re-use significant areas of previously used land, while other proposals which contribute to meeting the medium to longer term housing need and demand of the area may have a detrimental affect on this SEA objective. Through compliance with other policies of the plan including sustainable design, peats and soils and Sustainable Drainage systems, the affect on soil quantity and quality is likely to be minimal.

SEA Objective 8

Minimise waste

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Elements of the spatial strategy seek to address the limits in waste management infrastructure through seeking contribution in line with the waste management in new developments: supplementary guidance. The spatial strategy also makes provision for new waste management facilities to facilitate the minimisation of waste. While this is the case through further development there is likely to be further waste generated therefore it is key to reduce the minimisation of waste through developer requirements set out in the relevant policy.

SEA Objective 9

Avoid impact to and where possible enhance the water environment

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. This is due to the proposals in the spatial strategy seeking to mitigate any potential impact development may have on the water environment and where possible seek to enhance it where possible.

SEA Objective 10

Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (inc future capacity)

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. This is due to the proposals in the spatial strategy seeking to mitigate any potential impact development may have on the water environment and where possible seek to enhance it where possible. This is reinforced through other policies of the plan on issues such as sustainable drainage and waste water.

SEA Objective 11

Maintain air quality

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. It is not anticipated that there will be any proposal of the spatial strategy which will have a negative affect on this SEA objective as through regulatory powers of other agencies and mitigation such as improved transport infrastructure to reduce congestion leading to limited concentrations of air quality issues related to transport emissions.

SEA Objective 12

Reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. While a number of the proposals are likely to have a positive affect on this objective they are likely to have a positive cumulative affect when considered with other policies of the plan which seek to address the issue. Through allocation of sites within the plan, as part of this spatial strategy we have avoided detrimental affect on this SEA objective through avoidance of sites which are at risk of flooding or mitigation has been written into policies to avoid negative affect.

SEA Objective 13

Increase proportion of energy from renewable sources

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. There are a number of policies within the spatial strategy (namely 14 and 24), which seek to provided bases for the renewable energy sector. While these seek to grow the renewable energy sector in Highland it is unsure if the products made will be used in Highland therefore this plan may have a wider affect on increasing the use of renewable resources that just the Highland Council area.

SEA Objective 14

Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Given that the majority of proposals of the spatial strategy make significant provision for the improvement of transport infrastructure both public and private, it is anticipated that there will be a significantly positive affect on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 15

Protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Proposals within the spatial strategy seek to avoid affect on the historic environment and through working with other policies of the plan and through the mitigation written into the policies of the spatial strategy it is possible that there will be no/limited cumulative affect on this SEA objective as a result of the spatial strategy.

SEA Objective 16

Value and Protect the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscapes

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Proposals within the spatial strategy seek to avoid affect on the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscapes and through working with other policies of the plan and through the mitigation written into the policies of the spatial strategy it is possible that there will be no/limited cumulative affect on this SEA objective as a result of the spatial strategy. However, given that development can easily change the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscapes then this should be managed through other policies of the plan. It should be noted that development of an area is not necessarily going to have a negative affect on the diversity or local distinctiveness of landscapes.

SEA Objective 17

Conserve and enhance landscape character and scenic value

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Proposals within the spatial strategy seek to avoid areas with strong landscape character and scenic value given the location of the developments. Where there is likely to be an affect it has been flagged in the SEA site assessment and appropriate mitigation has been sought through the policy in the spatial strategy.

SEA Objective 18

Safeguard wild areas

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's spatial strategy elements are considered cumulatively. Proposals in the spatial strategy are unlikely to have an affect on this SEA objective given the location of the proposals in the spatial strategy not being in areas where qualities of wildness are found.

Assessment

Following is an assessment of the cumulative impacts on each SEA Objective if the General Policies in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan are adopted.

SEA Objective 1

Maintain and enhance designated wildlife sites, biodiversity, valuable habitats and protected species, avoiding irreversible losses.

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. This would be due to the positive and significantly positive affect there may be on this SEA objective through a range of policies. The suite of policies related to the natural, built and cultural heritage, habitats and species are likely to have the the most significant impact. Through using the plan as a whole rather than policies in isolation this also boosts the positive affect of other policies including the policy on green networks.

SEA Objective 2

Maintain, enhance and create green networks for wildlife and people.

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. Through the inclusion of a policy on green networks it coordinates a number of policy approaches to deliver further benefits to all elements of a green network. There are a number of policies which have limited/no affect on this SEA objective which have meant that it is unlikely there would be a significantly positive cumulative affects on this SEA objective using the policy approaches alone, however the spatial strategy facilitates the delivery of the green network which may lead to a more significant positive affect.

SEA Objective 3

Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate nature/natural environments

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. This is due to a number of policies providing opportunities to allow people to come into contact with nature/natural environments, however no one single policy addresses this issue outright. The suite of green network policies make the most significant contribution toward this SEA objective but given the neutral affect of most policy approaches it is unlikely there will be a significantly positive cumulative affect on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 4

Protect and enhance human health

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. This is due to a significant number of policies in the plan making a positive contribution towards this SEA objective. While not all of this positive affects are on issues related to physical health, many are related to social and mental wellbeing. There is no single suite of policies which deliver a significant benefit in isolation but working as a whole the policies can deliver significant benefits to the protection and enhancement of human health.

SEA Objective 5

Retain and improve quality, quantity and connectivity of publicly accessible open space.

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. This is due to the affects of open space being pulled together in order to maximise their benefits through the suite of green network policies. Through linkage to appropriate guidance, the plan has also put sufficient emphasis on delivery of high quality, accessible and fit for purpose open spaces to enable this positive cumulative affect

despite the majority of policy approaches having limited/no impact on the SEA objective, however this is mainly delivered through other guidance rather than through this plan.

SEA Objective 6

Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. While a comprehensive approach is being taken to the protection of not only local routes but also long distance routes, it is the provisions of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act and the Council's Access Strategy that will have more significant positive affect on this SEA objective. Through linking to these documents the plan seeks to do this. The majority of policy approaches have limited/no impact on the SEA objective leading to this overall neutral cumulative affect.

SEA Objective 7

Reduce contamination, safeguard soil quantity and quality

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. While a number of policy approaches directly address this SEA objective it is unlikely that there will be a cumulative positive affect given the limited other policies which offer a positive affect on this SEA objective. Some policies are likely to have a negative affect on this SEA objective due to limited opportunities to utilise previously used land because of the nature of that development, however through mitigation written into these policies (such as Policy 37 where development is directed towards the reuse of traditional buildings).

SEA Objective 8

Minimise waste

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. While a number of policy approaches directly address this SEA objective it is unlikely that there will be a cumulative positive affect given the limited other policies which offer a positive affect on this SEA objective. Some policies are likely to have a negative affect on this SEA objective due to the lack of opportunities to minimise waste given the location of development (ie housing in the wider countryside offers limited opportunity to deliver recycling facilities due to its location).

SEA Objective 9

Avoid impact to and where possible enhance the water environment

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. A number of policy approaches directly address this SEA objective with the suite of water environment policies having the most positive affects. Policy approaches to wider countryside and housing in the countryside are likely to have a negative affect on this objective (given potential lack of opportunity to connect to public sewer) however this is likely to be mitigated through the use of policy approach on waste water.

SEA Objective 10

Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (inc future capacity)

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. While the suite of policies on the water environment are anticipated to have a significantly positive affect on this SEA objective many of the policies approaches in the plan are likely to have no/limited affect on this SEA objective therefore it is considered that the plan is likely to have a neutral cumulative affect when all policies are considered in the round.

SEA Objective 11

Maintain air quality

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. The policies on pollution and air quality seek to address this SEA objective and can work cumulatively with a number of other policies to maintain air quality in Highland. However given the number of other policy approaches which are anticipated to have a neutral affect on the SEA objective it is likely that cumulatively only a neutral affect on this SEA objective will be apparent.

SEA Objective 12

Reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. This is due to a number of policy approaches indirectly addressing the SEA objective with policies on renewable energy and sustainable design likely to have a significant affect. The majority of policies within the plan are likely to have a limited affect on this SEA objective therefore it is anticipated that rather than having a significantly positive affect on this SEA objective the affect will be positive.

SEA Objective 13

Increase proportion of energy from renewable sources

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. While a number of policy approaches address this specifically and have significant affects the majority of the policies of the plan are anticipated to have little/no affect on this SEA objective. However, through working with the spatial strategy this plan may have a more positive affect given the spatial strategy makes provision for the development of the renewable energy industry in Highland.

SEA Objective 14

Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. A number of policy approaches in the plan are likely to have a significantly positive affect on the SEA objective as they are directly related to addressing this proposal. The plan is likely to have a number of more indirect positive affects on this SEA objective. There are two policy approaches (housing in the countryside and wider countryside) which may lead to a negative affect on this SEA objective given the location of the type of development that these policies deal with.

SEA Objective 15

Protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. While a number of policy approaches are anticipated to have a direct positive or significantly positive affect on this SEA objective the majority of policies in the plan are likely to have limited/no affect on this SEA objective. However where policies directly address the SEA objective then it is anticipated that there will be a significantly positive affect (such as Policy 58).

SEA Objective 16

Value and Protect the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscapes

It is anticipated that there may be a **significantly positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. A number of policy approaches are likely to have a significantly positive affect on this SEA objective through directly addressing the objective (such as policy 58 and policy 62). Other policies in the plan are likely to have an indirect positive affect on this objective due to the type of development which is managed by these policies.

SEA Objective 17

Conserve and enhance landscape character and scenic value

It is anticipated that there may be a **positive cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. This is due to the number of SEA objectives which have a positive affect on the SEA objective, either directly or indirectly. While this is the case the majority of policy approaches in the plan have limited/no affect on this SEA objective given the wider nature of the issue.

SEA Objective 18

Safeguard wild areas

It is anticipated that there may be a **neutral cumulative affect** on this SEA objective if the plan's general policies are considered cumulatively. This is due to a limited number of policies addressing the issue in the plan itself. However, where the issue is addressed it is likely to have a significantly positive affect on the SEA objective.

Measures envisaged for the prevention, reduction and offsetting of significant adverse effects

At the Main Issues Report Stage the first version of this Environmental Report was issued. This has helped us to identify negative effects of policy approaches and in formulating the policies for the proposed plan we have been able to avoid potential negative effects through changing the policy approach or through including mitigation within the policy itself. This rings true for both the spatial strategy and general policies section of the plan.

The mitigation in the spatial strategy section of the plan can be seen as more obvious as they are, in most cases, within the policies as developer requirements. Within policies mitigation has been identified where appropriate. A list of mitigation from general policies is below. While this list identifies mitigation, it will not be applicable in all cases and further mitigation may be required in other cases.

Policy Number	Mitigation identified in the general policies of the plan
28	Site waste management plan and Sustainable Design Statement. Proposals assessed against a number of factors to avoid adverse impacts of development.
29	No mitigation identified
30	Requires adequate mitigation to be provided. This will vary on a case by case basis.
31	No mitigation identified
32	No mitigation identified
33	No mitigation identified
34	Proposals assessed against a number of factors to avoid adverse impacts of development.
35	Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to avoid affect on the landscape character and local distinctiveness of landscapes.
36	Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to avoid affect on the landscape character and local distinctiveness of landscapes.
37	No mitigation identified
38	In the first instance proposals for new settlements should come through the LDP to ensure a full assessment of issues can be made.
39	Suitable site criteria have to be met.
40	No mitigation identified. Mitigation is dependant on location of site
41	No mitigation identified. Mitigation is dependant on location of site
42	No mitigation identified. Mitigation is dependant on location and condition of site
43	Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
44	Proposals will be assessed against any affect on landscape character of an area.
45	No mitigation identified. Mitigation is dependant on location of site and scale or proposal.
46	Sensitive design required, utilisation of existing infrastructure before creation of new, redundant equipment is removed.

Policy Number	Mitigation identified in the general policies of the plan
47	Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment and community.
48	Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment and community.
49	Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
50	Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
51	Woodland management plan required. Additional planting required where appropriate.
52	Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
53	Demonstrate other resources have been exhausted/not viable. Requirement for appropriate environmental safeguards. Creation restoration or extension of geodiversity interests.
54	Minimisation and positive re-use of mineral, construction and demolition wastes. Waste management plan should be prepared where appropriate.
55	Avoidance of unnecessary disturbance, degradation or erosion. Peatland management plan required.
56	Compliance with local transport strategy and core path plans. Incorporate suitable mitigation onsite. Design for safety of all users. Assessment of affect of masterplans on local and strategic road network.
57	Requires adequate mitigation to be provided. This will vary on a case by case basis.
58	Surveys carried out identifying, if appropriate, a mitigation plan. Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
59	Surveys carried out identifying, if appropriate, a mitigation plan. Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
60	Surveys carried out identifying, if appropriate, a mitigation plan. Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
61	No mitigation identified. Mitigation is dependant on location of site
62	No mitigation identified. Mitigation is dependant on location of site
63	Consideration given to River Basin Management Plans
64	Flood risk management assessment required where proposals are within 1 in 200yr flood risk area. Developmens should not compromise the objectives of the EU Water Framework directive.
65	Connection to public sewer in first instance. Need to demonstrate why no connection to public sewer.

Policy Number	Mitigation identified in the general policies of the plan
66	Planning application to be submitted with information required by PAN 69.
67	Requires adequate mitigation to be provided. This will vary on a case by case basis. Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
68	Requires adequate mitigation to be provided. This will vary on a case by case basis. Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
69	Requires adequate mitigation to be provided. This will vary on a case by case basis.
70	Requires adequate mitigation to be provided. This will vary on a case by case basis. Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
71	Requires adequate mitigation to be provided. This will vary on a case by case basis. Proposals assessed against a number of criteria to ensure maximum benefit for the environment.
72	Conditions to require independent monitoring of planning conditions.
73	Air quality assessment required. Consideration of conflicting land uses.
74	Contribution towards delivery of green network
75	Open space safeguard. New/improved open space provision required for new developments.
76	Safeguard of playing fields and sports pitches. Compensatory provision if playing field/sport pitch is built upon.
77	Safeguard of access rights. Submission of an access plan for major developments.
78	Safeguard of long distance routes and their settings.

Mitigation of significantly adverse affects

Through giving due consideration to the SEA objectives, views of the community and statutory agencies and consultees when producing the plan to date it has been possible to formulate a plan with no potential significant adverse affects. This is demonstrated through the assessment matrices which can be found in Appendix 4. Where adverse affects have been identified (mainly through the spatial strategy) mitigation has been written into the relevant policy.

Assessment of Compatibility between Policy Approaches

In accordance with best practice when assessing such a broad based document it was considered appropriate and beneficial to assess the compatibility of all of the preferred policy alternatives contained within the Highland-wide Local Development Plan.

The table below shows where there has been an incompatibility between the preferred policy approaches. Where this is the case an explanation and mitigation is suggested.

NOTE: This table looks at compatibility of the policies only (including spatial strategy policies). This approach is not suitable for the assessment of compatibility of the vision elements of the plan however as the spatial strategy and general policies of the plan facilitate the delivery of the visions it is anticipated that there will not be any conflict in approaches.

The numbers in the table relate to the policy number in the plan.

Key:

√	Compatible Policy Approaches
X	Incompatible Policy Approaches
0	No Clear Link

Summary of table

Through this assessment it can be seen that there should not be any compatibility issues between the policy approaches which are to be contained within the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. However, this is a high level assessment and it is recognized that through application of the policies in the plan small compatibility issues may be identified.

Monitoring

Section 19 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires the Responsible Authority to monitor significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. This must be done in such a way as to also identify unforeseen adverse effects and to take appropriate remedial action.

It is considered good practice for monitoring:

- fit a pre-defined purpose, help to solve problems, and address key issues;
- is practical and is customised to the PPS;
- is transparent and readily accessible to the public;
- is seen as a learning process and a cyclical process relating closely to the collation of the environmental baseline.

For this monitoring to be effective it will need to be linked to both the SEA Objectives and the Plan Objectives. The baseline data set out earlier in this report sets the scene for any monitoring which is to take place. Below is a monitoring framework. As part of the Action Programme for the Highland-wide Local Development Plan we will publish a fuller framework for monitoring of the plan. However, the table below only considers indicators relevant to the state of the environment.

Note: Items highlighted in grey are longer items which we seek to monitor as and when resources become available.

SEA Topic	What the plan seeks to achieve	Monitoring Indicator	Responsible for Data Collation	Publication of Monitoring	Remedial Action
Air	No increase in number of Air Quality Management Areas	Number of Air Quality Management Areas	THC (Environmental Health)	Biennially	Review policy and site allocations in areas where AQMA have been designated.
Water Quality	Improve Water Quality	Number of designated bathing areas	SEPA	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
		Number of rivers "C" classification or below			
		Number of bathing areas passing bathing water quality			
		% of planning applications granted in last 12 months which connected to public water/sewer			
	Reduce instances of flooding	Number of planning applications granted within medium to high flood risk areas (1 in 200yr probability)	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
	Increase number of developments incorporating water efficient technologies	Number of schemes that incorporate water efficient technologies	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
Soil	Remediation of Contaminated Land and redevelopment of brownfield sites	Number of planning applications granted on brownfield land in the last 12 months	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
	Reduction in the area of prime agricultural land developed	Number of planning applications granted on prime agricultural	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development

		land (1, 2, 3.1 of the Macaulay Institute Classification)			Plan(s).
Biodiversity	Protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Highland	Number of applications granted within SPA, SAC, Ramsar, NNR, SSSI, Sites of Local Nature Conservation.	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
	Protected Species are not significantly disturbed	Number of applications which require a protected species survey	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
Climatic Factors	Reduction in Travel	% travelling to work/study by car	THC (Information and Research)	Biennially	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
		% travelling to work/study by public transport	THC (Information and Research)	Biennially	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
		% travelling to work/study by active travel	THC (Information and Research)	Biennially	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
Human Health	Improve accessibility to open space	Provision of open space (m ²)	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
		% of households within 1200m of open space	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
Cultural Heritage	Reduce number of buildings at risk	Number of buildings at risk	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development

					Plan(s).
Landscape	Impact on quality of landscape	Number of planning applications granted within NSA and SLA in last 12 months	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
Material Assets	Improved accessibility to recycling facilities	% of households within 15km of recycling centre	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
		Number of planning applications granted which include provision for recycling point in last 12 months	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
	Reduction in waste going to landfill	% of total residual waste in Highland going to landfill	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
	Protection and enhancement of public access	Number of planning applications granted which affect path identified in the core path plan	THC (Information and Research facilitated by access officers)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).
	Increase number of developments incorporating sustainable materials	Number of schemes that incorporate sustainable materials	THC (Information and Research)	Annually	Review policy and site allocations in Local Development Plan(s).

Next Steps

This is the Finalised Environmental Report which will be adopted alongside the Highland-wide Local Development Plan on 5th April 2012. This document will not be subject to consultation.

As soon as practicably possible after the adoption of the Highland wide Local Development Plan, The Highland Council will prepare a Post Adoption Strategic Environmental Statement setting out:

- how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
- how the environmental report has been taken into account;
- how the opinions expressed in response to the invitation mentioned in section 16 have been taken into account;
- how the results of any relevant transboundary consultation have been taken into account;
- the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered; and
- the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.