

**WEST HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS LOCAL PLAN:  
ADOPTED: SEPTEMBER 2010**

**PLANA IONADAIL NA GÀIDHEALTACHD AN IAR IS  
NAN EILEAN**

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL  
ASSESSMENT (SEA)  
FINALISED ENVIRONMENTAL  
REPORT**

## **CONTENTS**

- 1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY**
- 2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**
- 3 PURPOSE AND LOCAL PLAN CONTEXT**
- 4 METHODOLOGY**
- 5 PREDICTED ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE AND ISSUES**
- 6 LOCAL PLAN STRATEGIC ALTERNATIVES**
- 7 SEA OBJECTIVES AND PLAN GENERAL POLICIES COMPATIBILITY**
- 8 MONITORING THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PLAN - ASSESSMENT OF PLAN ALLOCATIONS**
- 9 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL PLAN AND SEA**
- 10 APPENDICES**
  - (a) Relevant documents for West Highland and Islands**
  - (b) Consultation Authorities' Comments and Council's Responses (separate document)**
  - (c) Settlement by Settlement Site Selection Commentary (separate document)**
  - (d) SEA Matrices for Deposit Draft December 2008 Site Allocations (separate document)**
  - (e) SEA Matrices for Sites Not Confirmed (separate document)**

# 1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

## What is SEA?

- 1.1 This finalised Environmental Report presents the findings of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the West Highland and Islands Local Plan. This Report and its associated process is now required by European and Scots law. The purpose of the SEA is to assess, consider and mitigate for the potential environmental effects of the Plan. This procedure looks at the natural, built and cultural heritage of an area and assesses whether or not these will be negatively or positively affected by the Plan. Consideration of these effects is to be integral to the decision making process on the Plan's content.
- 1.2 In setting this out in this publicly available report, all parties can comment on the Plan and its potential environmental impact. In particular, three agencies, known as the Consultation Authorities - Historic Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) - are tasked by the Scottish Government with providing comments and recommendations. They have done so and these letters are set out in Appendix 10(b) together with a summary of how the Council has responded in changing the Plan content.

## How SEA Influences the Plan

- 1.3 The likely environmental effects of the Local Plan's objectives, policies and site allocations such as housing, business and community have been assessed. A "matrix" method has been used in order to assess this Plan content against a set of SEA Objectives, which have been agreed with the Consultation Authorities. These matrices are either within this document or its related, separate appendices. They provide a consistent and structured method of assessment albeit the lack of factual evidence such as adequate survey information necessitates some subjectivity.
- 1.4 Many of the objectives, policies and site allocations have been predicted to have neutral or sometimes positive effects on the environment. However, where potential negative effects have been identified, associated mitigation methods have been outlined and where appropriate the mitigation has been included in the Plan. Mitigation has taken various forms such as: new or strengthened general policy wording within the Plan; better related planning policy or supplementary guidance, and; additional developer requirements for allocated sites.
- 1.5 Examples of potential negative effects considered include:
- Habitats and Species - the loss of inbye croftland which is one of the most biologically diverse land types found in West Highland supporting a range of crops and associated wildlife.
  - Landscape - inappropriately sited and designed development can have harmful effects on landscape character and the setting of towns and villages in the landscape. For example potential impacts of development in the crofting townships that affect the Trotternish National Scenic Area have been considered.
  - The Water Environment - this includes streams, rivers, lochs, ground water, wetland habitats and flood plains. For example, the Plan needs to be aware of the need to preserve shellfish waters, to protect slope stability, and to avoid flood risk.
- 1.6 The general policies are expected to have a positive effect on the environment overall. This conclusion is based on the fact that the Plan has the following strategic objectives relating to the environment:-
- Address the need for quality living environments
  - Adopt a proactive approach to the wise use of the natural environment

■ Conserve and promote local identity

Also a number of the general policies in the Plan support the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and as such ensure that there will be few harmful effects on the environment as a result of development proposals. A potentially insensitive planning application will be assessed against all of the general policies in the Plan, and if such a development is to go ahead, it would need to offer some mitigation measures to avoid detrimental effects to the environment.

**Final Steps**

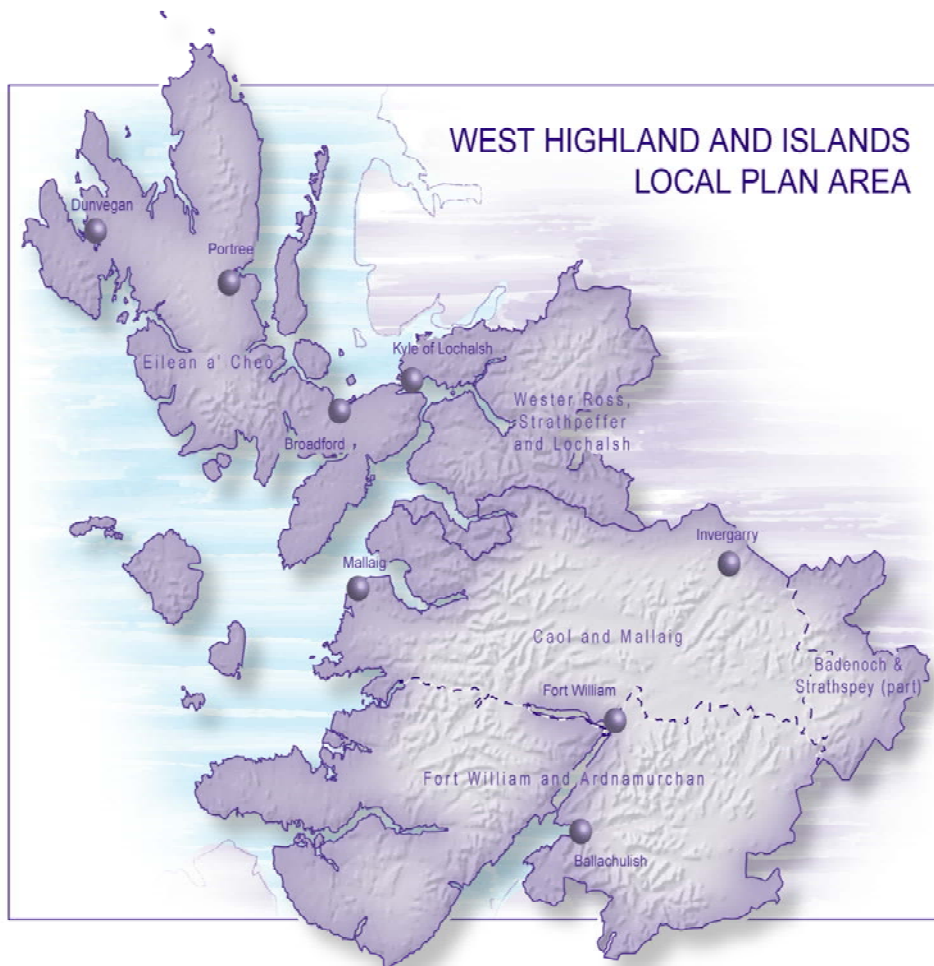
- 1.7 The Plan has now been adopted. Objections to the Plan were considered at an Examination. This is a process, chaired by Scottish Government appointed Reporters, that allows independent consideration of and judgement upon, objections to the Plan's content. Objections based on concerns about the environmental effects of the Plan's policies and proposals were heard at this Examination. The outcome was that the Reporters recommended changes to the Plan and these have been incorporated by the Council. These changes are listed and explained in two documents, an SEA Update Statement and a Post Adoption SEA Statement which are both available via the Council's principal planning office at Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness and via the Council's website via:  
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/whilp.htm>

## **2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) is the EC Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. The West Highland and Islands Local Plan required the production of a SEA and this finalised Environmental Report sets out the SEA process and accompanies the adopted version of the Plan.
- 2.2 The process has included the production of a Scoping Report which helped to identify a methodology for assessment and the likely effects of the Local Plan. The Scoping Report was sent out to the three consultation Authorities (Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, and Historic Scotland) for comment. We received their responses in June 2006.
- 2.3 A Draft Environmental Report was published in December 2007 alongside a Deposit Draft of the Local Plan for a consultation period of 12 weeks. The Scottish Government urged the Council to re-consult on its assessment of the environmental effects of the Local Plan to offer an earlier and more effective opportunity for comment on these effects and the Council's consideration of them. Therefore the Council decided to publish an Augmented Environmental Report in May 2008 alongside the Pre-Deposit Draft of the Local Plan for a further consultation period of 6 weeks to offer another opportunity for comment before making decisions about the contents of a new, more finalised, Deposit Draft Plan. The comments received from the Consultation Authorities in January and June 2008 informed the content of the Revised Environmental Report and are contained in Appendix 10(b).

### **The Key Facts for the West Highland & Islands Local Plan Area**

- 2.4 The Plan area is defined on the map below. Lochaber is predominantly made up of mountainous terrain comprising some 4,468 sq. km of the south west Highlands. Its coastline overlooks the Inner Hebrides chain stretching from Mull through to Skye. The landward margins reach north towards Inverness, east to Badenoch and south across Rannoch Moor into Argyll and Bute. The area embraces mainland Britain's highest and westernmost extremities, Ben Nevis and Ardnamurchan Point. It includes such celebrated landscapes as Glencoe, Glen Nevis, Knoydart and the Small Isles.
- 2.5 The area has a population of 19,252, which has increased by 1.6% since 2001. Approximately 55% of the population live in Fort William which is the key sub-regional town and principal employment, service and tourist centre. The age profile is similar to that of Highland.
- 2.6 The Skye and Lochalsh Local Plan area extends over 2,732 square kilometres and is an area of significant landscape importance. It covers the Isle of Skye, the smaller islands such as Raasay and Rona and the adjacent mainland area of Lochalsh. It is home to the stunning scenic beauty of Glenshiel, the Five Sisters of Kintail and the Cuillin Hills.
- 2.7 The area has a population of 12,950 people which has increased by around 5% since 2001. The area is sparsely populated containing 4.53 persons per square kilometre (compared to 7.7 Highland wide). It too has a similar proportion to Highland in terms of its population in the very youngest and very oldest age groups.



### The Local Plan

- 2.8 Local plans set out detailed policies and proposals for the development management of a given area. The West Highland and Islands Local Plan is utilised to guide decisions on planning applications that are lodged within the Plan's jurisdiction. The Plan replaces: the Lochaber Local Plan which was approved in February 1999; the Skye and Lochalsh adopted Plan which dates back to March 1999, and; that part of the Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan (Adopted September 1997) west of Kinlochlaggan, close to Loch Laggan and the A86.

### 3 PURPOSE AND LOCAL PLAN CONTEXT

#### The Purpose of the SEA

- 3.1 The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. The SEA aims to identify and mitigate significant environment effects arising from certain plans and programmes. The Directive requires that an SEA be carried out on every local plan and an environmental report produced.
- 3.2 The consideration of environmental factors has always been integral to the production of a local plan. However, there was never a defined process or report produced. The Strategic Environmental Assessment will provide a more comprehensive and transparent means of assessing the environmental issues that would normally be considered in the plan-making process.

#### Objectives of the Local Plan

- 3.3 The strategic objectives of the Local Plan are based on those identified in the Highland Structure Plan (approved in 2001). This Highland-wide document, approved by Scottish Ministers, provides the regional policy framework for local plan objectives and policy content. These objectives aim to create quality living environments and sustainable development. They are listed below:-

##### *Consolidating the settlement hierarchy*

- To sustain the role and function of places to in supporting housing, jobs, services and facilities at a scale commensurate with their size, location and the distribution of the population.
- To expand the functions of the sub-regional centres and strengthen their position as the focus for population, employment, commerce and transport.

##### *Taking an integrated approach to improving accessibility to goods, services and markets*

- To promote improvements in infrastructure, enhance connectivity internally and externally outwith the Area, and provide for convenient interchange between different modes of transport.
- To direct development to nodal locations within the transport and utility “corridors” and encourage “mixed use” and sustainable travel.
- To recognise the scope to amalgamate public services for viability and promote innovation in their delivery as part of sustainable communities.

##### *Creating an improved business environment*

- To encourage development and supporting infrastructure at locations which offer economic advantage.

##### *Addressing the need for quality living environments*

- To promote the principles of sustainability, excellence and innovation in the design of buildings and places and the regeneration of communities.

##### *Adopting a proactive approach to the wise use of the natural environment*

- To identify resources and their sensitivity and enable development or use of a type and scale within acceptable environmental limits, including the re-use of “brownfield” land.
- To promote opportunities for maximising development of “renewables” and implementing the Area Waste Plan.
- To direct development away from land susceptible to flood, erosion, subsidence or other risk, whilst recognising the value of related “buffers” and mitigation.

#### *Conserving and promoting local identity*

- To safeguard and market the area's uniqueness and heritage as a key underpinning of regeneration, economic growth and social well-being.

#### *Working in partnership with other agencies*

- To promote a development and land use framework which delivers the plans and programmes of the principal service providers and environmental management bodies and collaborate with the private sector and partners to meet the area's strategic development aspirations.

### **Links to Other Plans and Programmes**

- 3.4 The Local Plan needs to take into account a number of other plans, programmes and strategies in its formulation. There are a wide range of documents that will influence the objectives and proposals of the Plan. Appendix 10(a) to this report identifies the plans, programmes and strategies which we have considered in the production of the Local Plan. The appendix highlights the environmental objectives of these documents and considers how the Local Plan will aim to contribute to these objectives.

### **The Main Plans and Programmes to be considered**

- 3.5 The relevant plans, programmes and strategies have been divided into various tiers from International importance to local importance. Examples of these documents include:-
- International/European Tier – Kyoto Protocol (1998)
  - UK National Tier – Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended, 1981)
  - Scotland National Tier – Choosing Our Future: Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy (Scottish Executive, 2005)
  - Scottish National Planning Policy Tier – SPP 6 Renewable Energy (2007), SPP 7 Planning and Flooding (2004), PAN 61 Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (2001)
  - Regional Tier – The Highland Council's Planning for Sustainability in the Highlands DPPG (2006)
  - Local Tier – Lochaber Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2004), Skye and Lochalsh Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2003), Lochaber Landscape Character Assessment (1998), Skye and Lochalsh Landscape Character Assessment (1996).



## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **The Highland Council's Approach to SEA**

- 4.1 The Council's approach to the SEA process follows the guidance set down by The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Scottish Government. There has been an emphasis on integrating the Local Plan objectives with those of the SEA process. The strategic environmental assessment of the development site options and the aims of the SEA have been integral to the development of the Plan.
- 4.2 The revised Environmental Report was published at the same time as the Deposit Draft Local Plan. The SEA process informed the Plan process of the likely significant environmental effects of the Plan's objectives, policies and allocations and we looked at ways of avoiding or mitigating possible negative effects.

### **The SEA Process**

- 4.3 The SEA process works in conjunction with a number of stages in the development plan process. These stages were followed to complete the SEA Environmental report, and are as follows:-
- Scoping likely significant environment effects
  - Formulating environmental objectives and criteria
  - Assessing the Plan and alternatives to the Plan, which includes testing the Plan's objectives, policies and allocations
  - Publication of a Draft (Augmented) Environmental Report with the Pre-Deposit Draft Local Plan
  - Preparing the Deposit Draft Local Plan with the Revised Environmental Report
  - Considering the environmental effects of the Plan through the Examination process and the Reporters' recommendations
  - Consideration of the content and format of the final version of the Environmental Report and finalisation of the means of monitoring the Plan's policies and proposals prior to the adoption of the Local Plan
  - Inclusion of a statement explaining how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan; how the consultation authorities views and the public's responses have been taken into account; and the reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted as opposed to other alternative policies and proposals considered
  - Monitoring of the significant environmental effects of the Plan and considering the possible need for review of the Plan and the SEA Environmental Report.

### **SEA Screening**

- 4.4 Section 5(3)(a) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 has now established that all statutory development plans require a SEA.

### **Environmental Baseline**

- 4.5 The baseline data was collated from a number of sources to give a view of the current condition of the Local Plan area. The data includes information about population statistics, life expectancy, fragile areas (all obtained from GRO(S)), designated areas such as National Scenic Areas, Special Protection Areas and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SNH data), and information gained from completing the SEA matrices for each potential development site which identifies issues in relation to the percentage of sites at potential flood risk and contamination. The environmental baseline data offers a means of providing a source of information against which the potential effects of the Local Plan can be assessed and monitored. We need to monitor whether the policies and proposals of the Plan have an effect, whether positive or negative, on the resources of the Plan area. The

refinement of the environmental baseline data and intentions for monitoring are discussed in section 8 and in more detail in the Post Adoption SEA Statement - available via: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/whilp.htm>

### **SEA Scoping**

- 4.6 The Council produced a Scoping Report for the Plan area and sent this to the consultation authorities. The Scoping Report set out the key facts for the area, the SEA objectives, the areas of international, national and local/regional importance, and, moreover, attempted to identify the potential effects of the Local Plan and how these could be assessed. We received comments on the Scoping Report in June 2006 and these were taken into account in the formulation of the Environmental Report published in December 2007.

### **Assessing the Local Plan against the SEA**

- 4.7 The environmental assessment of the Local Plan has involved the evaluation of each of the SEA objectives against the Local Plan objectives; this is shown in Table 4.1 below. Generally, the Plan objectives have scored positively against the SEA objectives. This is probably because we have carried out the SEA and Plan process simultaneously. Where there has been a conflict between the SEA and Plan objectives we have offered a form of mitigation against this negative impact. The table which we have used to assess the SEA objectives against the Local Plan objectives is shown below.
- 4.8 The scoring system provides clarity relating to the significance of the effects on the environment. Most of the Plan objectives will not significantly impact on the SEA objectives. The objectives that will impact are those which actively encourage the expansion of settlements and transport proposals. Even if the new transport proposals are sustainable, they still involve new development and therefore the possible destruction of certain habitats and species. Table 4.1 outlines the various strands of mitigation that we suggest will help address any concerns.

**Table 4.1 SEA Objectives and their relation to the Local Plan’s Objectives**

**Predicted impact (+ positive, - negative, 0 neutral)**

We recognise that levels of mitigation will vary, but the scores recorded in table 5.1 are based on “typical” current practice. However, we will strive for as much mitigation as possible. The following assessment was undertaken with the assumption that the General Policies (as amended within the Deposit Draft 2008) of the Local Plan were to be used for mitigation purposes. Post Examination changes strengthened some mitigation requirements and none were removed or diluted.

**Environmental Effect Scoring**

Symbol	Description of Effect
+	Small positive effect
++	Significant positive effect
0	Neutral or no effect
-	Small negative effect
--	Significant negative effect

SEA Objectives	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife	Possible Mitigation	
Sustain the role and function of places in supporting housing, jobs, services and facilities	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Application of General Policies as amended
Expand the functions of the	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	-	-	-	Application of	

sub-regional centres																									General Policies as amended Avoid key wildlife corridors and habitats and species (Art. 1 Habitats Dir.)
Promote improvements in infrastructure, enhance connectivity and provide for convenient interchange of modes of transport	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	-	-	-	Application of General Policies as amended Avoid key wildlife corridors and habitats and species. (Art. 1 Habitats Dir.)
Direct development to nodal locations within the transport and utility "corridors" and encourage "mixed use" and sustainable travel	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	-	-	-	Application of General Policies as amended Avoid key wildlife corridors and habitats and species. (Art. 1 Habitats Dir.)
Recognise the scope to amalgamate public services for viability and promote innovation in their delivery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Application of General Policies as amended
Encourage development and supporting infrastructure at locations which offer economic advantage	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	Application of General Policies as amended Avoid key wildlife corridors and habitats and species. (Art. 1 Habitats Dir.)
Promote the principles of sustainability, excellence and innovation in the design of buildings and places for regeneration of communities	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	Application of General Policies as amended
Identify resources and their sensitivity and enable development or use of a type and scale within acceptable environmental limits	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	Application of General Policies as amended
Promote opportunities for maximising development of "renewables" and	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	Application of General Policies as amended

implementing the Area Waste Plan																									
Direct development away from land susceptible to flood, erosion, subsidence or other risk	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	Application of General Policies as amended
Safeguard and market the area's uniqueness and heritage	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Application of General Policies as amended
Promote a development and land use framework which delivers the plans and programmes of the principal service and environmental management bodies	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	Application of General Policies as amended

- 4.9 It is important that designated areas are treated sympathetically. The West Highland and Islands Local Plan Adopted Plan, General Policy 4 Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage addresses the issue of Natura sites with the following wording - *“For features of **international importance** (Natura 2000 (SPA, SAC) and Ramsar sites), developments likely to have a significant effect on a site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site for nature conservation, will be subject to an appropriate assessment. Where we are unable to ascertain that a proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of a site, we will only allow development if there is no alternative solution and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. Where a priority habitat or species (as defined in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive) would be affected, development in such circumstances will only be allowed if the reasons for overriding public interest relate to human health, public safety, beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment, or other reasons subject to the opinion of the European Commission (via Scottish Ministers). Where we are unable to ascertain that a proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of a site, the proposal will not be in accordance with the development plan within the meaning of Section 25(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.”*

#### **Identification of Effects on Natura Interests**

- 4.10 The Plan is subject to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Therefore, the Plan cannot be approved unless the Council can ensure that the policies and proposals of the Plan are not likely to have a significant effect on any European site, or an appropriate assessment has been carried out in respect of the provisions of the Plan in line with Articles 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive. The Council has carried out a separate Habitats Regulations Appraisal (including Appropriate Assessment) for the Plan and satisfied itself and the Reporters that the requirements are met. The Appraisal is available via

#### **Difficulties Encountered in the SEA Process**

- 4.11 There were problems gathering relevant, up to date, information and assessing the likely impacts of the Plan on environmental objectives. It was difficult to obtain data sets that are pertinent to the Plan area as many cover the Highland area as a whole. The baseline data involved a trawl of The General Office for Scotland data, Scottish Natural Heritage information pertaining to designated nature conservation sites and NHS neighbourhood statistics. There was also an assessment of the SEA matrices for each “Site Option”. The availability of data and potential actions to gather fundamentally important data is discussed in section 8 on monitoring.

#### **SEA Matrices**

- 4.12 It was difficult identifying relevant questions to ask in the assessment of each “Site Option” to cover thoroughly such aspects as material asset and landscape, the historic environment, biodiversity and climatic factors. We also assessed human health and population impacts of the Plan’s policies and proposals. It proved difficult to separate the environmental effects from the socio-economic effects but it is recognised that Strategic Environmental Assessment does not require the weighing of these other effects. The

population and human health issues centred around providing housing for the community including affordable housing provision, providing open space, ensuring access to services and encouraging active travel and healthy lifestyles.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment**

- 4.13 The assessment of sites which are proposed to be allocated in the Plan also encounters problems where there are no detailed plans for the site or for how it should be constructed or accessed. Some specific proposals which may come forward as planning applications on allocated sites will require an Environmental Impact Assessment, Environmental Statement or Appropriate Assessment (see below) at that time. This detailed assessment is not appropriate at local plan level. Below is a link to guidance on the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999. The regulations specify which types and sizes of development require Environmental Impact Assessment.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/11/30082353/14>

### **Appropriate Assessment**

- 4.14 Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan is required under the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994 (as amended) in order that the planning authority as competent authority may determine the likely impact of it on the conservation interests for which a European nature conservation site has been classified. Appropriate Assessment has been completed and is available via:

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

## 5 PREDICTED ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE AND ISSUES

### Environmental Baseline for the Lochaber, Skye and Lochalsh Area

5.1 This part of the Environmental Report examines baseline data and trends that are considered to be relevant to the production of the Plan. More detailed mapping is available within the Map Booklet of the Plan. We included new or relevant data if it became available during the consultation stages of the Plan process. Table 5.1 below summarises the main statistics for the area.

Table 5.1 Key Baseline Facts

Environmental Receptor	Key Facts
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Over 40% of UK's threatened species present</li> <li>▪ 66 UK Priority Habitats (35 in Skye and Lochalsh and 31 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 15 Local Priority Habitats (6 in Skye and Lochalsh and 9 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 146 UK Priority Species (68 in Skye and Lochalsh and 78 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 258 Local Priority Species (176 in Skye and Lochalsh and 82 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ Habitat types in West Highland include: Marshy grassland and rough pasture; Upland Meadows; Blanket bog; Wet woodland and Purple moor grass and rush pastures.</li> <li>▪ UK BAP Species in West Highland include: Ragged Robin; Common Eyebright; Brown Trout; Yellowhammer and Lapwing</li> </ul>
Designated Natural Heritage Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 8 NSA sites (3 in Skye and Lochalsh and 5 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 3 SPA sites (1 in Skye and Lochalsh and 2 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 19 SAC sites (9 in Skye and Lochalsh and 10 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 89 SSSI sites (41 in Skye and Lochalsh and 48 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ The percentage of coverage of NSAs, SPAs, SACs and SSSIs is shown in table 5.2 and is also illustrated in map 5.2</li> <li>▪ 2 RAMSAR sites (0 in Skye and Lochalsh and 2 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 12 proposed AGLVs (6 in Lochaber and 6 in Skye and Lochalsh)</li> <li>▪ Landscape Character Assessments for Lochaber and Skye &amp; Lochalsh (see Appendices for details)</li> </ul>
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2001 Census: 31,163 (12,374 in Skye and Lochalsh and 18,789 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ Life Expectancy: The average is 76.7 years for the Plan area (80.3 for females and 74.5 for males in Skye and Lochalsh, and 79.1 for females and 72.9 for males in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 16.8% of the population are over 65 (this is higher than the Highland average of 15%)</li> </ul>



<b>Environmental Receptor</b>	<b>Key Facts</b>
Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 550 listed buildings (255 in Skye and Lochalsh and 295 in Lochaber)</li> <li>14 Gardens and Designed Landscapes (5 in Skye and Lochalsh and 9 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 19 Conservation Areas (9 in Skye and Lochalsh and 10 in Lochaber)</li> <li>▪ 8,252 Archaeological Sites (HER) (4,490 in Skye and Lochalsh and 3,762 in Lochaber)</li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Morar is the only beach in the Local Plan area to be included in the Scottish Bathing Waters report, carried out by SEPA in 2006. The area is currently classified as good bathing water.</li> <li>▪ 26 out of 104 Shellfish Harvesting/Growing Waters as designated by SEPA under EC Shellfish Waters Directive (79/923/EEC) are located in Skye, Lochalsh and Lochaber (the shellfish growing areas are plotted on map 5.1 overleaf)</li> </ul>
Air Pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relatively low atmospheric pollution</li> </ul>
Flood Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The percentage of Site Options which are at a potential flood risk is 22%</li> </ul>
Potentially Contaminated Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The percentage of Site Options which are potentially contaminated is 20%</li> </ul>
Brownfield Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The percentage of Site Options which are brownfield is 20%</li> </ul>
Vacant and Derelict Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The percentage of Site Options which are included in the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey is 7%, half of these sites are allocated in the Proposed Plan</li> </ul>
Fragile Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are large parts of the Plan area, outside the major settlements, that can be classed as fragile areas because more than one of their key services is over 10 minute drive away and by public transport this figure is often tripled. Map 5.3 illustrates this overleaf.</li> </ul>

Table 5.2 Percentage of land covered by NSAs, SPAs, SACs and SSSIs

<b>Type of designation</b>	<b>Skye and Lochalsh</b>	<b>Lochaber</b>	<b>Combined Percentage</b>
NSAs	19.6%	46.6%	33.1%
SPAs	10.8%	3%	6.9%
SACs	4.6%	11.6%	8.1%
SSSIs	16.6%	15.9%	16.25%

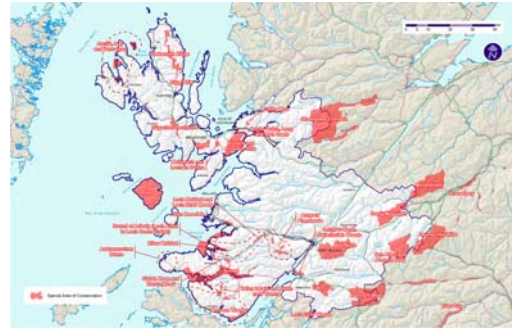
Map 5.1 Percentage of NSAs, SPAs, SACs and SSSIs

Enlarged versions of the maps below are available via the background maps of the Map Booklet available via [www.highland.gov.uk/whilp](http://www.highland.gov.uk/whilp) and in paper form in public libraries.

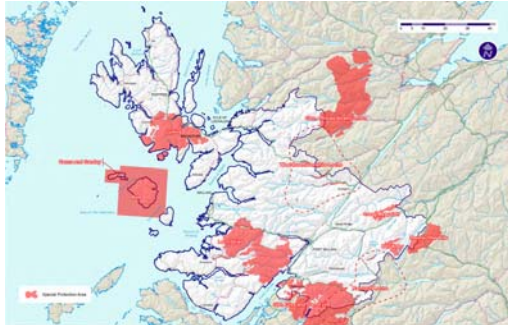
**NSAs**



**SACs**



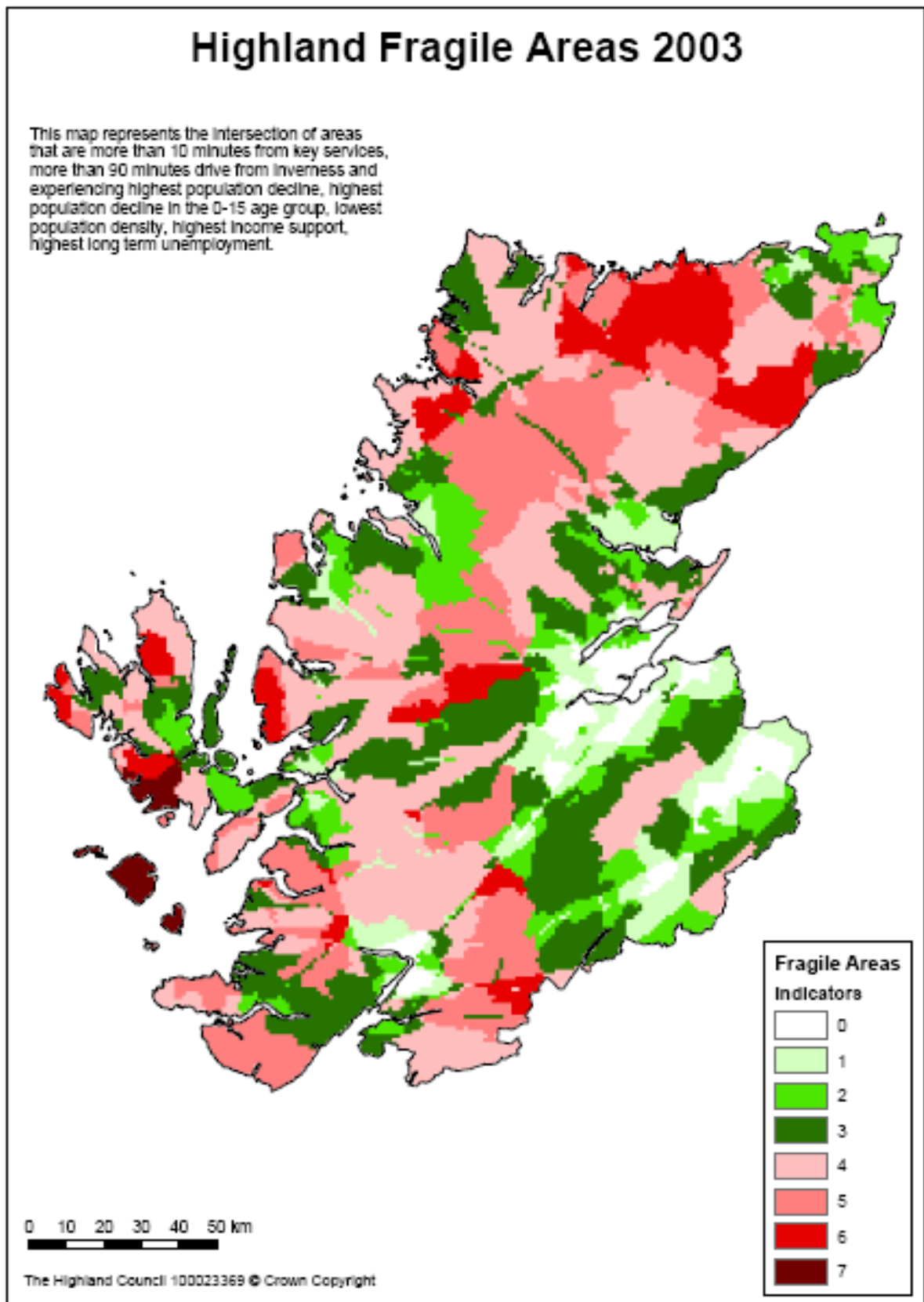
**SPAs**



**SSSIs**



Map 5.2 Highland Fragile Areas Map 2003



## Environmental Problems in the West Highland & Islands Local Plan Area

5.2 Potential environmental problems that affect the Plan area were identified through initial discussions with communities, the Consultation Authorities and an analysis of data currently available. These are summarised in table 5.3 below. We identified the main Environmental Receptor(s) that each potential environmental problem relates to, however it is recognised that there may be other receptors as well.

Table 5.3 Environmental Problems

Potential Environmental Problem	Environmental Receptor this relates to	Implications for Local Plan	Response in Local Plan
Negative impact of development on traditional crofting settlement character	Historic Environment	The Local Plan must ensure that a policy framework is in place which will ensure development fits with the existing settlement character.	General Policies 1 and 4
Negative impact of development on natural, built and cultural heritage features	Biodiversity and Designated Natural Heritage Features	The Local Plan will seek to maintain a high quality natural heritage and taking account of built/cultural heritage sites	General Policy 4
Decay of listed buildings	Historic Environment	The Local Plan should identify key sites for redevelopment.	General Policy 4
Negative impact of access on habitat, species and the historic environment	Historic Environment and Biodiversity	The Local Plan will seek to ensure a balance between the demand for development while protecting the quality and character of the environment and ensure a key link with the access strategy and core path planning work.	General Policy 4
Tidal and riverine flood risk to new and existing development	Flood Risk	The Local Plan will seek to ensure that land at risk from flooding is not identified as suitable for development	General Policy 9
Reduced quality of watercourses and the coastal environment	Water	The Local Plan will seek to put in place a policy framework which takes into account any potential detrimental impact on watercourses or the coastal environment.	General Policy 14
Continued reliance on inappropriate waste management practices	Potentially Contaminated Land	The Local Plan will provide clear reference to the Area Waste Plan and fully assess the need for additional waste management facilities.	General Policy 8
Negative impact of development on air quality	Air Quality	Due to the negligible air pollution in West Highland & Islands and the lack of large scale industrial development	General Policy 4 and Structure Plan policy

		proposed, the Local Plan does not require a General Policy specifically on air quality. However we will apply the policy in the Structure Plan if applicable and policy in the successor Highland-wide Plan.	
Potential negative effect of identified contaminated land	Potentially Contaminated Land	The Local Plan will encourage development on suitable brownfield sites ensuring that contamination issues are fully addressed at the earliest possible stage.	General Policy 10
Negative impact of inappropriate aquaculture development	Water	The Local Plan will seek to balance the need for economic development in aquaculture against the quality of the environment. Aquaculture Framework Plans and Coastal Zone Management Plans deal with such development issues and the Highland-wide Local Development Plan will pursue the issue further.	General Policy 3, balanced with General Policy 4 and others
Loss of good quality croft land	Population and Historic Environment	The Local Plan will seek to ensure that good quality croft land is safeguarded from inappropriate development	General Policies 1-4
Loss of native woodland cover	Biodiversity	The Local Plan will identify areas of native woodland and ensure that the impact on these areas is fully considered in development proposals.	General Policies 4, 11, 12 and 13
Loss of peatland cover	Biodiversity	The Local Plan will seek to ensure that the impact on areas of important peatland cover is fully considered and that such areas are protected where appropriate.	General Policies 4, 11, 12 and 13
Loss of land for recreation	Population	The Local Plan will recognise the importance of recreation and tourism and seek to put in place a policy framework which reflects this.	General Policy 2 and SG on Open Space
Negative impact of development on the key species and habitats promoted through the Local Biodiversity Action Plan	Biodiversity	The Local Plan will ensure the key species and habitats promoted through the Local Biodiversity Action Plan are fully considered.	General Policy 12
Increased travel/energy use	Population and Air Pollution	The Local Plan will seek to reduce the need to travel by promoting development within existing settlements whilst	General Policy 19

		recognising the needs of the rural area.	
Lack of sustainable design and construction techniques	Air Pollution	The Local Plan will promote sustainable design	General Policy 6 and SPG on Sustainable Design
Lack of provision of affordable housing	Population and Fragile Areas	The Local Plan will ensure a policy framework is in place to allow the delivery of affordable housing.	General Policy 5
Poor use of sustainable drainage schemes	Water	The Local Plan will provide clear reference to the key requirements for sustainable drainage systems.	General Policy 14

### Limitations of Data

5.3 There is a wealth of data 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 the Plan area have been more widely studied than others. Therefore, the quality and accuracy of information for some areas will be greater than for others.
- Data is predominantly gathered on a Highland wide basis, therefore, it has proved difficult at times to disaggregate this information for the West Highland and Islands area only.
- 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.

Data limitations are discussed further in section 9 on monitoring.

### Evolution of the Environment without the Local Plan

5.4 The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) requires an assessment of the likely future of the environment should the Local Plan not be produced. The negative trends highlighted in table 5.3 above are likely to continue if there are no planning policies to help guide development to appropriate locations and to secure appropriate mitigation.

## **6 LOCAL PLAN STRATEGIC OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

### **Alternatives**

- 6.1 SEA requires that “reasonable alternatives” to the Plan are considered. Alternatives are outlined here in order to set the context for the following two sections of this report – scoping of SEA issues and consideration of a framework for the assessment of environmental effects. The Council’s consideration of site options also provided an assessment of the environmental effects of alternatives albeit at the settlement scale (see section 8 below).
- 6.2 At the highest level, the main options concerning plan preparation are to either prepare or not prepare a local plan. However, given that the preparation of a local development plan within a prescribed timescale is now a statutory duty placed on the Council, then a “do nothing” approach is not a reasonable option. Therefore the high level “option” to prepare a plan has been chosen.
- 6.3 Both the Lochaber Futures and Skye and Lochalsh Main Issues Report posed questions about strategic alternatives. For example Lochaber Futures suggested that reversing previous population decline should be an underlying principle of the Plan but that a more aspirational, vision for future population and employment growth could be achieved with the right circumstances. In Skye and Lochalsh, the Main Issues Report invited comment on the reasonableness of a more specific target of 100 houses per annum over the Plan period. It also prompted debate on the key planning policy alternatives of concentration versus dispersal and the use of brown or greenfield sites. Similarly the pros and cons of a restrictive housing in the countryside policy around both Portree and Fort William were floated for public and Committee debate. Fort William and Sleat’s expansion options of internal or satellite new settlement growth were also included.
- 6.4 It should be noted that many development pressures and outcomes are outwith the scope of, or not within the complete control of, the local plan. However, debate was invited on these options and others through the consultation documents and exercises and the results reported to Committee for decision.
- 6.5 Using the examples above, the Council resolved that the growth targets were reasonable for both areas in that maintaining or fostering a small but steady rate of population growth was an acceptable aspiration and one that could be achieved without compromising the environment provided development of the right type occurred in the right places and if necessary with the right mitigation. In terms of concentration versus dispersal, it was agreed that concentration of development within existing settlements normally resulted in less environmental impact. For Lochaber, this resulted in: the Plan’s re-application of a restrictive housing in the countryside policy around Fort William; the limiting of the number of identified smaller housing in the countryside settlements, and the consequent concentration of most allocated development sites within larger established settlements.
- 6.6 In Skye and Lochalsh, the Plan is more permissive in not applying a restrictive commuter hinterland policy around Portree and in identifying far

morecrofting settlement development boundaries. These choices could potentially have more environmental impact but the Council felt that many parts of Skye and Lochalsh have an established settlement pattern of dispersedcrofting townships and allowing the continued organic expansion of these communities was important for social and economic reasons. The Plan does however emphasise the importance of drawing the settlement development area boundaries in such a way as to minimise environmental effects of new development. Enhanced siting and design, landscape character guidance and landscape references / objectives have been incorporated within the Plan.

- 6.7 Wherever possible, brownfield sites have been given preference to greenfield but given the rural nature of much of the Plan area options are limited. Potential new/expanded settlements are suggested for Kilbeg and Torlundy. The latter was deleted following Examination. Matrices have been produced for these locations that assess their likely environmental effects. The Council still believes that if these are developed as sustainable and as far as possible self-contained communities then they can provide a reasonable alternative to development sites within established settlements. This will depend upon securing mitigation such as non-car transport links and structural landscaping but new settlements can have environmental advantages such as allowing comprehensive rather than piecemeal sewerage provision.



## **7 SEA OBJECTIVES AND PLAN GENERAL POLICIES COMPATIBILITY**

7.1 This Revised Environmental Report identifies the likely significant effects of the Plan, with specific reference to the following aspects of the environment.

- Biodiversity
- Population
- Human health
- Fauna
- Flora
- Soil
- Water
- Air
- Climatic figures
- Material assets
- Cultural assets, including architectural and archaeological heritage
- landscape
- The inter-relationship between these

SEA objectives were identified to incorporate the above areas, and these form the basis on which the plan will be assessed. The 24 SEA objectives as shown in detail in the next section and were agreed in principle with the Consultation Authorities during the development of the Strategic Environmental Assessment methodology for the Wester Ross Local Plan.

7.2 The Council's starting point in identifying the SEA objectives was the 15 sustainability objectives set out in The Highland Structure Plan (2001). These were expanded and further developed by taking account of guidance from a number of sources and now total 24 SEA objectives.

### **SEA Objectives**

7.3 The SEA Objectives are informed by the need to cover the range of issues outlined in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations. This Schedule covers issues such as material assets and landscape, the historic environment, biodiversity, flora and fauna, air, water, soil and climatic factors and human health.

7.4 The SEA Objectives are also informed by environmental issues that are particularly prevalent in the West Highland and Islands Local Plan area. These objectives are listed below.

1. Protect and Enhance Human Health
2. Minimise exposure to noise and vibration
3. Reduce and prevent crime and fear of crime
4. Increase social inclusion
5. Protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment
6. Enhance landscape and townscape character
7. Value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness
8. Retain and improve quality and quantity of publicly accessible open space
9. Reduce single houses/small groups of houses in open countryside
10. Improve quality of built environment
11. Reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change
12. Increase proportion of energy from renewable sources
13. Minimise waste, then re-use or recover it through recycling, composting or energy recovery

14. Reduce need for energy
15. Increase use of sustainable building techniques
16. Reduce air pollution to levels that do not damage natural systems, including contribution to climate change
17. Reduce the need to travel
18. Increase potential use of public transport
19. Avoid impact to and where possible enhance the water environment
20. Maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (inc. future capacity)
21. Reduce contamination, safeguard soil quantity and quality
22. Protect, enhance and where necessary restore designated wildlife sites and protected species
23. Improve biodiversity, avoiding irreversible losses
24. Provide appropriate opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate wildlife and wild places

7.5 The 24 draft SEA Objectives can be assessed against the policies and objectives of the Local Plan (the objectives of the Plan and the SEA process are assessed in the Methodology section). The tables below offer an assessment of the Plan's General Policies against the SEA objectives. The predicted impact is based on assumptions that adequate mitigation is secured from the developer or that proposals that are clearly unacceptable in terms of the relevant policy wording are refused. Site SEA matrices define the detail of developer requirements that are required for mitigation. These objectives have been reviewed for more recent local development plans and the Council is committed to improving them as better practice and data becomes available.

## Assessment Of Environmental Impacts Of Local Plan General Policies

### General Policy (GP) 1 - Settlement Development Areas

"We will support proposals within Settlement Development Areas (as shown on the Proposals Map insets) if they meet the requirements of Structure Plan Policy G2 Design for Sustainability, as shown on the page following Policy 6 of this Plan.

We will also judge proposals in terms of how compatible they are with the existing pattern of development, how they conform with existing and approved adjacent land uses, and the effect on any natural and cultural heritage feature within these areas (see Policy 4, Appendix 1 and Background Maps).

Developments which are judged to be significantly detrimental in terms of the above criteria shall not accord with the Local Plan."

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
Policy																								
GP1	+	-	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>		<p>Noise - The design of settlements to promote active travel could offset potential noise pollution.</p> <p>Historic Environment - There are allocations within SDAs which have developer requirements as mitigation. If it is likely that any built heritage is going to be affected then a developer requirement can be used as mitigation.</p> <p>Climate change, renewable energy, energy and designated sites – by encouraging development within SDAs it is more likely that district heating schemes are viable. Concentrating development in established settlements encourages less car use. Any new development is also likely to be in keeping with existing settlement patterns.</p>																						

## General Policy (GP) 2 - Development Factors and Developer Requirements

“Developers must take account of the details set out on the Proposals Map insets. We will give particular consideration to the total effect of private water and sewage systems.”

SEA Objective  Policy	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP2</b>	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>					<p>Historic Environment – this general policy has a neutral impact on the historic environment.</p> <p>Contamination – this general policy can have a positive impact on contamination as a developer requirement can be used as mitigation.</p> <p>Waste Management – this general policy can have a positive impact on waste management as a developer requirement can be used to ensure the benefits off-site of recycling.</p>																			

## General Policy (GP) 3 - Wider Countryside

“Outwith Settlement Development Areas, proposals may be acceptable where they help support communities in fragile rural areas who are having difficulties in keeping their population and services by helping to repopulate communities and strengthen services.. Suitably designed proposals will be supported if they:

- are consistent with other policies in the Highland Structure Plan and this Local Plan;
- are in accordance with the existing settlement pattern and landscape character and avoid, where possible, the loss of locally important croft land; and
- account for drainage constraints or can otherwise be adequately serviced and do not involve undue public expenditure or infrastructure out of keeping with the rural character of the area.”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP3</b>	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	0	-	0	0	0	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	<p>Social Inclusion and Housing in the Countryside – the negative aspects associated with housing in the wider countryside can be offset by a permissive approach to affordable housing in the countryside and the promotion of the development of new crofts which can both enable greater social inclusion by offering affordable accommodation solutions.</p> <p>Waste Management – the Council will encourage recycling through Council policy through the provision of waste recycling facilities.</p> <p>Energy.</p> <p>Reduce the Need for Energy - The Council will encourage the promotion of the renewable energy generation in the wider countryside.</p> <p>Air Pollution, Sustainable Travel, Public Transport, Water Environment – The Council will encourage the use of active and public transport to reduce any potential pollution problems.</p> <p>Designated Wildlife/Species – The Council will highlight designated areas in the development plan and will aim to avoid the unsympathetic development of these areas. One house in the countryside is less likely to have impact, however it is acknowledged that lots of single houses could have a cumulative impact, but these effects are not predictable.</p> <p>Landscape character – the second bullet point in the General Policy has changed and Landscape Character Assessment principles are being strengthened in the Local Plan. We are encouraging developers to be aware of landscape however a design guide is not yet available.</p> <p>Biodiversity and designated wildlife – neutral effects as General Policies 11, 12 and 13 have been amended to provide mitigation.</p> <p>Water environment – the General Policy has been amended to discharge to land rather than water.</p>																							

## General Policy (GP) 4 - Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage

“When making decisions on development proposals we will take account of the level of importance of, and the effect on natural, built and cultural heritage features. This will include where appropriate, not just the feature itself but the wider setting and impacts which must be taken into account. This policy must be read in conjunction with the Background Maps and the policy frameworks identified in Appendix 1.

1. For features of local/regional importance we will allow developments if we believe that they will not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity and heritage resource.

2. For features of national importance we will allow developments that can be shown not to compromise the amenity and heritage resource. Where there may be any significant adverse effects, these must be clearly outweighed by social or economic benefits of national importance. It must also be shown that the development will support communities in fragile areas who are having difficulties in keeping their population and services.

3. For features of international importance (Natura 2000 (SPA, SAC) and Ramsar sites), developments likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of a site, will be subject to an appropriate assessment. Where we are unable to conclude that a proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of a site, we will allow development, but only where there is no alternative solution and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social, environmental or economic nature. Where a priority habitat or species (as defined in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive) would be affected, prior consultation with the European Commission (via Scottish Ministers) is required unless the proposal is necessary for public health or safety reasons or will have beneficial consequences of primary importance to the environment.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Background Maps and the policy frameworks identified in Appendix 1.”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
Policy																								
GP4	0	0	0	0	++	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	++	+	+
Predicted impact (++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>		<p>The word “unreasonable” has been changed in the General Policy to “unacceptable”.</p> <p>This General Policy is aimed at protecting, not enhancing the natural, built and cultural heritage.</p>																						

## General Policy (GP) 5 - Affordable Housing

“In accordance with the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing, on sites allocated for housing with an indicative overall capacity of four or more houses the Council will expect to either negotiate a Section 75 Agreement with the landowner(s) and other interested parties, or utilise other mechanisms to provide for a contribution towards affordable housing (as defined in the Guideline), such contribution normally being a minimum of 25%. Negotiations will be subject to market and site conditions, and the contribution may be in the form of land, housing units or a financial contribution.

On these allocated sites, and to prevent the subdivision of larger plots, where an application is made for less than four houses, developers will be expected to provide a financial contribution in proportion to the number of units proposed, and a Section 75 agreement (or other mechanisms) will be required to ensure that any further development on the site will include an appropriate proportion of affordable housing.

This will also apply to proposals for development on sites not allocated for housing within this Local Plan and which would be expected to accommodate four or more houses at density levels consistent with the existing settlement or density patterns. When making decisions on development proposals we will take account of other policy considerations, such as the level of importance of, and the effect on, the natural and cultural heritage (see Appendix 1 and Background Maps).

Proposals which include affordable housing should be carefully designed to fully integrate the affordable housing plots as part of a single, overall development of the site and the affordable homes should be indistinguishable from the general market homes in terms of standard of design and average density.

In the landward areas, a contribution towards affordable homes attributed against the primary landholding, will apply in respect of every fourth dwelling granted planning permission, within that same landownership. However, equivalent contribution / provision within any neighbouring settlement will also be acceptable.”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
Policy																								
GP5	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Predicted impact (++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect		Historic Environment – Affordable housing providers are more likely to use historic buildings than private developers.																						

## General Policy (GP) 6 - Designing for Sustainability

"We will judge development proposals against a 'Design for Sustainability' statement which we will normally require developers to submit with their planning applications in line with the Development Plan Policy Guideline on Designing for Sustainability."

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP6</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	<p>Policy G2 is from the Structure Plan, therefore it can not be changed; It also covers crime.</p> <p>The supporting text for the General Policy has been updated.</p> <p>Historic Environment – the DPPG covers design of the historic environment.</p> <p>The DPPG covers habitats, crime and noise (safe and secure environments).</p> <p>The General Policy has been amended and Design for Sustainability Statement will normally be required with planning applications. A Checklist will be rolled out in due course.</p>																							



## General Policy (GP) 7 - Waste Water Treatment

“Connection to the public sewer as defined in the Sewerage (Scotland) Act 1968 is required for all new development proposals either:

- in settlements identified in the plan with a population equivalent of more than 2000 (SEPA can advise on this); or
- wherever single developments of 25 or more units are proposed. In all other cases a connection to the public sewer will be required, unless the applicant can demonstrate that:

- 1) the development is unable to connect to public sewer for technical or economic reasons; or
- 2) the receiving waste water treatment plant is at capacity and Scottish Water has no programmed investment to increase that capacity; and that the proposal is not likely to result in or add to significant environmental or health problems.

The Council's preference is that any private system should discharge to land rather than water.

Within or adjacent to the public sewer, where connection to the public sewer is not permitted because there is no capacity but Scottish Water has confirmed that investment to address this constraint has been specifically allocated within its investment programme, a temporary private system would only be supported if:

- the system would be designed and built to a standard which will allow adoption by Scottish Water.
- the system is designed such that it can be easily connected to a public sewer in the future. Typically this will mean providing a drainage line up to a likely point of connection. The developer must provide Scottish Water with the funds which will allow Scottish Water to complete the connection once the sewerage system has been upgraded.”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
Policy																								
GP7	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	Changes have been made to the General Policy to ensure positive effects are achieved.																							

## General Policy (GP) 8 - Waste Management

“Proposals for waste management facilities will be assessed in line with the approach set out within the Highland Structure Plan subject to taking into account the Highland Area Waste Plan, the National Waste Plan, the National Waste Strategy and SPP10. Developers will be expected to demonstrate how these considerations have been taken into account.

Waste management facilities will be supported:

- on business or industrial land in line with the Highland Structure Plan; or
- in the case of community composting facilities and recycling points, in other locations close to source; provided that they are compatible with surrounding uses and meet other criteria relating to environmental impact and transportation.

Proposals for redevelopment of existing waste management facilities will be assessed against the National Waste Strategy, the National Waste Plan and the Highland Area Waste Plan to determine whether the site should be safeguarded for future waste management purposes, and will be subject to consultation with SEPA.

In considering proposals for any type of new development, the Council will also take into account the extent to which they effectively manage and promote the reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery of waste during the construction and operation of the development including any measures for waste separation and collection at source.”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP8</b>	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>		Designated wildlife/protected sites – this is neutral impact as it discourages fly-tipping. The General Policy has been amended to enhance the positive effects.																						

## General Policy (GP) 9 - Flood Risk

“Development proposals within or bordering areas susceptible to flooding, being areas with a medium to high flood risk (1:200 or greater annual probability of flooding), will need to demonstrate that the probability of flooding and any required mitigation has been assessed; a flood risk assessment will need to be submitted with the planning application.

Development proposals outwith the medium to high flood risk areas may be acceptable unless local circumstances dictate otherwise, and a Flood Risk Assessment may be required.

However, development proposals *within* the medium to high flood risk areas will normally be restricted to:

- Within built-up areas - residential, commercial and industrial development, providing that flood-prevention measures to the appropriate standard already exist or are under construction. Water resistant materials and construction methods should be considered to mitigate the effects of flooding.

- On undeveloped or sparsely developed areas - essential infrastructure, navigational, recreation, transportation, environmental or conservation uses, as well as job-related residential uses with a locational need, providing adequate evacuation procedures are in place. Alternative lower risk locations should always be explored first, and any essential infrastructure should be designed to remain operational during floods.

Developments may also be possible where they are in accord with the flood prevention or management measures as specified within a Local Plan allocation or a Development Brief. Any developments, particularly those on the flood plain, should not compromise the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive.

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP9</b>	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>		Water environment, human health, climate change – the General Policy has been amended and we are trying to avoid flood risk areas where possible.																						

## General Policy (GP) 10 - Physical Constraints

“Subject also to the principle of development, developers will be expected to demonstrate appropriate mitigation, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, if their proposals affect or are affected by the constraints below (where appropriate these are shown on the background maps). Where relevant developers will need to have regard to both existing constraint features and to those consented but not yet built.

- Poorly drained areas
- Within 1,000m of large wind generators<sup>1</sup>
- ENA Standards 43-8: "Overhead Line Clearances" (distance from power lines)<sup>2</sup>
- Areas of excessive slope (with a gradient of over 1 in 7)
- New, existing or former waste management sites in accordance with SPP10
- Areas that could erode or subside
- Safeguard areas around sewage treatment works<sup>3</sup>
- Within 400m of an active quarry
- Any waters that an EU Directive applies to in accordance with PAN79
- Areas affected by Radon Gas
- Hazardous Sites as shown on the Hazard Sites consultation area map
- Radio Telecommunications Services
- HSE Notifiable Hazardous Sites
- Trunk, A Roads and Rail Lines
- Trunk Water Mains and Water Catchment Areas
- Land with possible contamination issues (Where the past history of landuse/ management indicates that contamination may have occurred, developers will be required to undertake a risk assessment to establish the level of contamination if any; provide an assessment of the impact of contamination including any contaminant migration and effect on controlled waters together with provisions for treatment/amelioration; and decontaminate the site prior to any further occupation.)

1 See [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) for information on existing and proposed windfarms in the Highlands.

2 See [www.energynetworks.org](http://www.energynetworks.org)

3 See *The Sewerage Nuisance (code of practice) (Scotland)*

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/04/2014033/0> “

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP10</b>	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0
Predicted impact (++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	Changes have been made to the General Policy. Waste management – a cross reference to SPP10 has been made in the General Policy, therefore there is a positive effect.																							

## General Policy (GP) 11 - Protected Species

“Where there is good reason to believe that a protected species is present on site or may be affected by a proposed development, we will require a survey to be carried out to establish any such presence before determining the application.

Development that is likely to have an adverse effect on European Protected Species (see Glossary) will only be permitted where:

- There is no satisfactory alternative; and
- Development is required for preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment; and
- Development will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

Development that is likely to have an adverse effect on protected bird species (see Glossary) will only be permitted where:

- There is no other satisfactory solution; and
- Development is required in the interests of public health or public safety. Development that is likely to have an adverse effect on other protected animals and plants (see Glossary) will only be permitted where the development is required for preserving public health or public safety.”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
Policy																								
GP11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+
Predicted impact (++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	This General Policy has been amended as suggested by SNH.																							

## General Policy (GP) 12 - Other Important Species

“Development proposals should avoid adverse effects on the following species if not protected by other legislation or by nature conservation site designations:

- Species listed in Annexes II and V of the EC Habitats Directive
- Priority species listed in the UK<sup>4</sup> and Local<sup>5</sup> Biodiversity Action Plans
- Species of principal importance included on the Scottish Biodiversity List<sup>6</sup>
- Badgers under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992

We will use conditions and agreements to ensure that harm to these species is avoided.

4 See [www.ukbap.org.uk](http://www.ukbap.org.uk)

5 See [www.highlandbiodiversity.com](http://www.highlandbiodiversity.com)

6 See [www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk](http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk)”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP12</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	The General Policy has been amended as suggested by SNH.																							

## General Policy (GP) 13 - Important Habitats

"We will seek to safeguard the integrity of features of the landscape which are of major importance because of their linear and continuous structure or combination as habitat "stepping stones" for the movement of wild fauna and flora. (Article 10 Features).

We will consider the value of the following Other Important Habitats, where not protected by nature conservation site designations, in the assessment of any development proposal which may affect them:

- Habitats listed in Annex I of the EC Habitats Directive
- Habitats of protected bird species (see Glossary)
- Priority habitats listed in the UK<sup>4</sup> and Local<sup>5</sup> Biodiversity Action Plans
- Habitats of principal importance included on the Scottish Biodiversity List<sup>6</sup>

We will use conditions and agreements to ensure that significant harm to the ecological function and integrity of Article 10 Features and Other Habitats is avoided. Where we judge that the reasons in favour of a development clearly outweigh the desirability of retaining those important habitats, we will seek satisfactory mitigation measures including compensatory habitat creation or enhancement of retained habitat and which, in the case of Article 10 Features, allows for continued movement of wild fauna and flora. The Council will also support, where appropriate, opportunities to create new habitat areas through development.

4 See [www.ukbap.org.uk](http://www.ukbap.org.uk)

5 See [www.highlandbiodiversity.com](http://www.highlandbiodiversity.com)

6 See [www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk](http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk)"

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP13</b>	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	+
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	The General Policy has been amended as suggested by SNH.																							

## General Policy (GP) 14 - Surface Water Drainage

“All proposed development must be drained by Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) designed in accordance with The CIRIA SuDS Manual and, where appropriate, the Sewers for Scotland Manual 2nd Edition. Planning applications should be submitted with information in accordance with PAN 69 paragraphs 23 and 24.”

SEA Objective  Policy	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP14</b>	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	+
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	The General Policy has been amended to enhance the positive effects. Water environment – where we have been aware of existing surface water drainage problems on a site we have asked for net betterment via specific developer requirement.																							



## General Policy (GP) 15 - Developer Contributions

"The Council will seek appropriate developer contributions in association with development proposals emerging from partnership activity, from the development plan process and from planning applications. This will be proportionate to the scale, nature, impact and planning purposes associated with the development, and may be in addition to contributions made by a developer as part of an Affordable Housing agreement. Where public signage is to be provided as part of a development, the Council will encourage bilingual provision.

SEA Objective	Policy	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP15</b>	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	
Predicted impact (++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																									
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	All the enhanced site developer requirements to secure mitigation are underpinned by this general policy.																								

## General Policy (GP) 16 - Housing in the Countryside (now deleted)

“The Council will presume against housing in the open countryside of hinterland around towns as defined within the Local Plan (see Glossary, Proposals Map, Structure Plan Policy H3: Housing in the Countryside and the approved Development Plan Policy Guideline). Exceptions to the policy will only be made where at least one of the following apply:

- A house is essential for land management or family purposes related to the management of the land (retired farmers and their spouses);
- Affordable housing is required to meet a demonstrable local affordable housing need;
- Housing is essential in association with an existing or new rural business;
- The house proposed is a replacement of an existing dwelling which does not meet the requirements for modern living and where the costs of upgrading are not justified on economic or environmental grounds (subject to the existing dwellings being demolished);
- The proposal involves conversion or reuse of traditional buildings or the redevelopment of derelict land;
- The proposal forms part of a comprehensively planned new settlement which meets the criteria set out in Structure Plan Policy H2 "New settlements".

Where exceptions are justified, all proposals should accord with the general policies of the Plan, and indicate suitable drainage and other servicing, avoid conflict with natural and cultural heritage interests including locally important croft land and hazards, and be suitably sited and designed [Structure Plan Policy G2].

In the open countryside outwith the hinterland of towns, we will assess proposals in the context of Policy 3 Wider Countryside and, in the case of proposals which form part of a comprehensively planned new settlement, will support them if they meet the criteria set out in Structure Plan Policy H2 "New settlements".”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
Policy																								
<b>GP16</b>	0	0	0	-	+	-	-	0	-	0	0	0	-	-	0	-	--	--	-	0	0	0	0	0
Predicted impact ( ++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	<p>Social Inclusion and Housing in the Countryside – the negative aspects associated with housing in the wider countryside can be offset by a permissive approach to affordable housing in the countryside and the promotion of the development of new crofts which can both enable greater social inclusion by offering affordable accommodation solutions.</p> <p>Waste Management – the Council will encourage recycling through Council policy through the provision of waste recycling facilities.</p> <p>Energy. Reduce the Need for Energy - The Council will encourage the promotion of the renewable energy generation in the wider countryside.</p> <p>Air Pollution, Sustainable Travel, Public Transport, Water Environment – The Council will encourage the use of active and public transport to reduce any potential pollution problems.</p> <p>Designated Wildlife/Species – The Council will highlight designated areas in the development plan and will aim to avoid the unsympathetic development of these areas.</p> <p>Historic Environment – the policy does not favour refurbishing buildings however it is an exception in the hinterland, therefore it had a positive impact.</p> <p>Housing in the countryside – this is not a significant negative effect as in certain areas it is still a restrictive approach.</p> <p>Landscape character and local distinctiveness – a design guide will be prepared for the revised Housing in the Countryside SPG. Landscape Character Assessment principles are being strengthened in the Local Plan.</p> <p>Biodiversity – neutral impact as General Policies 11, 12 and 13 have been amended and provide mitigation.</p>																							

## General Policy (GP) 17 - Commerce

“The Council will encourage retail, office, and leisure development (Use Classes 1-3, 7, 10 & 11), within the following network of centres.

Hierarchy / Scale	Centre(s)	Function/Role
<b>Sub-Regional Town Centre</b>	Fort William (High Street / An Aird) Portree	Mixed use Comparison & Convenience
<b>Urban District Centre</b>	Caol / Lochside / Blar Mor Portree (Dunvegan Road)	Mixed use Comparison & Convenience
<b>Urban Neighbourhood Centre</b>	Upper Achintore Corpach Inverlochy/Claggan	Mixed use Convenience
<b>Retail Park</b>	North Road, Fort William	Bulky goods
<b>Sub-Area / Local Centre</b>	Mallaig, Kinlochleven, Ballachulish South, Acharacle, Strontian, Spean Bridge, Broadford, Kyle of Lochalsh Kyleakin, Uig, Dunvegan, Staffin, Plockton	Mixed use Comparison & Convenience
<b>Villages</b>	Various	Local shop

[Specific opportunities for land assembly / redevelopment are allocated within the relevant settlement sections.]

Outwith the above centres, proposals will be judged against the following criteria:

- its compliance with the sequential approach to site identification;
- its accessibility by means of public transport, walking and cycling;
- its impact, including any cumulative impact, on the vitality and viability of a centre defined in a Highland development plan;
- its fit with the aim of creating a retail hierarchy in which travel is minimised;
- whether the type and scale of development proposed can reasonably be accommodated within a centre defined in the Plan;
- the extent to which the proposals meet with identified deficiencies;
- whether any developer funded mitigation of the above is offered.”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
Policy																								
<b>GP17</b>	+	-	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Predicted impact (++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	Any potential for negative impact from this General Policy can be offset by General Policy 4. Noise can be mitigated by encouraging active travel.																							

## General Policy (GP) 18 - Design Quality and Place Making

“New development should be designed to make a positive contribution to the architectural and visual quality of the place in which it is located. Applicants should demonstrate sensitivity and respect towards local distinctiveness of architecture and design in their proposals.

Where relevant we will judge proposals in terms of their contribution to place-making. They should have regard to the historic pattern of development and open space in the locality and should, where relevant, be an integral part of the settlement. We will examine proposals to ensure that people may move safely and conveniently within the development and, where appropriate, to facilities in other parts of the settlement. Proposals will also be examined in terms of their creation of attractive and effective streetscapes and other open space.”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
Policy																								
GP18	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Predicted impact (++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>																								

## General Policy (GP) 19 - Travel

“Development proposals that involve travel generation must include sufficient information with the application to enable the Council to consider any likely on- and off- site transport implications of the development and should:

1. be well served by the most sustainable modes of travel available in the locality from the outset, providing choice of mode wherever possible, having regard to key travel desire lines;
2. be designed for the safety and convenience of all potential users;
3. incorporate appropriate mitigation on site and/or off site, provided through developer contributions where necessary, which might include improvements and enhancements to the walking/ cycling network and public transport services, road improvements and new roads;
4. incorporate an appropriate level of parking provision, having regard to the travel modes and services which will be available and key travel desire lines and to the maximum parking standards laid out in SPP17 or those set by the Council.

The Council may seek the implementation and monitoring of Travel Plans in support of significant travel generating developments.

Where site masterplans are prepared, they should include consideration of the impact of proposals on the transport network.

In assessing development proposals the Council will also have regard to any implications arising from the Core Path Plan, which will be a material consideration.”

SEA Objective	Human Health	Noise	Crime	Social Inclusion	Historic Environment	Landscape/Townscape	Local Distinctiveness	Open Space	Housing in the Countryside	Built Environment	Climate Change	Renewable Energy	Waste Management	Energy	Sustainable Housing Techniques	Air Pollution	Sustainable Travel	Public Transport	Water Environment	Water Abstraction	Contamination	Designated Wildlife/Protected Species	Biodiversity	Access to Wildlife
<b>GP19</b>	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Predicted impact (++ significant positive effect, + small positive effect, 0 neutral or no effect, -- significant negative effect, - small negative effect)																								
<b>Discussion and Possible Mitigation of Negative Effect</b>	Human health – small positive effect is due to the encouragement of active travel.																							



Wider Country-side	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	0	-	0	0	0	-	-	0	-			-	0	0	0	0	0
Heritage	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	+
Affordable Housing	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Design for Sustainability	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Waste Water Treatment	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0
Waste Management	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
Flood Risk	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Physical Constraints	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0
Protected Species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+
Other Important Species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+
Important Habitats	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	+
Surface Water Drainage	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	+
Developer Contributions	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0
Housing in the Country-side	0	0	0	-	+	-	-	0	-	0	0	0	-	-	0	-			-	0	0	0	0	0
Commerce	+	-	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Place Making	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Travel	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 8 MONITORING THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PLAN - ASSESSMENT OF PLAN ALLOCATIONS

### How Environmental Problems were Considered in the Plan Allocations

8.1 When considering the allocation of sites for uses such as housing, business and community, we need to take into account the environmental issues. The Plan allocations have, where possible, tried to avoid sites or interests that are designated for their natural, built and cultural heritage or where water environment problems are likely to occur. In order to fully consider the possible environmental problems that may be created by the Plan allocations, we have assessed each proposed site against a set of criteria contained in the matrix which is shown below. This also contains the Council's interpretation of each criterion. These assessment criteria have been reviewed for more recent local development plans and the Council is committed to improving them as better practice and data becomes available.

### SEA SITE ASSESSMENT MATRIX

QUESTION NO.	SEA ISSUES: REGULATIONS CATEGORY CHECKLIST QUESTION	Y/N	+ve -ve or N/A	OPPORTUNITIES TO MITIGATE, IMPROVE OR N/A	INTERPRETATION OF QUESTION
<b>Population and Human Health</b>					
1	Will the allocation affect the provision of open space within the area?				Impact on useable public open space and opportunities to enhance formalise or create public open space
2	Will the allocation encourage walking, cycling and public transport use?				Is any part of the site within 400m straight line distance of any community/commercial building or will it provide a community/commercial building within walking distance of existing residential areas? Are there opportunities to create new walking/cycling routes or enhance existing?
3	Does the allocation provide an opportunity for planning gain in terms of encouraging more sustainable travel patterns?				E.g. bus service subsidy or community use within village will have +ve effect
4	Will the allocation involve "off-site" road improvements that will contribute to road safety?				Is the site likely to deliver betterment to the local road network - junctions, crossing facilities etc
5	Is there scope for road safety measures as part of the allocation?				Is it likely any application will incorporate on-site traffic calming or street lighting?
6	Is the allocation near any existing "bad neighbour" uses?				Is the site adversely affected by any neighbouring use?
7	Are there any contaminated land issues affecting the allocation?				Is the site within or likely to be affected by an entry on the TECS "possible sites register"?
<b>Material Asset and Landscape</b>					
8	Will the allocation affect any landscape designation?				Is the site inside or likely to affect any landscape designation (include NSAs, AGLVs but not designed landscapes)
9	Is the allocation on derelict, vacant or other brownfield land?				Use latest S. Govt. definitions
10	Is the allocation within the current settlement boundary?				Is the site allocated for any form of development (including "existing uses") within the adopted plan? Has



					the settlement envelope changed?
11	Will the allocation affect the distinctiveness or the enjoyment of the local landscape?				Conformity with Landscape Capacity Assessment if available. Does it follow the siting and design guidance for the relevant landscape character type identified in the Landscape Character Assessment. Will the allocation result in the removal of valued landscape features? Will the allocation negatively affect any key views?
12	Will the allocation affect any remote landscape of value for recreation (wild land)?				Is the site inside or likely to affect an area of Wild Land identified on Map 3 of SNH's Policy Statement, Wildness in Scotland's Countryside, or an area of Remote Coast identified by THC?
<b>Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage</b>					
13	Will the allocation affect a Conservation Area?				Is the site inside or likely to affect character of a confirmed Con. Area?
14	Will the allocation impact on any listed building? and/or its setting?				Is there a listed building or a part of the setting "area" of a listed building within the site?
15	Will the allocation affect a site identified in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes?				Is any part of the site inside the outer boundary of an Inventory "entry" or will the site affect the setting of an "entry"
16	Will the allocation affect any locally important archaeological site identified in the Sites and Monuments Record?				Will the site affect any THC SMR site?
17	Will the allocation impact on any Scheduled Ancient Monument and /or its setting?				Is there any SAM within the site boundary or will a SAM be affected?
<b>Biodiversity, flora and fauna</b>					
18	Will the allocation affect any natural heritage designation or area identified for its importance to nature conservation?				Is any part of the site inside or likely to affect the designation (SAC, SPA, SSSI, NNR, RAMSAR) or likely to affect non-statutory features identified as being of nature conservation importance e.g., Ancient Woodland Inventory sites and Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest ?
19	Will the allocation affect any protected or priority habitat or species?				Will the allocation affect any species listed under the appropriate annexes of the Wildlife and Countryside Act or the Habitats and Birds Directive (particularly EPS) or priority habitats and species under the UK BAP
<b>Air, water, soil and climatic factors</b>					
20	Is the allocation likely to provide or use energy from a local, renewable source?				e.g. district heating plant
21	Is the allocation at risk from fluvial or coastal flooding?				Is any part of the site within the 1 in 200 year flood risk contour?
22	Will the allocation impact on ground water or surface water drainage, in the area?				Any change in rate, quantity, quality of run-off plus groundwater impact? On and off site impacts. Will these affect priority habitats, especially blanket bog?
23	Will the allocation have a physical impact on existing watercourses?				Any culverting, diversion or channelling of existing

					watercourses?
24	Will the allocation offer opportunities for sustainable waste management?				Will the waste produced by the site be minimised and processed close to source in a sustainable way?
25	Can the allocation be connected to the public water and sewerage system?				Can the site be connected at reasonable cost?
26	Will the allocation have a significant impact on the local landform?				Can the site be developed without significant re-contouring, under-building etc.? Will access tracks have significant cut and fill?
27	Will the allocation affect or be affected by coastal erosion?				Use any relevant shoreline management plan.
28	Does the allocation offer opportunities for shelter from the prevailing wind and for solar gain?				Is the site sheltered from the prevailing wind and does it have a principal aspect between SW & SE?
29	Will the allocation have any impact upon local air quality?				Is the site likely to be developed for a use producing air pollution?
30	Will the allocation have an impact on light pollution levels?				Is THC policy likely to require street lighting at this location or already provided adjacent? Are there proposals for floodlighting on the site?

8.2 This matrix was completed for each potential development site and provided a means of assessing the sustainability of each Plan proposal. The assessment of each site is available in Appendices 10 (d) & (e) and via:  
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/whilp.htm>

### **Mitigation**

8.3 The matrices flagged up potential problems with regard to the likelihood of an allocation having an adverse impact on the environment. Where a problem was identified sites have not been confirmed through the Plan process or boundaries have been amended or a mitigation requirement has been specified.

### **Site Options and Alternatives Considered**

8.4 Appendix 10 (c) sets out the village by village commentary providing a brief summary of the site selection process. In some cases there were concerns raised through SEA which have influenced that decision, although that is not always the case. Examples of these different outcomes are provided, including illustration of how SEA has influenced the contents of the Plan. SEA matrices for the site options not allocated are to be found in Appendix 10 (e).

8.5 Below are some examples of the types of assessment that have been carried out in the Plan area and mitigation measures that have been prescribed. The complete set of SEA matrices is available via:  
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/whilp.htm>

8.6 There are matrices for those sites suggested in response to Lochaber Futures and the Site Options Draft for Skye and Lochalsh but which were rejected by the Council. The vast majority of these sites were rejected for environmental reasons. Often the sites were distant from any recognised community and/or would have undue landscape impact. Examples in Skye and Lochalsh include: the remoter new settlement locations in Sleat; the

unrelated housing and tourism proposals for Auchtertyre, and; the exposed hillsides east of Kyle of Lochalsh and west of Portree.

- 8.7 Within Lochaber, suggested sites were rejected at Duror, Arisaig, Ballachulish South, Spean Bridge, Morar, Lochaline, Invergarry and Glencoe largely on a combination of landscape, flooding and woodland impact reasons. The rejected sites matrices give more detail.
- 8.8 There are also matrices for those sites that were floated by the Council at the options stage but were not followed through into the Deposit Draft December 2007. These sites were not confirmed for a variety of reasons but generally because of already allocated alternatives having a better balance of planning factors. Environmental effects will have been a factor in this part of the site selection process but only one factor. The net was cast wider at the options stage and therefore the rejection of many sites was simply down to reducing the scale of land allocated for development in each settlement. Further information on the reasoning behind the site selection process for each settlement is available from the Skye and Lochalsh and Lochaber Area Committee papers of 19 March 2007 and the Planning Environment and Development Committee papers of 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008 (available from [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)). The Examination process led to further site reductions and deletions the reasons for which are explained in the Report of Examination available via: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/whilp.htm>

#### **Home Farm, Portree**

- 8.9 The affordable housing development at Home Farm, Portree has planning permission for 249 units already and will go a long way to reducing the current housing waiting lists which stand at just over 600 households. However, this size of development to the north of the village is obviously going to have a negative environmental impact on the area. The site is within the current settlement boundary and as such is reasonably close to the centre of Portree. A bus route from the site is proposed to offer a more sustainable means of travelling into the village centre. The energy implications of such a large development have also been taken into consideration. It is hoped that some of the negative environmental impacts may be overcome by the establishment of a community renewable energy project, for example a district heating plant. In order to mitigate against the potential negative effects of the development on the distinctiveness of the local landscape there is a developer requirement for structural planting on the site margins following the guidance set out in the Portree North Framework Plan. This planting will also provide some shelter from the prevailing wind. The housing allocation may also offer opportunities for sustainable waste management. There is a possibility that the Portree landfill site may provide for an energy from waste plant that could provide heated water to much of Portree. The ground water and surface water drainage impacts also need to be taken into consideration, there is a planning agreement in place to ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and also to avoid a physical impact on existing watercourses.

#### **Glen Road, Broadford**

- 8.10 This allocation has the potential to provide up to 200 units, most of which will probably be affordable. The developer requirements on this site are to provide Home Zones, public open space and a tramway pedestrian footpath into the village centre to create an attractive living environment and hopefully encourage active travel into the village centre and reduce car usage and therefore CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The allocation is close to a locally important archaeological site, therefore, an excavation of the allocation may be required

and development may need to be avoided on some parts of the site. The allocation will possibly utilise a wider village renewable energy biomass plant. This will help to minimise the negative impact caused by the additional energy requirements. There will also be SUDS design measures employed and the retention of natural water courses where possible. A village recycling centre should also be provided close to the site.

### **Burnside, Plockton**

- 8.11 This site has planning permission for 24 affordable housing units. The allocation is outwith the village centre but there is a developer requirement to provide a path linkage into the village. The site forms part of the entrance to a village which contains an important conservation area. Siting development outwith the conservation area will avoid any direct impact upon it. The impact of a development of this size could potentially have a negative visual impact on the landform. For this reason the SEA assessment asked that sensitive siting and design practices were followed. Consideration was also given to planting and the implementation of SUDS. The allocation is in the vicinity of Burnside Cottage which is on The Council's list of Sites and Monuments Records. The development avoids adverse impact on the setting of the cottage.

### **Cnoc Breac, Mingarry**

- 8.12 This site was allocated for 8 housing units in the Deposit Draft 2007 Plan. This capacity figure was also a reduction from the 'Site Options' stage due to potential flood risk. The site was removed from the Deposit Draft 2008 because of crofting and environmental reasons. It remains within a settlement development area but is no longer endorsed for larger scale development. Environmental concerns included the land's candidate AGLV status (Areas of Great Landscape Value), the proximity of archaeological interests and flood risk concerns.

### **Coteachan Hill, Mallaig**

- 8.13 This site is allocated for the provision of 10 houses. The site is in the vicinity of a site which is in The Council's Sites and Monuments Record. There will need to be a photographic kept of the surviving remains of the building referenced in the Record. A proposed core path goes through the development site and needs to be incorporated into any Masterplan to allow safe public access and access for the maintenance of the path. Developer Requirements will ensure that the natural watercourses on the site will be retained and integrated as natural features in the development. There will also be a requirement for restorative landscaping and planting.

### **Upper Achintore, Fort William**

- 8.14 This Fort William expansion site could potentially provide an additional 300 housing units. There will be developer requirements for the provision of additional open space including a playing field, plus access to be maintained to the "green wedge" between Upper Achintore and Plantation. There is also a core path proposal on this site and this is to be incorporated into the design of this housing development. The site has potential contaminated land issues and therefore an assessment of potential contamination issues may be required given the site's previous history. The size of this allocation means that there will be a significant impact on the local landform. There will also be developer requirements for planting.

### **Monitoring the Environmental Effects of the Plan**

- 8.15 The SEA Directive and the 2004 Regulations require this Environmental Report to include “a description of the measures envisaged for monitoring” the significant environmental effects of the Plan in order, amongst other things, to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects, in order to be able to carry out appropriate remedial action. To avoid duplication, existing monitoring arrangements may be utilised.
- 8.16 The specific intentions for monitoring for SEA purposes are set out in the Post Adoption SEA Statement available via:  
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/whilp.htm>

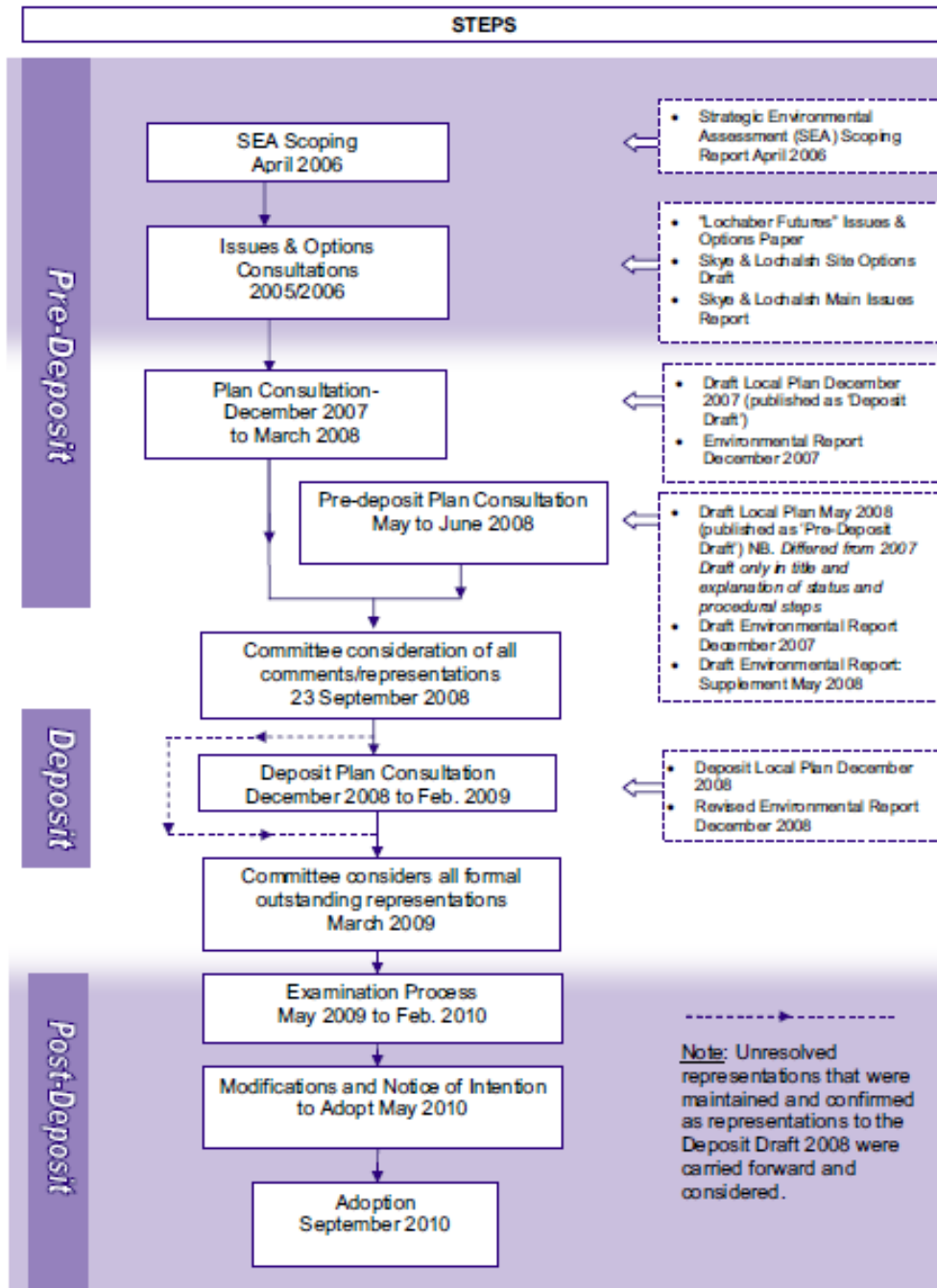
## 9 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL PLAN AND SEA

### Public Consultation

9.1 The Local Plan is now adopted and has therefore completed its current review process and is at monitoring stage. Local development plans now have a statutory 5 year review cycle.

### Plan Process

9.2 Key stages and dates in the Plan process are set out below.



## 10 APPENDICES

### 10 (a) RELEVANT PLANS PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES

This appendix does not include a list of all plans/programmes/policies/advice, but does list those of direct relevance to the SEA of the Local Plan.

Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective	Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective	How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan
<p>International Tier</p> <p>EC Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC)</p>	<p>The objective of this Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p> <p>Aims to identify and mitigate significant environment effects arising from certain plans and programmes.</p>	<p>The Directive requires that an SEA be carried out on every Local Plan and an Environmental Report produced.</p>
<p>Kyoto Protocol (1998)</p>	<p>United Nations international treaty on climate change. The Protocol entered into force in February 2005. Developed countries that have ratified the Protocol are committed to reducing their emissions of greenhouse gases.</p> <p>Commitment signed by 38 countries (plus the EU) to introduce legally binding targets to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 5% of 1990 levels in the period 2008-2012. The UK has committed to an 8% reduction.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will take account of targets reducing CO2 emissions and consider measures to reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable and active forms of transport.</p>
<p>European Climate Change Programme (2005)</p>	<p>The European Commission's main instrument to discuss and prepare the further development of the European Union's climate policy.</p> <p>To identify and develop all the necessary elements on an EU strategy to deliver the EU Kyoto Protocol commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 8% below 1990 levels by 2008-2012.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should promote choice and raise awareness of the need for change; encourage the development of renewables, and aim to reduce the need to travel. The Council will promote active and public transport, and housing site allocations will mostly be located in existing settlements to make use of existing facilities and services in order to reduce CO2 transport related emissions.</p>

Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective	Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective	How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan
<p>EC Directive establishing a framework for Community action in the Field of Water Policy</p> <p>Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)</p>	<p>The Water Framework Directive is designed to integrate the way we manage water bodies across Europe. It aims to protect and enhance our water environment, promote sustainable water consumption, reduce water pollution and lessen the effects of floods and droughts.</p>	<p>The Strategic Environment Assessment of each site will identify whether the area is at risk from coastal or fluvial flooding according to the SEPA 1 in 200 year flood map contours. In terms of conserving water the Local Plan will make reference to the guidance in The Council's Designing for Sustainability in the Highlands.</p>
<p>EU Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)</p>	<p>The main aim of this Directive is to provide a common basis for tackling the noise problem across the EU. Provides a strategic approach to controlling environmental noise. It requires Strategic Noise Maps to be drawn along major roads, major railways and major airports. Action plans also have to be prepared to manage noise issues.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should take account of the implications of policies on noise levels. In terms of proposed new development and infrastructure the Plan should ensure that buffer zones are provided where noise may be an issue.</p>
<p>European Commission White Paper European Transport Policy for 2010 (2001)</p>	<p>Outlines what has been achieved to date at the EU and member state level, and what the key targets are for the future. Series of principles presented, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revitalise the railways</li> <li>- Improve quality in the road transport sector</li> <li>- Balance growth in air transport and the environment</li> <li>- Improve road safety</li> <li>- Policy on effective road charging</li> <li>- Develop high quality urban transport</li> <li>- Develop medium and long term environmental objectives for a sustainable transport system.</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan is being developed within the framework for transport provided at the EU level and will take account of the principles detailed within this document.</p>
<p>EU Waste Framework Directive (75/442/EEC)</p>	<p>Along with subsequent Directives, this Directive aims to create an integrated approach to waste management in order to reduce waste production. It requires all necessary measures to be taken to ensure that waste is recovered or disposed of without harming human health.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should reflect the need to reduce the overall amount of waste that is produced within the area, as well as the need to sustainably dispose of waste that is produced. The Plan will allocate land for recycling facilities where applicable.</p>
<p>The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development (2002)</p>	<p>Principles of international commitment to sustainable development reaffirmed. Aims to strengthen and improve Government at all levels to fulfil commitment to sustainable development.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will take into consideration the principles of sustainable development and seek to reflect these within the overarching objectives of the strategy and individual projects.</p>



Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective	Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective	How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan
Agenda 21 (1992)	<p>Agenda 21 underlines the growing awareness of the need to adopt a balanced and integrated approach to environment and development issues.</p> <p>Agenda 21 contains a broad range of qualitative objectives that relate to sustainable development. These include a requirement for countries to adopt integrated strategies to ensure compliance with legislation relating to sustainable development, to promote the use of renewable energy systems and to build public environmental awareness.</p>	The Local Plan will reflect the principles of sustainable development, and will make reference to the Council's Renewable Energy Strategy and the development policy planning guidance – Planning for Sustainability in the Highlands.
EC Directive On Public Access to Environmental Information (2003/4/EC)	Enforces the right of the public to view environmental information held by public authorities.	The Highland Council is required to ensure that all environmental information relating to the Local Plan is made available to the general public.
The Lisbon Agenda Established 2000	<p>A ten year European strategy designed to spur economic growth throughout the EU.</p> <p>Targets are wide ranging and ambitious. They include achieving 3% average economic growth, 70% employment and the creation of 20 million jobs across Europe by 2010.</p>	Promoting innovation and regional investment in the Local Plan area can encourage economic growth in the region in alignment with the goals set out in the Lisbon Agenda.
<p>UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters</p> <p>'The Aarhus Convention' Adopted June 1998</p>	Acknowledges the need for public participation in environmental issues and grants the public rights to access to justice and information on the environment.	Public involvement in the formulation of the Local Plan should be actively facilitated. Consultations should incorporate the views and suggestions of local residents, business groups, council representatives and government.
The Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)	<p>International commitment to maintaining the world's biodiversity. Three main goals established – the conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of genetic resources.</p> <p>Requirement for each country who has signed the declaration to develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.</p>	Adequate consideration of impacts affecting biodiversity with support for more detailed assessment at the local level where appropriate will be recommended.

Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective	Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective	How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan
European Protected Species, Development Sites and the Planning System, Interim guidance for local authorities on licensing arrangements (2001) (SNH)	This guidance clarifies the licencing arrangements which currently apply in cases where European protected species are present on any site which is the subject of a development proposal.	Any instances of protected European species should be highlighted in the Local Plan should they be within or affected by a proposed development site and proposals should be designed to avoid any impacts, failing which it will be necessary to satisfy licensing requirements.
The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat 'The Ramsar Convention' Adopted February 1971	An international treaty that provides the framework for national and international co-operation for the conservation of wetlands primarily to provide a habitat for birds.	The Local Plan must recognise the legal status of any 'Ramsar' protected site and reflect its ecological importance in its biodiversity objectives.
SE Circular EU Habitats and Birds Directive (2000)	EU Nature conservation policy is based on two main pieces of legislation – the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive. Its priorities are to create the European ecological network (of special areas of conservation) called NATURA 2000, and to integrate nature protection requirements into other EU policies such as agriculture, regional development and transport.	The Plan must not designate projects to be constructed in or affecting SACs or SPAs unless it is ascertained that there will not be an adverse effect on the integrity of the site, or else there are no alternative solutions and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest. Where a priority habitat would be affected, planning consent can only be issued where reasons of overriding public interest relate to human health, public safety, beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or other reasons subject to the opinion of the European Commission.
EU Soil Thematic Strategy (Consultation stage)	The emerging Soil Strategy aims to reduce soil pollution, erosion, compaction and sealing of soil. It also aims to protect the role of soil in storing CO2, avoiding water pollution and preserving biodiversity. Protection of the sustainable production of food and renewable resources is a further aim.	The Strategy highlights soil protection as an issue and implicates soil degradation as a forthcoming issue in relation to land use.
European Landscape Convention (2000)	Promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues.	The Local Plan identifies European designations as internationally important features to be protected.
UK National Tier		

Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective	Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective	How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan
SEA Good Practice Guidelines (ODPM) 2005	The guidelines are designed to assist practitioners responsible for plans and programmes requiring SEA, explain the role of the Environment Agency in the process and promote good practice approaches.	The Council will use these guidelines to inform how best to carry out an environmental assessment on qualifying plans and programmes.
Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) UK Climate Change Programme (2006)	<p>The UK Government has identified climate change as the most serious environmental problem facing the world today and one that will inevitably become more serious in the short to medium term.</p> <p>This programme outlines the UK's contribution to the global response to climate change - to deliver the UK's commitment of a 12.5% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 2008-2012. The programme sets out a strategic, far reaching package of policies and measures across all sectors of the economy to achieve the targets set. These are also designed to move the UK towards its domestic target of 20% reduction in 1990 levels of CO2 emissions by 2010.</p>	<p>It is imperative that the Local Plan directly addresses the issue and acknowledges the increased likelihood of flooding events and identifies ways that greenhouse gas emissions can be reduced.</p> <p>The Plan will take account of the UK wide emission reduction targets and consider measures which would positively contribute to these targets, for example reducing the need to travel and encouraging the use of more sustainable alternatives.</p>
UK Energy White Paper Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy (2003)	<p>Defines a long-term vision for energy policy combining environmental, security of supply, competitiveness and social goals.</p> <p>Four key goals within the White Paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to cut the UK's carbon dioxide emissions, the main contributor to global warming, by 60% by about 2050 with real progress by 2020;</li> <li>- To maintain the reliability of energy supplies;</li> <li>- To promote competitive markets in the UK and beyond, helping to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth and to improve our productivity; and</li> <li>- To ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated.</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan should recognise the significance of energy consumption by the transport sector and the corresponding contribution to CO2 emissions.</p> <p>Where possible the Plan will seek to reduce the overall need to travel, and where travel is necessary the promotion of more sustainable options such as walking, cycling and rail will be promoted.</p>

Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective	Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective	How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan
<p>Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2000 – amended 2003)</p>	<p>Describes the plans drawn up by the Government and devolved administrations to improve and protect ambient air quality in the UK in the medium-term. Standards set for 8 main air pollutants of particular concern to human health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benzene;</li> <li>- 1,3-butadiene;</li> <li>- Carbon Monoxide;</li> <li>- Lead;</li> <li>- Nitrogen Dioxide;</li> <li>- Ozone;</li> <li>- Particles (PM10); and</li> <li>- Sulphur Dioxide</li> </ul> <p>Local authorities are charged with drawing up their own strategies to tackle the air quality objectives in their areas. Standards are to be achieved between 2003 and 2008. The standards are purely health based and objectives are to be derived from these, taking account practically, technical feasibility, and economic factors.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will have regard to the implications of different policies on air quality and promote measures which reduce the need to travel and encourage the development and uptake of more sustainable options. The Plan should seek to ensure that air pollution within the area is managed and where possible, steps are taken to alleviate air quality problems.</p>
<p>The Future of Air Transport (2003) White Paper</p>	<p>Sets out a strategic framework for the development of airport capacity in the UK over the next 30 years, against the wider context of the air transport sector. It does not itself authorise or preclude any particular development, but sets out a policy framework which will inform decisions on future planning applications, and against which the relevant public bodies, airport operators and airlines can plan ahead.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should take account of current and future air transport proposals and assess their potential contribution to the local economy, whilst taking full account of expansion plans and related environmental concerns.</p>
<p>Forestry Commission (2004) The UK Forestry Standard: The Government's Approach to Sustainable Forestry</p>	<p>The two central aims of the Standard are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The sustainable management of our existing woods and forests; and</li> </ul> <p>A steady expansion of tree cover to increase the many diverse benefits that forests provide.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will safeguard and improve areas of semi-natural and amenity woodland where appropriate.</p>

<b>Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective</b>	<b>Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective</b>	<b>How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan</b>
Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended)1981	This Act is the principle mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. The Local Plan will aim to protect designated areas and priority habitats from development influences.	There are a number of SSSIs in the Local Plan area. The Plan should recognise their statutory importance and strive to ensure they are adequately protected.
UK Biodiversity Action Plan (1994)	This was published in response to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) highlights a number of priority habitats and 382 species with associated action plans at the species, habitat and local level.	The Local Plan will take account of the priority habitats and species highlighted in the UK wide Action Plan and also those mentioned in the local biodiversity action plans.
UK Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996	Offers protection for rare wild mammals throughout the UK, including species such as red squirrels, bats and otters.	The Local Plan will make provision for incidents concerning wildlife conservation if protected species are discovered in areas designated for development.
UK The Protection of Badgers Act 1992	UK legislation offering specific protection to badgers and their setts. It is an offence to wilfully kill, injure or mistreat a badger. Their setts are also protected from obstruction, destruction, damage and, when active, disturbance. Any work within 30 metres of a badger sett may require a licence from SNH, and if destruction of the sett is unavoidable, a licence will definitely be required from SNH beforehand.	The site options within the Plan will be assessed to see if the presence of badgers is an issue. If this is the case, this fact will be highlighted in the Plan and any developer will be made aware through the developer requirements text that a licence from SNH will be required.
Scotland National Tier		
The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005	The Act ensures that during the preparation of a qualifying plan or programme, there will be the carrying out of an environmental assessment. The SEA process that should be followed by a responsible authority is also outlined.	The Council will follow the procedure outlined in the Act when carrying out an environment assessment on a plan or programme.

Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective	Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective	How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan
<p>Scotland's Transport Future (2004) Transport White Paper</p>	<p>Sets out the vision for Scotland's transport future and the strategies and structures which will achieve this. The objectives of the White Paper are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- promote economic growth by building, enhancing, managing and maintaining transport services, infrastructure and networks to maximise their efficiency;</li> <li>- promote social inclusion by connecting remote and disadvantaged communities and increasing the accessibility of the transport network;</li> <li>- protect our environment and improve health by building and investing in public transport and other types of efficient and sustainable transport which minimise emissions and consumption of resources and energy;</li> <li>- improve safety of journeys by reducing accidents and enhancing the personal safety of pedestrians, drivers, passengers and staff</li> </ul>	<p>Sustainable travel patterns within the Local Plan area will be promoted to support this policy. Emphasis the need to explore sustainable transport modes where possible – making particular relevance to haulage by road, rail and sea.</p>
<p>Scottish Executive et al (2005) Securing the Future The UK's shared framework for sustainable development</p>	<p>Sets out the guiding principles that have to be adhered to in order to achieve the goal of sustainable development. The following principles set out the framework for all sustainable development policy within the UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Living within environmental limits</li> <li>- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society</li> <li>- Achieving a sustainable economy</li> <li>- Promoting good governance</li> <li>- Using sound science responsibly</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan should adhere to the five principles in order that all policies are sustainable. The emphasis within the strategy is on balancing all aspects of sustainability, and this should be considered within the Plan.</p>
<p>Scottish Executive: Choosing Our Future Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy (2005)</p>	<p>This document sets out the action that will be taken in Scotland to turn the shared priorities set out in the UK Framework for sustainable development into action. It has six key priorities; sustainable consumption and production, climate change and energy, natural resource protection and environmental enhancement, sustainable communities, learning to live differently and delivery.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will take account of objectives relating to sustainable development. Measures for reducing the need to travel and a shift to active and public transport will positively contribute to these indicators.</p>

Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective	Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective	How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan
Changing Our Ways: Scotland's Climate Change Programme (2006)	<p>The Scottish Executive is committed to playing its full part to tackle climate change. Key elements of this programme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- presenting a vision for Scotland and how we are to move forward</li> <li>- quantifying Scotland's 'equitable contribution' in carbon terms</li> <li>- setting a Scottish target for carbon emission reductions</li> <li>- demonstrating Scotland's achievements so far</li> <li>- setting out new actions and future directions across the main sectors</li> <li>- responding to the inevitable consequences of climate change</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan will seek to reduce the need to travel by allocating sites within the main villages where existing facilities and services exist. The Council will also support active and public transport, and will highlight the need for the provision of locally important pedestrian and cycle paths.</p>
<p>Scottish Executive Environment Group (2005)</p> <p>Indicators of Sustainable Development for Scotland</p> <p>Progress Report</p>	<p>The report identifies a number of indicators of sustainable development and notes that the following indicators have moved in the wrong direction from the previous year, promoting the development of renewables and changing modes of travel to more sustainable options.</p>	<p>Progress report highlights that environmental resources are being degraded through lack of progress on indicators such as transport and renewable energy. The Local Plan will seek to address this.</p>
Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006	<p>The Act will provide a mechanism for the delivery of a modernised planning system. It takes forward the commitment in <i>A Partnership for a Better Scotland</i> to improve the planning system to strengthen involvement of communities, speed up decisions, reflect local views better and allow quicker investment decisions.</p>	<p>Allows the Scottish Ministers to designate an area as a National Scenic Area by direction, and to vary or revoke the designation. It also enables Ministers to issue guidance to which planning authorities must have regard. Further Development Plan Regulations are expected in early 2009.</p>
Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003	<p>Part 1 of the Act introduces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- statutory right of responsible access;</li> <li>- reciprocal obligation on owners to manage their land responsibly;</li> <li>- places a duty on local authorities to uphold access rights and to maintain core paths;</li> </ul> <p>Part 2 introduces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- community's right to buy</li> </ul> <p>Part 3 introduces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- crofting community right to buy</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan needs to be aware of community land ownership and liaise with communities in order to assess if there are any allocations that may be required for the community's benefit. The Plan will also take into account local paths that need to be maintained, improved and safeguarded from development.</p>

Name of Plan/ Programme/ Objective	Objective and Main Requirements of Plan/Programme/Objective	How is the Plan/Programme/Objective affected by the Local Plan
Scottish Outdoor Access Code (2003)	<p>The Scottish Outdoor Access Code, which aims to support the access provisions of the Land Reform Act, is based on three key principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- respect the interests of other people</li> <li>- care for the environment</li> <li>- take responsibility for your own actions</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan should contribute to the development of core path networks alongside the core path plan. The Plan will identify paths that are required or need to be maintained or safeguarded in relation to a development site.</p>
Scottish Executive (2000) Rural Scotland : A New Approach	<p>Provides strategic confirmation of key issues such as establishing National Parks, Land Reform Act (ownership and access), water quality, planning and farming and notes their contribution to environmental quality. The main environmental objectives are to maintain the quality and diversity of Scotland's natural and cultural heritage.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should endeavour to maintain and enhance water quality, and safeguard amenity woodland and important croft land in order to protect the local landscape and maintain the natural heritage of an area.</p>
Scottish Executive (2006) Rural Development Programme for Scotland 2007-2013 The Strategic Plan	<p>The consultation paper sets out key themes and priorities for the Rural Development Strategy for Scotland. The Strategy will guide the use of European Union Funds and other resources for rural development in the 2007-13 Scotland Rural Development Programme. The Strategy will form part of a UK National Strategy Plan which must be submitted to the European Commission. The three proposed themes for the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- underpinning performance and quality in the agriculture food processing and forestry sectors</li> <li>- enhancing rural landscapes and the natural heritage</li> <li>- promoting a more diverse rural economy and thriving communities.</li> </ul>	<p>The three themes of the strategy support SEA objectives through the promotion of rural economic development and communities, natural heritage and landscape enhancement. The Local Plan will seek to improve facilities for local communities, whilst acknowledging the need to maintain the local landscape and will plan for maintaining the natural heritage of the region.</p>



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<p>Scotland's Biodiversity (2004) It's In Your Hands A Strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland</p>	<p>Vision: 'It's 2030: Scotland is recognised as a world leader in biodiversity conservation. Everyone is involved; everyone benefits. The nation is enriched'</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- conserve what we have</li> <li>- sustain healthy ecosystems</li> <li>- create networks and connections</li> <li>- engage more people</li> <li>- promote sustainable development</li> </ul> <p>The strategy also underlines the need to promote understanding and appreciation of natural heritage.</p>	<p>Sets out the overall approach to biodiversity conservation and enhancement which the Local Plan should contribute towards. The Local Plan should identify key species and habitats, and give adequate consideration to the impacts affecting biodiversity with support for more detailed assessment at the local level where appropriate.</p>
<p>SHEP1 Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2006 consultation) (HS)</p>	<p>This policy document sets out the Scottish Ministers' vision and strategic policies for the wider environment and provides greater policy direction for Historic Scotland. It offers a framework for more detailed strategic policies and operational policies that have a role and interest in managing the historic environment.</p>	<p>Careful consideration will be given to areas of historic importance within the Plan area. Where possible, land allocations will avoid the setting of built heritage features. In circumstances where this is not possible, a development will need to be sensitively sited and designed to respect the character and setting of the historic environment.</p>
<p>Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004</p>	<p>The Act sets out provisions relating to biodiversity duties, notification of SSSIs, Nature Conservation Orders to prohibit an operation, Land Management Orders for SSSIs to ensure conservation, restoration or enhancement. The overall aim is wildlife protection. Fossils are also included within the legislation.</p>	<p>The Act highlights the importance of the designated protected areas that will need to be recognised and protected in the Local Plan.</p>
<p>Scottish Executive (2001) A Forward Strategy for Scottish Agriculture</p>	<p>The Strategy sets out the national vision for the agricultural and land management sector, responding positively to contextual change and providing a more viable future for the industry. It aims to make the industry more prosperous by establishing better connections with the market. It views agriculture as an integral part of rural development and emphasises the importance of environmental stewardship.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should take account of the concerns and opinions of local crofters, farmers, estate managers and landholders in the provision of new development.</p>

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<p>Scottish Executive (2004) Framework for Economic Development in Scotland</p>	<p>The Vision of the Framework is 'to raise the quality of life of the Scottish people through increasing the economic opportunities for all on a socially and environmentally sustainable basis.' Key objectives include economic growth, regional development and closing the opportunity gap. Sustainable development is also a key aim, the framework focuses on more efficient and profitable production, using fewer raw materials; adding more value to products with less pollution and waste in the process; and more consumer needs fulfilled with less energy, water or waste.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should reflect and build on the emphasis for environmentally sustainable ways of developing business. Business land allocations will be made in the main towns and villages.</p>
<p>Scottish Executive (2001) A Smart Successful Scotland, Ambitions for the Enterprise Networks</p>	<p>This strategy aims to provide support to businesses through the Local Enterprise Company (LEC) network. It also emphasises the importance of fostering and maintaining good global connections, and marketing Scotland as a place to invest, partly on the basis of the high quality environment, skills and learning are also emphasised.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should seek to promote and improve upon the attraction of the Highlands as a place to invest, whilst generating income and employment through effective business links. The development of schools and further and higher education will be supported.</p>
<p>Scottish Executive (2003) Securing a future: Scotland's Renewable Energy</p>	<p>Notes the Scottish Executive's target of achieving 18% of electricity generation in Scotland from renewables by 2010. Includes a commitment to biomass generation in Scotland and discusses opportunities arising from biomass initiatives, including short rotation coppice and co-products from timber operations and agriculture.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will make reference to the Council's DPPG Designing for Sustainability in the Highlands in order to improve the energy efficiency of individual developments. There is also interest in the provision of wind turbines in the Local Plan area.</p>
<p>The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &amp;c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)</p>	<p>Requirement for appropriate assessment of land use plans if there would be a likely significant effect on European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.</p>	<p>Requirement for appropriate assessment of policies and proposals if there would be a likely significant effect on European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects</p>

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<p>Scottish Executive (2001) Potential Adaptation Strategies for Climate Change in Scotland</p>	<p>Identifies a full range of potential adaptation strategies for Scotland, including those specifically relating to agriculture, forestry, fishing and biodiversity. Emphasises the importance of flexible resource management and the need to move on from defining conservation objectives on the basis of single species or fixed locations as these may no longer be achievable. The strategy notes that: 'the fragmented and often overlapping nature of policies for forestry, agriculture and biodiversity impedes appropriate adaptation strategies. In the medium-term, drivers of change from agriculture, from mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, from sustainability issues and from the protection of biodiversity may lead to a blurring and perhaps complete removal of the distinctions between policies for forestry, agriculture and biodiversity.'</p>	<p>The Local Plan will take account of the Scottish share and consider measures from the transport sector which would positively contribute to the targets, for example reducing the need to travel and encouraging modal shifts to more sustainable methods.</p>
<p>Scottish Executive (2003) Let's Make Scotland More Active</p>	<p>The Strategy focuses on the need to increase physical activity amongst Scotland's population and sets targets of achieving 50% of adults and 80% of children meeting at least the minimum recommended levels of physical activity by 2022.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should promote the development of facilities (e.g. cycle, footpaths and sports centres) that encourage local populations to become more active. The Plan will take into account health related impacts of different strategies and seek to promote more active travel.</p>
<p>Scottish Executive (2003) Improving Health in Scotland The Challenge</p>	<p>Addresses wider health issues and aims to improve life expectancy. Also aims to reduce health inequalities between deprived and affluent people. Aims to 'mainstream' health policy so that it becomes an integral part of wider public sector policies. To achieve the required 1% annual increase, the strategy focuses on ensuring that physical activity is encouraged across the population as a whole, and targeting specific communities for basic changes in activity levels.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should promote the development of facilities (e.g. cycle, footpaths and sports centres) that encourage local populations to become more active. The Plan will take into account health related impacts of different strategies and seek to promote more active travel.</p>

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Delivering a Healthy Scotland Meeting the Challenge: Health Improvement In Scotland Annual Report (2006)	Aims to improve health and narrow the health inequalities gap, with a strategy to achieve a more rapid rate of health improvement. Report illustrates progress and actions on health improvements and how it contributes to key cross cutting government themes, e.g. sustainable development, social justice and community regeneration. Makes reference to the ways in which sustainable development supports health improvement and vice versa, in particular maintaining and increasing levels of green spaces in and near towns for recreation and enabling walking and cycling; funding initiatives that promote non car based travel.	Take measures in the Plan to promote health lifestyles. For example protect accessible green spaces to encourage physical recreation/ active travel.
Forestry Commission Scotland (2005) Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme	The aim of the Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme (SFGS) is to help deliver the Scottish Forestry Strategy (SFS) by encouraging the creation and management of woods and forests to provide economic, environmental and social benefits.	The Local Plan supports the aim of managing existing woodland and enhancing it to maximise biodiversity, landscape, community and recreation objectives. The Local Plan supports the creation of forest crofts and forest walks.
Forestry Commission Scotland (2004) Framework Document for Forest Enterprise Scotland	The purpose of Forest Enterprise Scotland is to manage the national forest estate to deliver economic, environmental and social objectives of the Scottish Forestry Strategy. Guiding principles include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sustainable forest management</li> <li>- delivering the Scottish Forestry Strategy</li> <li>- helping to deliver other Scottish Executive agendas</li> <li>- efficiency and effectiveness</li> </ul>	The Local Plan and the SEA process will take account of the principles outlined, in relation to particular issues concerning community access to forests for recreational purposes and the transportation of timber.
Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and SNH (2003) Habitat Networks for Wildlife and People	Aims to enrich the natural heritage of Scotland by the creation of woodland networks through linking woodlands, old and new, to form a more continuous woodland cover. This benefits wildlife by providing wider and more sustainable habitats and should enhance opportunities for people who live near, work in or simply enjoy woodlands. Proposes methods by which woods and forests can be linked and suggests woodland should be viewed as an integral part of the wider landscape rather than as individual stands of trees.	The Local Plan should aim to complement this strategy by encouraging an increase in woodland cover and the creation of forest crofts and woodland walks.

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The Scottish Executive publication, 'Better bathing waters: meeting the challenges of the revised Bathing Water Directive in Scotland' (2006) (SEPA)	The Scottish Executive has designated 63 bathing sites in accordance with the European Commission's Bathing Water Directive. This Directive requires that the water quality at all designated bathing waters must meet specific microbiological requirements in order to protect the health of those that bathe there.	The Strategy highlights the importance of tackling both point source and diffuse pollution. This has implications for all developments proposed within the Local Plan. The Plan must ascertain the bathing sites within the area and ensure that there are no site options that could potentially lead to the contamination of such designations.
Groundwater Protection Policy for Scotland SEPA Environmental Policy 19 (2003)	Groundwater is a valuable resource in Scotland, essential for irrigation in some agriculturally productive areas, and is vital to the maintenance of the ecology and biodiversity of other habitats. As groundwater is not visible, it is often poorly understood and its value underestimated as a consequence. Groundwater should be managed in a sustainable way to maintain and enhance its contribution to social, economic and environmental welfare. However, the resource can be damaged by pollution and over-abstraction, sometimes irreversibly.	The Plan will identify land allocations that may have potential contamination issues which could have a negative impact on ground water, and will advocate a contaminated land assessment and appropriate remedial work on these sites.
Policy on the culverting of Watercourses (policy26) SEPA (1998) (SEPA)	This policy aims to prevent the unnecessary damage to river channels as a result of culverting schemes which are proposed for reasons of convenience.	The Local Plan will assess whether there would possibly be a need to culvert a watercourse within the sites designated. It may be preferable to develop around, or divert a watercourse.
Position Statement - Policy And Supporting Guidance On Provision Of Waste Water Drainage In Settlements (2006) (SEPA)	This position statement sets out SEPA's policy principles on the provision of waste water drainage within and outwith settlements served by a strategic sewerage system. The document also provides supporting guidance for implementation of these policy principles.	The policy will affect suitable sewerage arrangements for the Plan's development allocations.
SNH Wildness in Scotland's Countryside – A Policy Statement	This document aims to promote debate about whether and how we might safeguard such areas. It identifies land-use planning as a way of protecting wild land as an aspect of landscape character. It advises councils to identify and protect wild land in development plans.	The Local Plan identifies Remote landscapes of Value for Recreation as a local and regionally important feature.
Scotland's Scenic Heritage (1978) Countryside Commission for Scotland	Sets out the results of a review conducted to identify areas of unsurpassed attractiveness which must be conserved as part of our national heritage.	The Local Plan identifies National Scenic Areas as nationally important features.

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Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 (WEWS)	<p>The Act translates the EC Water Framework Directive into the Scottish context. It includes a number of key commitments relating to Scotland's water environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establishing River Basin Management districts;</li> <li>- preparing River Basin Management Plans</li> <li>- regulation of controlled activities (including those likely to cause pollution to the water environment, those involved in abstraction, and those from construction on or near water).</li> </ul> <p>The Act aims to prevent further deterioration of water quality and has given Scottish Ministers powers to introduce regulatory controls over activities in order to protect and improve Scotland's water environment. That is, wetlands, rivers, lochs, transitional waters (estuaries and saline lagoons), coastal waters and water under the ground (groundwater).</p>	<p>The Local Plan will reflect the Act in the development of adequate drainage systems. Future expansion of local water provision or abstraction and wastewater handling to cope with expected population increases will require close consultation with SEPA and Scottish Water.</p>
The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (CAR)	<p>Brings into effect the regulation of the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- abstractions from surface and groundwater;</li> <li>- impoundment of rivers, lochs, wetlands and transitional waters;</li> <li>- groundwater recharge;</li> <li>- engineering in rivers, lochs and wetlands;</li> <li>- engineering activities in the vicinity of rivers, lochs and wetland which are likely to have a significant adverse impact upon the water environment;</li> <li>- activities liable to cause pollution;</li> <li>- direct or indirect discharge of certain substances to groundwater; and</li> <li>- any other activities which directly or indirectly are liable to cause a significant impact upon the water environment.</li> </ul>	<p>The Regulations apply across the water environment to provide a holistic approach to pollution control and protection of the water environment. Any activities that may fall within the remit of these regulations will require close consultation with SEPA and the receipt of appropriate licences.</p>

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Flood Prevention and Land Drainage (Scotland) Act 1997	<p>The introduction of the Flood Prevention and Land Drainage (Scotland) Act 1997 instigated changes to the responsibilities and duties of Local Authorities in Scotland.</p> <p>In respect of this Act the flooding referred to is the flooding of land, not being agricultural land. Flooding of agricultural land falls outwith the requirements of the Act. The implications on The Highland Council of this Act impose the following additional requirements:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Assessment of watercourses, from time to time for the purpose of ascertaining whether any such watercourse is in a condition likely to flood.</li> <li>b) A duty to maintain watercourses, which are in a condition likely to cause flooding, or where works would substantially reduce the likelihood of such flooding.</li> <li>c) Notification of Local Authorities outwith the area. Where it appears to The Highland Council that any watercourse in the area is in a condition which is likely to cause flooding, outwith the area, the Council shall notify the local authority for the area in which the land is situated.</li> <li>d) Reports shall be published, at two year intervals.</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan should take account of flood plains and areas at risk of flooding from SEPA's flood risk maps.</p> <p>Development proposals should avoid flood plains in the first instance, should this not be possible, adequate flood prevention or attenuation measures should be included.</p>
Scottish Executive's Locational Guidelines for the Authorisation of Marine Fish Farms in Scottish Waters (2002)	This document provides guidance to the aquaculture industry and regulatory bodies on the environmental sensitivity of local areas supporting aquaculture.	The Local Plan will aim to avoid sites at the shore which may negatively impact on the siting of any proposed Fish Farm.

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<p>Passed to the Future (2002) Historic Scotland Policy for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment</p>	<p>Sets out the Scottish Executive's policy for the sustainable management of the historic environment. It notes the irreplaceable nature of historic environment features, but also sets out the following key principles to guide the parameters in which change can take place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognising value – in terms of quality of life and as a means of meeting social, environmental and economic needs</li> <li>- good stewardship – taking into account capacity for change and the sustainable use of resources</li> <li>- assessing impact – following the precautionary principle where impact is not clear</li> <li>- working together – to reduce damage, resolve conflict and maximise benefit</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan should recognise the important role of the historic environment and acknowledge the need to work together with others to consider a balance between social, economic and environmental needs. The SEA documents should be easily available to the public and the consultation authorities will be actively consulted on the content of the SEA.</p>
<p>Scottish Executive Trunk Road Biodiversity Action Plan (TRBAP) (2000)</p>	<p>Sets the Scottish Executive's commitment to protecting Scottish biodiversity on the trunk road network. The purpose of the document is twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to assist in the delivery of biodiversity targets and objectives as set down in the Scottish Local Biodiversity Action Plans.</li> <li>- to raise awareness of biodiversity in all engineers, managers, planners, designers and ecologists working on the Scottish Trunk Road network.</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan should take account of any recommendations and actions outlined within the Trunk Road Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>
<p>National Waste Strategy and National Waste Plan (2003) SEPA</p>	<p>The strategy sets out a framework within which Scotland can reduce the amount of waste it produces and deal with the waste that is produced in a more sustainable way. It covers all household, commercial and industrial waste. More than 85% of the waste produced in Scotland is sent directly to landfill – a massive misuse of resources and a major source of greenhouse and other gases. The National Waste Plan aims to reduce this practice and outlines how we can work towards a culture of reducing, reusing and recycling our rubbish.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should take account of waste issues when considering the projected population increase within the plan area. Locating waste and recycling facilities close to settlements should help minimise the need to travel and increase rates of recycling. Means of approaching waste issues associated with building industries should be considered.</p>



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Scottish Water's Q and S III programme (first stage of Q and S III 2006-2010)	The Q and S III Programme highlights the water and waste water systems that require, and are to receive, an upgrade or growth funding.	The Local Plan allocations can influence the provision of Q and S programme investment and ensure that it is directed to where future development is likely.
Scottish National Planning Policy Tier (Scottish Executive)		
National Planning Framework for Scotland (2004) (National Planning Framework 2 is being progressed. It will set out the Scottish Government's strategic development priorities).	<p>A non-statutory, planning policy document prepared by the Scottish Executive which looks at Scotland from a spatial perspective and sets out an achievable long-term vision to guide the spatial development of Scotland to 2025. The key aims of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to increase economic growth and competitiveness;</li> <li>- to promote social and environmental growth and competitiveness</li> <li>- to promote sustainable development and protect and enhance the quality of natural and built environment.</li> </ul>	One of the roles of the Local Development Plan is to enhance the value of the rural resources in the area and help to create development opportunities at sustainable locations.
NPPG 5 Archaeology and Planning (1994)	Require the protection, preservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of all nationally important sites of archaeological interest and their settings; and also for other unscheduled remains and their settings identified as particularly worthy of preservation.	Sites of archaeological importance should be identified in the Plan and the setting of these sites should also be protected.
	Require the protection and where appropriate the enhancement of landscapes of historic importance including historic gardens and designed landscapes, and their settings.	The Plan will identify landscapes of historic importance and avoid designating sites within the setting of these.
	Require the excavation and recording of sites where the primary aim of preservation has not been achieved.	The Plan will reflect the NPPG's aim of preserving sites of historic importance. There may be cases where the community need for certain types of development may conflict with the historical significance of a site. In these cases the Local Plan will advocate the excavation of the site.

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Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 6 Renewable Energy	<p>Targets for the amount of energy created from renewable sources should not be regarded as an ambition in itself. They should be regarded as a minimum. There is a specific renewable energy generation target of 50% by 2020. The planning policy supports in principle the full range of renewable technologies.</p> <p>Support for renewable energy developments and the need to protect and enhance Scotland's natural and historic environment must be regarded as compatible goals. Development plan policies for wind farms should be based on the principle that they should be accommodated only where the technology can operate efficiently and the environmental and cumulative effects can be addressed satisfactorily.</p>	The Local Plan should promote renewable energy development and encourage energy efficiency in new developments.
Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 10 Planning for Waste Management:	The Scottish Government is currently pursuing a manifesto commitment to a zero waste Scotland. SPP10 encourages a model policy focusing on industrial land for waste management installations. To ensure waste management requirements are met, all development plans must include the relevant policies.	The Plan will identify sites suitable for waste disposal and recycling close to waste production and focusing on industrial allocations. The Plan should also encourage the reduction, re-use and recovery of waste through the re-use of buildings and should therefore allocate brownfield sites where appropriate.
NPPG 13 Coastal Management (1997)	<p>Provides guidance on managing and enhancing biodiversity on the coast.</p> <p>Highlights the need to distinguish between developed, undeveloped and isolated coastlines.</p> <p>Advises planning authorities on how to manage the risk of erosion and flooding along the coastal zones. Also outlines policy guidance for coastal zone development locations and actions to be taken by planning authorities in development plans and control decisions.</p>	The Local Plan will identify sensitive landscapes and coastal areas where development should be avoided. Areas at risk from coastal flooding should also be avoided.

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NPPG 14 Natural Heritage (1999) SPP 14 Natural Heritage to update NPPG 14 (Draft produced Winter 2007)	This document offers guidance on how the conservation and enhancement of Scotland's plants, animals, landform, geology, natural beauty and amenity should be reflected in land use planning.	Local Plans are required to place particular emphasis on the strength of protection afforded to international, national, regional and local designations. The Plan should also indicate the criteria against which a development affecting a natural designation will be assessed, and identify appropriate opportunities to improve public access for the purposes of enjoying and learning about natural heritage.
Scottish Planning Policy (2008)	Is a statement of Scottish Government policy on land use planning. It sets out the core principles which should underpin the modernised planning system: plan-led system; primary responsibility with local authorities; confidence in the planning system; constraints and requirements necessary and proportionate; engage all interest early; and quality of outcomes.	The Local Plan is the principle document to guide development within the area and must be relevant and up to date.
SPP2 Economic Development (2002)	Development should embrace a wide range of views including those representing the economy, investment and infrastructure interests. Planning authorities should therefore work with the business community, the Enterprise networks and infrastructure providers to ensure that policies and proposals for land allocations reflect current and likely future requirements. However, this should not conflict with the protection afforded to international, national, regional and local designations.	The Plan should make reference to the objectives of HIE and should allocate land for business use accordingly. The Plan should also help commit infrastructure providers such as Scottish Water to invest in areas that will provide future development.
SPP3 Planning for Housing (2003) Currently under review, draft produced Autumn 2007	A key aim of the planning system is to provide well-located, high quality new housing. The overall aim of SPP 3 is to guide new housing developments to the right places by ensuring new developments are easily accessible by public transport and well integrated into walking and cycling networks. Extensions to cities, towns and villages or new settlements should be developed in a sustainable way.	Local Plans are to guide development in suitable site specific allocations, close to existing settlements, that will not negatively impact on the natural and built environment.

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SPP7 Planning and Flooding (2004)	<p>New development should not take place if it would be at significant risk of flooding from any source or would materially increase the probability of flooding elsewhere.</p> <p>The storage capacity of functional floodplains should be safeguarded, and works to elevate the level of a site by landraising should not lead to a loss of flood water storage capacity.</p> <p>The policy in this SPP is based on the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- developers and planning authorities must give consideration to the possibility of flooding from all sources.</li> <li>- new development should be free from significant flood risk from any source.</li> <li>- in areas characterised as 'medium to high' flood risk for watercourse and coastal flooding new development should be focussed on built up areas and all development must be safeguarded from the risk of flooding.</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<p>Flood risk will be a material consideration in a range of cases. Where built up areas already benefit from flood defences, redevelopment of brownfield sites should be acceptable but greenfield proposals will extend the area of built development at risk and should preferably be considered in light of alternatives through the development plan process.</p>
SPP8 Town Centres and Retailing	<p>Sets out the Government's policy for town centres and the key uses, particularly retailing, which contribute to their economic growth and enhancement. It supports town centres and their role as locations for a range of land uses.</p> <p>There is sequential approach for retail and commercial uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• town centre sites</li> <li>• edge of town centre sites</li> <li>• other commercial centres identified within the development plan</li> <li>• out-of-centre sites in locations that are, or can be made, easily accessible by a choice of modes of transport.</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan will aim to provide land for business within the main settlements in order to retain the vitality of town centres and reduce the need to travel.</p>
SPP10 Planning for Waste Management (2007)	<p>The Scottish Government is currently pursuing a manifesto commitment to a zero waste Scotland. SPP10 encourages a model policy focusing on industrial land for waste management installations. To ensure waste management requirements are met, all development plans must include the relevant policies.</p>	<p>The Plan will identify sites suitable for waste disposal and recycling close to waste production and focusing on industrial allocations. The Plan should also encourage the reduction, re-use and recovery of waste through the re-use of buildings and should therefore allocate brownfield sites where appropriate.</p>

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SPP11 Physical Activity and Open Space (2007)	Addresses the land use implications of sport and physical recreation and aspects of informal physical recreation that take place in urban open spaces, which are significant land uses in our towns and cities, and large areas of countryside which are shared by those enjoying outdoor pursuits and seeking places for quiet relaxation.	Local authorities and developers should aim to maintain existing open spaces and create new open spaces which are fit for purpose and sustainable over the long term. The Local Plan should take into account the need for open spaces within new and existing developments.
SPP15 Planning for Rural Development (Consultative Draft 2005)	This SPP focuses on sustainable rural development in the countryside and settlements of 3000 population or less. The SPP encourages a supportive attitude towards 'appropriate' development in areas that help create opportunities for development in sustainable locations wherever appropriate – for example where infrastructure capacity exists or can be provided at reasonable cost, or to meet justifiable social or economic objectives.	Sustainable rural settlements may require the allocation of affordable housing sites which the development Plan will designate. Infrastructure providers should make reference to the Plan allocations to assess where future capacity is necessary, in order to progress the development of these rural areas. The importance of the sensitive design of development in rural areas will be highlighted as well.
SPP 17 Planning for Transport (2005)	<p>Promotes the integration of land use planning and transport at the national, regional and local level.</p> <p>Within SPP17, land use planning is stated as an important tool in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reducing the need for travel by relating land use to transport facilities;</li> <li>- enabling access to local facilities by walking and cycling;</li> <li>- encouraging public transport access to developments; and</li> <li>- supporting essential motorised travel.</li> </ul> <p>Accessibility of new developments is an important issue, and it is recognised that the development plan's should locate and integrate new development, including development of new settlements and expansion of existing built-up areas for housing, with existing or planned transport infrastructure, particularly for walking, cycling and public transport, and with provision of public transport services.</p>	The Plan will recognise the importance of integrating land use and transport planning. Where possible the developer requirements text of the plan will advocate the creation of public footpaths, cycle ways and public transport improvements.

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SPP 21 Green Belts (2006)	<p>Green belt policy should be used as a long-term planning tool to provide clarity and certainty on where development will and will not take place. There should continue to be a strong presumption against inappropriate development in green belts. Where it is considered necessary, the proposed release of green belt land should be taken forward as part of a long-term settlement strategy in the development plan. This will ensure widespread engagement and debate on the future shape of settlements.</p> <p>Management plans agreed between local authorities, landowners and other interests, as well as a range of funding schemes, have an important role in maximising the benefits of green belt land in a co-ordinated way.</p>	<p>The review of a Local Plan will assess the appropriate long term use of green belt land whether this is partly for development that will benefit the community or for the improvement of the area as a green framework.</p>
SPP23 Planning and the Historic Environment (2008)	<p>Sets out Government planning policies in relation to the historic environment with a view to its protection, enhancement and conservation.</p> <p>Aims to provide effective protection of all aspects of the historic environment.</p>	<p>The Plan will:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- define the historic environment and where appropriate, its landscape or townscape setting, in proposals maps.</li> <li>- include policies for the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and its setting including listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and historic gardens and designed landscapes.</li> <li>- include reference to existing and proposed conservation areas.</li> </ul> <p>outline criteria that will be applied to development proposals within conservation areas, within the curtilage of listed buildings and development affecting the setting of scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, historic gardens and designed landscapes.</p>

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Memorandum of Guidance Scottish Office Development Department Circular No.13/1998	Advice on consideration of conservation and listed building consent matters. The Memorandum aims to : offer readers a readily understandable and comprehensive guide to the current legislation present, in a readily understandable form, the principles and policies upon which the legislation is based offer clear guidance which will help both applicants and planning officers to determine whether they are following those principles and policies and achieving what is best for the site, and make quick and easy the location of that guidance.	The Memorandum of Guidance is being withdrawn in stages between March 2008 and March 2009. Sections on policy were replaced by papers published in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy published in October 2008. The technical annexes are being replaced by a suite of guidance papers.
PAN 33 Development of Contaminated Land (2000)	Planning authorities are encouraged and expected to promote the re-use of brownfield land, including contaminated sites, and to inform developers of the availability of sites and the potential constraints attached to them.	Local Plans should set out site specific proposals for land use in their area so that opportunities for development and redevelopment are readily identifiable to landowners, prospective developers and the local community. The allocation of a site for a particular use, however, does not in itself approve the suitability of a site for that purpose. Only investment by the developer or applicant can confirm this. In some instances an assessment of potential contamination issues will be necessary and any remedial work will also need to be financed by the developer.
PAN 42 Archaeology – The Planning Process and Scheduled Monument Procedures (1994) (HS)	Includes advice on the handling of archaeological matters within the planning process and on the separate controls over scheduled monuments under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Supports the associated NPPG 5 – Archaeology and Planning – which sets out the Governments planning policy on how archaeological remains and discoveries should be handled within the development plan and development control systems. As NPPG 5 indicates, nationally and more locally important remains and their settings should be preserved wherever feasible.	A planning authority need to keep up to date with the latest records, new finds and legislation with regard to archaeological areas within Local Plan areas. Where archaeological remains of lesser importance are affected by proposed development, planning authorities should weigh their importance against other factors, including the benefits of the proposed development. In cases where it is judged that development should still proceed, then excavation of all or part of, the site may be necessary.

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PAN 43 Golf Courses and Associated Developments (1994)	Golf course proposals will be assessed on the demand for such development in the area and their ability to fit into the landscape.	The development and design of golf courses can provide attractive green, open spaces. However, such development will impact on biodiversity. The Local Plan supports the development of golf courses but not to the detriment of important natural and cultural heritage.
PAN 44 Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape (1994)	<p>House building is likely to continue to be the most widespread urban land use change for many years ahead. Recycling disused and vacant land as brownfield sites for new housing remains a national priority and can provide for a large part of these needs.</p> <p>Demand for new housing is high in many settlements, and development may threaten the character or identity of a place. A cumulative loss of landscape quality has already become apparent. Suburban housing estates, often devised with little appreciation of local character or a sense of place, have taken shape around the fringes of many towns.</p>	Development Plans will advocate sensitive siting and design of new development within existing settlements, where possible. The Plan will also aim to avoid housing estates devoid of community facilities by allocating land for district centres which will incorporate community and business uses.
PAN 51 Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation (1997)	The environment and land use of Scotland provide the basis for sustaining life, economic development and social well-being. A range of specific environmental protection regimes are designed to safeguard the natural and built environment. They operate alongside the land use planning system which aims to ensure that development takes place in suitable locations and is sustainable, while also providing protection from inappropriate development.	Locations where there are special environmental protection concerns should be set out in the Local Plan and identified on the proposals map. Local Plans may also need to refer to particular environmental protection regimes if they are likely to impose constraints or limitations on development on particular uses of land in a specific area. This may take the form of a policy or the identification of an area where consultation on specified types of planning application is required. In some areas the Local Plan may have to acknowledge that because certain capacity or environmental thresholds have been, or are likely to be reached, further development is unlikely to be permitted unless it incorporates measures to address the environmental constraints.



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PAN 52 Planning and Small Towns (1997)	This Planning Advice Note is intended to encourage local councils, the enterprise network, Communities Scotland and Historic Scotland and other organisations to work together with local community and business groups to retain, restore and enhance what is best about a town and remove, and improve and rehabilitate what is worst.	The Local Plan can assist the aim of improving small towns by producing a vision for the area and identifying priorities for action within each town. Land use allocations will help to ensure a supply of land for particular housing, community and business uses to help meet the vision for an area.
PAN 53 Classifying the Coast for Planning Purposes (1998)	This advice note sets out the criteria which planning authorities should use in deciding whether the coast should be developed, undeveloped or remote.	This classification aims to provide a practical framework within which planning authorities, in their Local Plans, can classify the coast as a basis for the promotion or control of development.
PAN 56 Planning and Noise (1999)	The planning system has an important role to play in preventing and limiting noise pollution. The redevelopment of brownfield sites for housing, a concentration of transport on existing corridors and the increasing emphasis upon mixed-use developments are likely to make noise issues an increasingly important consideration in planning decisions. Although the planning system cannot tackle existing noise problems directly, it has the task of guiding development to the most suitable locations and in regulating the layout and design of new development. The noise implications of development can be a material consideration in determining applications for planning permission.	Development plans can provide the policy framework within which these issues will be considered, but careful attention will also need to be paid to noise issues in determining applications for planning permission.
PAN 59 Improving Town Centres (1999)	This PAN reflects the contents of NPPG 8 and underlines the importance of town centres and gives more detailed advice on how planning authorities can safeguard and improve them, drawing on specific examples of various approaches and actions undertaken in Scotland. To improve their prospects, the aim should be to promote lively, vibrant and viable town centres that provide a quality urban environment where people can live, feel safe, businesses can prosper and opportunities exist for new stimulating activities.	The Local Plan shall aim to allocate land for a number of purposes within existing villages and towns to help promote their vitality and viability.

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PAN 60 Planning for Natural Heritage (2000)	Complements NPPG 14 on Natural Heritage, with examples of good planning practice in relation to natural heritage from across Scotland highlighted in a number of cases. Provides advice on how development and the planning system can contribute to the conservation, enhancement, enjoyment and understanding of Scotland's natural environment, and encourages developers and planning authorities to be positive and creative in addressing natural heritage issues.	Local Plans are required to place particular emphasis on the strength of protection afforded to international, national, regional and local designations. The Plan should also indicate the criteria against which a development affecting a natural designation will be assessed, and identify appropriate opportunities to improve public access for the purposes of enjoying and learning about natural heritage.
PAN 61 Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (2001)	Planners have a key role in highlighting the need for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and co-ordinating SUDS projects.	The Local Plan should set the framework for the local authority's policies with regard to SUDS. Sites requiring urban drainage systems should be highlighted within the SEA matrix and in the developer requirements section of the Local Plan.
PAN 63 Waste Management Planning (2002)	One of the purposes of this PAN is to assist planning authorities in ensuring that development plans reflect the land use requirements for the delivery of an integrated network of waste management facilities.	The Plan will allocate sites for waste management facilities where required.
PAN 65 Planning and Open Space (2008)	Provides advice on the role of the planning system in protecting and enhancing existing open spaces and providing high quality new spaces.	The Local Plan will aim to protect areas that are valued; and ensure provision of appropriate, quality, open spaces in, or within easy reach of, new development.

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<p>PAN 66 Best Practice in handling Planning Applications affecting Trunk Roads (2003)</p>	<p>Intended to provide advice on best practice with the overall aim of enabling Scottish Executive Road Network Management and Maintenance Division (RNMMMD) to reduce the time taken to process consultations.</p> <p>The primary purpose of the trunk road network is to provide for the safe and effective movement of long-distance through traffic/ This means that the full implications for traffic flow and road safety are taken into account when proposals are made for new developments in the vicinity of trunk roads.</p> <p>It is recognised, however, that in some cases the trunk road provides the only road access to development or forms an important and inseparable part of the local road network. In such cases care is needed to ensure a balance is struck between local and wider interests when assessing proposals.</p>	<p>Planning authorities are required to consult the relevant trunk road authority in relation to Local Plan allocations affecting existing or proposed trunk roads or special roads under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- proposed development within 67 metres of the middle of the road;</li> <li>- where the development consists of, or includes, the formation, laying out or alteration of any means of access to such a road; or</li> <li>- where the development is likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic entering or leaving the road</li> </ul>
<p>PAN 67 Housing Quality (2003)</p>	<p>The design of a successful place will begin with understanding how new housing can be connected to the movement patterns (street and routes) and settlement patterns (street blocks and layouts) of an area.</p> <p>Vehicle and pedestrian routes should connect the housing with facilities and spaces within the development, to the local area and more widely.</p> <p>Issues that should be considered when looking at the accessibility and traffic management of housing areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- buildings whose access is from the street</li> <li>- routes connected to existing routes and patterns of movement</li> <li>- well connected or have the potential to be well connected to public transport</li> <li>- pedestrian and cycle routes, which may be streets with vehicular traffic, that are continuous and connected, with no dead ends</li> <li>- routes which are safe and convenient for people with limited mobility</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan will aim to allocate development sites in the core of existing settlements to provide easy access to local facilities and services. Where this is not possible, the provision of pedestrian and cycle routes will be advocated, and increased access to public transport will be encouraged.</p>

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PAN 68 Design Statements (2003)	<p>One of a series of advice notes which addresses design in more detail and should be read in conjunction with them. It explains what a design statement is, why it is a useful tool, when it is required, and how it should be prepared and presented. The PAN does not introduce a prescriptive approach. It seeks to ensure that local authorities and applicants become more confident in preparing them.</p> <p>The aim is to see design statements used more effectively in the planning process and to create places of lasting quality.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will encourage the good general design of built development and will offer guidance on specific areas where the high quality of design is particularly relevant in order to fit development sensitively in to the landscape.</p>
PAN 69 Planning and Building Standards Advice on Flooding (2004)	<p>Provides background information and best practice advice in support of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 7: Planning and Flooding. The SPP aims to prevent future development which would have a significant probability of being affected by flooding or which would increase the probability of flooding elsewhere. The PAN takes as a starting point the responsibilities of local authorities and developers in ensuring that future development is not located in areas with a significant risk of flooding, including functional flood plains. However, there are circumstances where development would benefit from selecting designs, forms of construction and materials which may help to minimise the effects of a flood event on the property.</p>	<p>The Development Plan will identify any flood risk areas during the site options stage of the Plan and will recommend that a flood risk assessment is carried out on brownfield and other possible development sites where any possible flood risk could be alleviated.</p>
PAN 71 Conservation Area Management (2004)	<p>There are over 600 conservation areas in Scotland. This PAN complements existing national policy and provides further advice on the management of conservation areas. It identifies good practice for managing change, sets out a checklist for appraising conservation areas and provides advice on funding and implementation.</p>	<p>Local Plans should prevent uncharacteristic development taking place in conservation areas.</p>
PAN 72 Housing in the Countryside (2005)	<p>This PAN aims to create more opportunities for good quality rural housing which respects Scottish landscapes and building traditions.</p>	<p>Development Plans should encourage good quality housing design and the sensitive siting of development.</p>

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PAN 73 Rural Diversification (2005)	The Scottish Executive is committed to supporting rural life, rural communities and the rural economy. This includes promoting sustainable development in rural areas.	Development Plans should contain positive policies that encourage rural diversification and are appropriate to the rural areas they apply to. They should identify sites that offer a choice of size, location and environmental amenity, in order to meet the varying demands of business and allow them to be located in the most suitable and sustainable locations.
PAN 74 Affordable Housing (2005)	Sets out how the planning system can support the Executive's commitment to increase the supply of affordable housing. It provides advice and information, including existing examples of better practice. Seeks to speed up the development of both market and affordable housing by ensuring that any affordable housing requirement included in the development plan is realistic.	The Local Plan will aim to allocate at least one site within each main settlement for affordable housing to ensure an adequate supply of land for this use over the Plan period.
PAN 75 Planning for Transport (2005)	Accompanies SPP17: Planning for Transport and provides good practice guidance which planning authorities, developers and others should carry out in their policy development, proposal assessment and project delivery. The document aims to create greater awareness of how linkages between planning and transport can be managed. It highlights the roles of different bodies and professions in the process and points to other sources of information.	The Plan will recognise the importance of integrating land use and transport planning. Where possible the developer requirements text of the plan will advocate the creation of public footpaths, cycle ways and public transport improvements.
PAN 79 Water and Drainage (2006)	Development Plans guide the future development and use of land in the long term public interest. Local Plans play a key role in identifying suitable locations for development in the context of an overall settlement strategy. Provision of water and waste water is an important consideration in the delivery of public policy objectives, including those set out in development plans.	Issues relating to water and drainage should not be viewed in isolation but considered in relation to the Plan's objectives. The Council and Scottish Water should work together to provide a long term framework for infrastructure provision over the development plan and Scottish Water's investment period.

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PAN 81 Community Engagement (2007)	The planning system is being radically reformed by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. The Act will change planning legislation in a number of ways which are aimed at making the planning system more efficient and inclusive at all levels – from national policy to strategic and local development plans and development management.	To meet the aims of the PAN the Local Plan team need to reach out to as many people as possible through the use of innovative consultation exercises. We are to produce a Main Issues Report to ask the public what their views are with regard to the main issues in the area. We will encourage partnership working with community organisations, infrastructure providers, landowners and other stakeholders, and monitor and evaluate participation levels throughout the Local Plan process.
PAN 83 Masterplanning	This will offer guidance on how to formulate a Masterplan for a given area.	A Local Plan may consider it appropriate for a Masterplan to be produced for a certain part of the Plan area. In this case the guidance on Masterplanning should be followed.
PAN 84 –Reducing Carbon Emissions in New Developments (2008)	Offers information and guidance on implementing the target set in SPP6 paragraph 36.	The Local Plan recognises through general policy 6 Designing for Sustainability that the forthcoming Council DPPG on Designing for Sustainability takes account of this PAN.

Regional Tier		
The Highland Structure Plan (2001)	The Structure Plan is a vision of how the Highlands should develop in very broad terms over a period of 10 years and beyond. It contains an indication of how international and national obligations affect the area, an overall long term development strategy, a strategic approach to safeguard and enhance the environment, policies and proposals that provide a basis for determining planning applications, and guidance for the preparation of Local Plans.	The Local Plan must conform to the Structure Plan strategy and aim to achieve the Plan's strategic objectives. The objectives are based on – provision and diversification of job opportunities, accommodating growth and retaining local populations, improving the level, range and accessibility of services, conserving natural resources by safeguarding and promoting the rural environment, maintaining and enhancing the area's distinct cultural identity by protecting archaeological sites, improving accessibility by building and improving roads, and fostering public transport and enhancing the quality of living by carrying out environmental improvements and controlling pollution.
A Smart, Successful Highlands and Islands (Highlands and Islands Enterprise, 2005)	This is an enterprise strategy for the Highlands and Islands. Its central aim is to realise the populations' full potential on a sustainable basis, and outlines the strategic objectives of strengthening communities, developing skills, growing businesses and making global connections. In particular it addresses the issues of remoteness, affordability of housing, unique cultural and natural assets, lower than average incomes, increasing rural populations and balancing growth, and increasing business development.	The Local Plan will reflect the need to build communities' prospects for a sustainable future, through land allocations for business and housing (emphasising affordable housing), protecting and enhancing natural and built heritage, and encouraging (where appropriate) the use of renewable energy.
NHS Highland Annual Report 2005/2006	NHS Highland aim to improve health and reduce inequalities in health outcomes between different sectors of the Highland community, reduce the time people wait to receive services and modernise their services.	The Plan can help to meet the aim of reducing inequalities in health by promoting the development of suitable housing, particularly affordable housing and allocating sites for the development of buildings for medical practices can also help the NHS to modernise.
Highland Area Waste Plan (SEPA, 2003)	This document outlines the strategic vision for waste management in the Highlands over the next twenty years. At present the Highlands has a high reliance on landfill sites. There is pressure for change including an increase in recycling.	The Local Plan will allocate sites for waste management were required, including recycling facilities.

Highland Forestry and Woodland Strategy (2004)	The opportunities in Highland for developing new forests and woodlands, and enhancing existing ones are wide-ranging. This strategy aims to maximise these opportunities and to guide development so that forestry and woodland management are well integrated with other interests.	The Local Plan needs to take account and safeguard these areas allocated by this indicative forestry strategy.
Highland Gypsy and Traveller Action Plan (2005)	The Highland Council Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan will enable the Council, working with partners, to improve its service provision by consulting with Gypsy/Travellers to improve understanding of their needs and aspirations, identifying the existing provision of services, monitoring access to services, and identifying required service improvements and necessary resources to facilitate access to services.	The Local Plan may be required to make land available for the services mentioned.
HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy Draft (2007)	A principal objective of HITRANS has been to prepare and keep up to date a Regional Transport Strategy to set out the long term programme for the development of transport services over the whole of Highland region. The priorities for the Skye and Lochalsh area are as follows:- to provide a Skye air service to the central belt (2013-2017) and to provide a commuter service between Kyle and Inverness (2008-2012). The Lochaber area priorities are to improve the routes from Fort William to Ballachulish and Inverness (2013-2017), and enhance the rail service between Oban and Fort William (2008-2017).	The Local Plan will take possible future transport improvements into account when allocating sites.
Highland Rail Report 'Room for Growth' HIE (2006)	Commissioned to inform National Rail Strategy regarding future rail traffic growth and infrastructure for Highland rail network. Identifies constraints and enhancement options to support freight and passenger service development. On Kyle line, potential for upgrading to take freight traffic, including a passing loop at Stromeferry. Fort William to Oban line, improvements to timetabling is appraised.	The Local Plan will take possible future transport improvements into account.
Housing Highland's Communities: Local Housing Strategy (2006)	The Highland Housing Strategy shows how The Highland Council and its partners will aim to meet people's housing needs over the next 5 years. It is used to guide local action on housing issues such as building new affordable homes and setting up new services.	The strategy will have an impact on housing allocations within the Local Plan, particularly the provision of affordable housing.



Highland Community Plan 2004 – 2007)	The Highland Council Community Plan aims to tackle three strategic issues – counter the worst effects of demographic change, tackle disadvantage, and upgrade our infrastructure. The Community Plan explains how this can be achieved in partnership with communities.	Development Plans need to take these issues into consideration and endeavour to locate new housing development where services and facilities exist or can be provided in the future.
Highland Access Strategy (2006-2011)	The Access Strategy will provide the overarching strategic framework and the context under which the six Core Path Network Plans for Highland will nest.	The Local Plan teams will liaise with access officers to ensure that possible core path routes will be safeguarded from development and will highlight areas where a path may be required in relation to a development.
The Highland Council's Planning for Sustainability in the Highlands DPPG (2006)	This is a guidance note in support of sustainable design. It offers advice on designing in a sustainable way to maximise the benefits which new development can provide while aiming to reduce the carbon footprint that this will create.	All new Local Plans for the Highlands will now place a requirement on planning applicants to demonstrate, by means of a Sustainable Design Statement, that their proposals take account of sustainable design practice.
Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Planning Guidelines (2006) (currently being reviewed and will be replaced with SPG for On-Shore Wind Energy Developments)	The Highlands have extensive renewables through hydro, wind, tide and bio-fuel energy. Developing ways to harness these are being explored. The drive for using energy from renewable sources comes from the recognition that global warming is related to greenhouse gas emissions such as carbon dioxide which arise largely from energy production. The document offers a 'Vision for Renewables Development in Highland' and offers information on what infrastructure is required to develop the national electricity grid.	The Local Plan will avoid recommending sites for development within the vicinity of electricity pylons and will safeguard areas that are required for the creation of renewable energy.
Highland Council Local Transport Strategy (2000) (currently being reviewed)	The Highland Council prepare a Local Transport Strategy and implement the policies, plans and projects to improve and manage the Highland transport system.	This document is utilised by the Local Plan team in order to help enable and encourage transport improvements.
The Council's Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy (2001)	The contaminated land regime brought into force with the Contaminated Land (Scotland) Regulations 2000 requires Local Authorities to identify and secure the remediation of contaminated land in their area.	The Local Plan should take account of the sites identified through inspection that overlap with potential development sites allocated in the Local Plan.

Local Tier		
The Core Path Plan for Skye and Lochalsh	The Skye and Lochalsh Core Path Plan will recommend the establishment of certain pedestrian and cycle paths in the Local Plan area.	The development plan will need to be aware of these proposals and ensure that no allocations will impact on these routes. The Local Plan will also need to be aware of the need for potential path provision with regard to new and existing developments.
The Core Path Plan for Lochaber	The Lochaber Core Path Plan will recommend the establishment of certain pedestrian and cycle paths in the Local Plan area.	The development plan will need to be aware of these proposals and ensure that no allocations will impact on these routes. The Local Plan will also need to be aware of the need for potential path provision with regard to new and existing developments.
Bayfield Development Brief August 1999	This Brief highlights the commercial and environmental opportunity presented by 5.3 hectares of land at Bayfield, Portree. It provides planning and servicing guidance in sufficient detail to help inform private development proposals and public funding bids. Interest from potential funding agencies, both public and private, is invited.	The Local Plan for the Skye and Lochalsh area needs to be aware of the potential to develop this land at Bayfield. Therefore, this area should be allocated as a potential development site for the uses advocated in the development brief.
Portree North Framework Plan 2003	Portree's growth has been constrained for the past 20 years by a lack of infrastructure to service its main development sites. Local housing and employment needs have either failed to be met or diverted to less suitable locations. However there is now an opportunity to open-up a supply of land to the north of the village that will accommodate these needs and consolidate Portree's role as the pre-eminent settlement on the Isle of Skye.	The Local Plan for the Skye and Lochalsh area needs to be aware of the potential to develop this land at the north of Portree. Therefore, this area should be allocated as a potential development site for the uses advocated in the framework plan. There is already a planning consent in place for housing development at Home Farm and this is under construction presently.

Glen Nevis Partnership Strategy 2001	The Nevis Strategy provides a framework and action programme to safeguard, manage and, where appropriate, enhance the environmental qualities and visitor opportunities and appreciation of the Nevis Area. It has been prepared by the Nevis Working Party and six Topic Groups over the last 18 months and builds on previous consultations. As an advisory document, the Strategy will not commit any organisations to specific actions, but provides an agenda for partnership action, which can be agreed by organisations and individuals with interests in the Nevis Area.	The development plan for the Lochaber area will aim to identify those areas that require protection from development pressures and avoid the allocation of these sites.
Achintore Road and Tigh Phurst Policy Studies (1993)	These two studies set out guidelines for infill/gap sites with a view to reinforcing the established character and pattern.	The two areas are still referred to in the Plan review.
Aquaculture Framework Plan for Bracadale (2002)	Loch Bracadale and its associated inner lochs form one of the largest areas of semi-enclosed inshore waters around the Skye coast. It is an area with a distinctive and varied character. There is therefore a need to ensure that in encouraging aquaculture development these qualities are not compromised and the interests of others, such as fishermen, local residents and recreational users are taken into account.	This framework supplements the statutory guidance contained in the Local Plan and the Structure Plan. Collectively these form the policy background against which the Council will assess all aquaculture proposals in Loch Bracadale.
Aquaculture Framework Plan for Loch Hourn (2001)	The Framework Plan for Loch Hourn is to guide aquaculture development to appropriate locations and to help minimise conflicts of interest.	This framework supplements the statutory guidance contained in the Local Plan and the Structure Plan. Collectively these form the policy background against which the Council will assess all aquaculture proposals in Loch Hourn.
Lochaber Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2004)	The Action Plan aims to promote sustainable management of our local biodiversity, raise awareness and educate people about the issues surrounding biodiversity, and suggest opportunities and actions that could be taken to improve our biodiversity.	The development plan should be aware of important species and habitats within the plan area and should aim to protect these areas from development.
Skye and Lochalsh Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2003)	The Action Plan aims to promote sustainable management of our local biodiversity, raise awareness and educate people about the issues surrounding biodiversity, and suggest opportunities and actions that could be taken to improve our biodiversity.	The development plan should be aware of important species and habitats within the plan area and should aim to protect these areas from development.

The Nevis Strategy (2001)	This plan aims to safeguard the environment around Ben Nevis. It is a framework and action programme to protect several SSSIs and the national and international importance of the area as a major tourist attraction.	The development plan needs to take account of the importance of the Nevis area and should aim to protect the setting of Ben Nevis by either presuming against development within the area or insisting on sensitive siting and design.
Lochaber – Today and Tomorrow 2007 (HIE)	A five year strategy for a prosperous future, this document sets out what we can do by working together in the next five years to achieve a better future. The crucial economic issues to be addressed include; encouraging more people to live and work in the area, reducing Lochaber’s dependence on public sector job creation, establishing and growing the knowledge economy, continuing to support business start-ups, improving education and skill levels, and ensuring that economic growth is spread throughout the whole of Lochaber.	The Local Plan will reflect the need to build communities’ prospects for a sustainable future, through land allocations for business in particular, and supporting proposals (where appropriate) for the development of buildings relating to education and training.
SNH’s Landscape Character Assessment for the Skye and Lochalsh Area (1996)	This study provides a detailed assessment of the landscape character of Skye and Lochalsh, and considers the likely pressures and opportunities for change in the landscape. It offers advice on how the landscape character may be conserved, enhanced or restructured as appropriate.	These characteristics should be taken into account in Local Plan preparation when allocating potential development sites.
SNH’s Landscape Character Assessment for the Lochaber Area (1998) (L)	This assessment highlights the areas of nature conservation importance in the Lochaber area.	These characteristics should be taken into account in Local Plan preparation when allocating potential development sites. The impact of development on important landscape characteristics should be carefully considered.
Lochs Duich, Long and Alsh SAC Management Scheme (once adopted) (2006) (S+L) (SNH)	SNH have a statutory responsibility to advise other relevant authorities as to the conservation objectives for marine SACs and any operations which may cause deterioration of natural habitats of species, or disturbance of species for which the site has been designated.	The Skye and Lochalsh Local Plan is required to consult this document and SNH in relation to the allocation of any sites in the SAC Management area.
Loch Sunart Marine Special Area of Conservation Management Strategy (once adopted) (L) (SNH)	This is a management strategy compiled to deliver the objectives of the Habitats Directive, whilst taking into account the needs of the local communities.	The strategy and the specific areas of conservation identified should be taken into account in the review of the Local Development Plan.

Sound of Arisaig Marine Special Area of Conservation Management Strategy (2000) (L) (SNH)	This is a management strategy compiled to deliver the objectives of the Habitats Directive, whilst taking into account the needs of the local communities.	The strategy and the specific areas of conservation identified should be taken into account in the review of the Local Development Plan.
SACs and SPAs	<p>The links below provide information on management of SACs and SPAs and there is also a link to SNHi where Sitelink provides information about sites of national and international importance.</p> <p><a href="http://www.snh.gov.uk/about/directives/ab-dir16.asp">http://www.snh.gov.uk/about/directives/ab-dir16.asp</a>  <a href="http://www.snh.gov.uk/about/directives/ab-dir17.asp">http://www.snh.gov.uk/about/directives/ab-dir17.asp</a>  <a href="http://www.snh.org.uk/snhi/">http://www.snh.org.uk/snhi/</a></p>	The Local Plan will take into account unsuitable activities on or adjacent to SACs and SPAs.
Lochaber Geopark (2005)	The main objective of the Geopark is to protect and protect the geological features in the Lochaber area which are of national and international importance.	The Plan supports the development of the Geopark and will reserve any suitable land required for its establishment.
Local Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment (2003) (SEPA)	The data recorded in 2003 which monitored levels of Sulphur Dioxide, Nitrogen Oxide and Benzene in Portree and Fort William found that the emissions were low and will not exceed EU air quality objectives.	The Plan will aim to allocate industrial sites a good distance from housing development and will also aim to reduce the need to drive by encouraging the allocation of new development within existing settlements, close to existing services and facilities and promote walking and cycling.