

Statement of Reasons

Inverness City Centre Development Brief

Introduction

This paper sets out the reasons for The Highland Council not carrying out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on the replacement Inverness City Centre Development Brief (ICCDB). This brief replaces the existing Inverness City Centre Development Brief (adopted March 2013) and will form part of the Council's statutory Development Plan. This paper should be read in conjunction with the determination notice for the aforementioned document.

Determination

It has been determined by the Highland Council, following advice from the Strategic Environmental Assessment Consultation Authorities (SEPA, SNH and Historic Environment Scotland) that a SEA is not required for replacement ICCDB. The individual consultation authorities responses to the SEA screening, the screening report itself and the determination notice can be viewed online at

http://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/712053/inverness_city_centre_development_brief

Statement of Reasons

This section sets out why the Council has determined that the ICCDB will not be subject to a SEA. The reasons are collated from information gathered during the screening process for the strategic environmental assessment and the responses to the screening from the consultation authorities.

The reasons for not carrying out a full SEA can be summarised as follows:

- all Consultation Authorities consider that the proposed development brief is **unlikely** to have significant environmental effects.
- The principle of development in this area has been established through the Spatial Strategy for Inverness contained in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) and through land use allocations set out in the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP). Both of these documents have been subject to SEA.
- The existing Brief was also subject to SEA Screening (August 2011). At that time the Consultation Authorities were of the opinion that there was no likelihood of significant environmental effects which concurred with The Highland Council's screening determination.
- As stipulated by Section 22(1) of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, Supplementary Guidance in connection with a Local Development Plan may only deal with the provision of further information or detail in respect of the policies or proposals set out in that plan and then only provided that those are matters which are expressly identified in a statement contained in the plan as matters which are to be dealt with in Supplementary Guidance. To this end, Paragraph 4.8 of the IMFLDP includes a statement setting out that the replacement Brief will be based on the same guiding principles of the existing Brief's vision and key themes and that the review will take place when new opportunity sites emerge.
- Given that the supplementary information to be set out within the updated Brief will accord with the guiding principles set out within the recently adopted IMFLDP and will not substantially differ from the scope and context of the original Brief, it is entirely reasonable to conclude that this update in itself will not give rise to significant environmental effects.

All comments made by the consultation authorities during the public consultation will be taken into consideration in the production of the final document. The Council has now progressed with the production of the draft Inverness City Centre Development Brief following a public consultation from February – March 2017.

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