

SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT – COVER NOTE

PART 1

To:

SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

or

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PART 2

An Environmental Report is attached for:

Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Developments

The Responsible Authority is:

The Highland Council

PART 3

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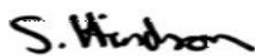
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PART 4

Signature

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signature
is acceptable)



Date

16th January 2009

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Contents of the Environmental Report

Non-technical summary	6
Introduction	7
Purpose of this Environmental Report and key facts.....	7
Key facts.....	8
SEA activities to date.....	10
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	10
Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)	11
Historic Scotland	14
Context	15
Outline and objectives of Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Developments.....	15
Relationship with other PPS and environmental protection objectives.....	16
Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment	21
Environmental Baseline	24
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna.....	24
Population and Human Health	24
Water.....	24
Soil	28
Air and Climatic Factors	29
Material Assets.....	29
Cultural Heritage	29
Landscape.....	30
Baseline Data Issues.....	30
Environmental problems.....	34
Likely evolution of the environment without Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development.....	35
SEA Objectives.....	36
Assessment of Environmental effects and measures envisaged for prevention, reduction and offset of any significant adverse effects	37
Alternatives to which SEA was applied	37
Alternative 1 - Do Nothing	37
Alternative 2 - Consider each site on its own merits	37
Alternative 3 - Develop Supplementary Guidance on Open Space in New Residential Developments	37
Chosen Approach.....	38
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna.....	38
Human Health	38
Material Assets.....	39
Water.....	39
Climate/air	39
Landscape.....	39
Assessment methods	40
Explanation of Assessment Measures	45
Assessment of PPS and its alternatives - Summary	46
Alternative 1 - Do Nothing	46
Alternative 2 - Consider each site on its own merits	47
Alternative 3 - Develop Supplementary Guidance on Open Space in New Residential Developments	48
Assessment of Cumulative Effects	50

Measures envisaged for the prevention, reduction and offsetting of significant adverse effects...	53
Monitoring	55
Next steps	56
Appendix A - Full assessment results	57
Option 1 - Do Nothing	57
Option 2 - Consider each site on its own merits	68
Option 3 - Adopt Supplementary Guidance on Open Space in New Residential Development....	78

List of Tables

Table 1: Relationship with other Plans, Programs or Strategies.....	16
Table 2: Summary of collected data	21
Table 3: River Quality	25
Table 4: Estuary Quality.....	25
Table 5: Coastal Water Quality	25
Table 6: Identified Baseline data issues	30
Table 7: Individual Baseline Data Issues	31
Table 8: Environmental Problems.....	34
Table 9: SEA Objectives	36
Table 10: Example of Assessment Matrix.....	41
Table 11: Assessment of Cumulative Effects	50
Table 12: Issues Scoped In/Scoped Out	53
Table 13: Measures envisaged for the prevention, reduction and offsetting of any significant adverse effects.....	54
Table 14: Key dates in the production of the Supplementary Guidance and the Strategic Environmental Assessment.....	56

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Non-technical summary

This Environmental Report has been prepared to fulfil the requirements of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The Report provides a Strategic Environmental Assessment for The Highland Council's Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development. The Supplementary Guidance sets out how the Council will approach the provision of new open space in any new residential development.

Highland's open space comprises a wide variety of sites including amenity greenspace, equipped play areas for children and young people, natural greenspace, parks and gardens, outdoor sports facilities and other functional greenspaces such as allotments.

Given the importance of appropriate greenspace, sport and recreation provision, the Council's long term aim is for the Highland Council area to have sustainable networks of high quality, fit for purpose greenspaces and sports facilities that support and enhance biodiversity and the quality of life of residents and visitors

The main focus of this Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report is on the future provision of open space. However, existing open spaces may also be improved through use of developer contributions.

Transport, Environment and Community Service and the Education Culture and Sport Service at the Highland Council play a key role in the provision, management, improvement, protection and promotion of greenspaces and sports facilities and have worked with Planning and Development in the production with this work. The Council would like to work in collaboration and partnership with the public, private and voluntary sectors to present new opportunities to enhance the quality and diversity of greenspace for the benefit of all who use it through the implementation of Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development.

A number of related plans policies and strategies were identified and have been used to better the content of the consultation version of the Supplementary Guidance.

Three different options were identified as possible alternatives to producing the supplementary guidance. These were 'Do Nothing' where we continue with our current approach to open space, 'Assess Each site on its own merits' where we will look at the open space provision required just for that site or finally, 'Produce supplementary guidance on open space in new residential developments' which will give specific guidance on the Council's approach to open space in new residential development. Each of these Alternatives were assessed against a set of Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives to assess the level of impact on the Environment. Also Identified were appropriate mitigation mechanisms to offset or reduce and potential negative impact of the chosen alternative on the environment.

This Environmental Report identifies environmental issues associated with the production and implementation of Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development. SEA objectives, an Assessment Matrix and appropriate mitigation mechanisms are identified through the report.

Introduction

Purpose of this Environmental Report and key facts

As part of the preparation of Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development The Highland Council is carrying out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is a systematic method for considering the likely environmental effects of certain PPS. SEA aims to:

- integrate environmental factors into PPS preparation and decision-making;
- improve PPS and enhance environmental protection;
- increase public participation in decision making; and
- facilitate openness and transparency of decision-making.

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

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

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to:

- provide information on Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development
- identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the PPS and its reasonable alternatives;
- provide an early and effective opportunity for the Consultation Authorities and the public to offer views on any aspect of this Environmental Report.

The key facts relating to the Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development are set out in below.

Key facts

Name of Responsible Authority	The Highland Council
Title of PPS	Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Development
What prompted the PPS (e.g. legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)	A lack of detailed guidance exists within the local plans. Under new planning regulations expected early 2009, supplementary guidance will become a legal part of the plan with the same legal standing as the local plan policies.
Subject (e.g. transport)	Town Planning
Period covered by PPS and Frequency of Updates	The period that the SPG will cover depends on two things: the review cycle of the local development plans (LDPs) and the completion and review of a Highland wide open space audit and strategy. LDPs need to be prepared on a 5 year cycle, and national guidance states that an open space audit and strategy are also to be reviewed on a 5 year cycle. The implication for the SPG is therefore that it too will need updating on a 5 year basis, given the likely changes in circumstances and needs that the audit, strategy and local plans will reflect.
Area covered by PPS	The Supplementary Guidance (SPG) will be relevant to the whole Highland area with the exception of Badenoch and Strathspey. The Cairngorms National Park Authority now prepares local development plans and guidance for this part of Highland Council area.
Purpose and/or objectives of PPS	<p>The purpose of the SPG is to set out in detail the approach which Highland Council expect developers and house builders to follow in providing, maintaining and managing open space provision in new residential development.</p> <p>Open Space is increasingly seen as a very important part of our built up environment, providing a variety of benefits to the residents living nearby. Guidelines are needed to ensure a consistent approach to the planning of open space, enabling the development process to achieve the right type, quantity and quality of open space in the Highlands.</p> <p>The focus will be on securing the right amount and type of open space in places which provide most benefit to the population it serves. Criteria for achieving higher quality and more accessible sites will also be set out, as well as identifying the circumstances where enhancing existing sites is more appropriate. Arrangements for management and maintenance will be clarified.</p> <p>This SPG will be used alongside the existing Highland Structure plan, existing and emerging local plans, as well as the new Highland-wide local development plan and 3 area local</p>

	<p>development plans. The objectives of the PPS are as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To enhance the quality and maintenance of existing open spaces to maximise benefits for health, well being and biodiversity - To provide new open spaces that are maintained to a high quality and that are fit for purpose
<p>Contact point</p>	<p>Simon Hindson Graduate Planner Development Plans Planning and Development Service Council Headquarters Glenurquhart Road Inverness IV3 5NX</p> <p>Tel: 01463 702261 e-mail: simon.hindson@highland.gov.uk</p>

SEA activities to date

This section sets out the SEA activity to date in terms of work carried out and the consultations authorities response at each stage where it was applicable.

1. Screening Report submitted to SEA Gateway - March 2008.
2. Comments received from consultation authorities indicating a requirement to take forward the SEA - April 2008.
3. The Highland Council Determined that a SEA would be necessary - August 2008. The determination notice was publicised in the local press and online. A copy of the Determination notice was sent to the Consultation Authorities
4. Scoping Report Submitted to SEA Gateway - August 2008
5. Comments received on the scoping report received back from the consultation authorities - September 2008. the following summarise the comments from the Consultation Authorities;

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)

- **General Comments**
 - i. Satisfied with the overall scope and level of detail proposed but suggest revisions to both these aspects.
- **Detailed Comments**
 - i. Relevant to include the following in the suit of relevant plans, programmes and environmental objectives to be considered;
 - PAN 61 Planning and SUDS
 - Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (as amended)
 - ii. Consider the flooding of development on the functional flood plain is an existing environmental problem which the SPG may address
- **Baseline Assessment**
 - i. The scoping report only gives limited information on the baseline at this stage. Generally more information would be provided.
- **Scope of Assessment**
 - i. SEPA are generally satisfied with the scope of the assessment
 - ii. SEPA are pleased that the water receptor will be scoped in
 - iii. SEPA does not believe that air or climate change will be significantly affected and would therefore have no objections to the Authority scoping these issues out.
 - iv. SEPA is satisfied that soil would not have a significant affect on soil and therefore is happy for it to be scoped out
 - v. SEPA agrees that negative effect is unlikely and welcomes the Highland Council's commitment to mitigate any identified significant effects.
- **SEA Objectives**

- i. An SEA objective which captures the positive effect on drainage and flooding is recommended
- ii. If air and climate are to be scoped in then an SEA objective for these receptors should be included
- **Proposed Assessment**
 - i. More information on how the assessment is to be carried out and presented would have been helpful
 - ii. It would be useful if the Environmental Report is clear how carrying out the assessment affected the SPG.
 - iii. SEPA are satisfied with the proposed eight week consultation period
 - iv. Significant effects will need to be monitored

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)

- **General Approach**
 - i. It would be useful to consider how the SPG will sit alongside the Highland Council's Open Space Audit and Strategy which is to be prepared in line with SPP11 and PAN 65.
- **Setting the Context**
 - i. SNH suggest the following PPS should be included in the Environmental Report;

International	EC Birds Directive
National	UK Biodiversity Action Plan and Scottish Biodiversity Strategy PAN 44 Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape PAN 52 Planning and Small Towns PAN 60 Planning for Natural Heritage PAN 61 Planning and SUDS PAN 76 New Residential Streets PAN 77 Designing Safer Places PAN 78 Inclusive Design Designing Places Let's Make Scotland More Active Improving Health in Scotland - The Challenge Delivering Health in Scotland - Meeting the Challenge
Regional/Local	SNH Natural Heritage Futures - Settlements Housing Landscape Capacity Studies Landscape Character Assessments

- **Environmental Objectives**
 - i. SNH Suggest rewording two of the SEA objectives
- **Existing Environmental Problems**
 - i. SNH believe the lack of strategic ability of how individual open space areas could be combined to form green networks could be added as a further existing environmental problem.
 - ii. Clarification should be made between the ability for people in built up areas to enjoy the natural heritage, rather than access of natural heritage to open space areas.
 - iii. Access to areas for recreation in the countryside could be added as a further existing environmental problem. As despite being surrounded by

countryside there is not a necessarily the people living in these areas may not have good access

- **Baseline Information**

- i. List the baseline information by SEA Topic rather than SEA Objective
- ii. A key source of information should be the Inverness Green Space Strategy and Action Plan 2007-2009
- iii. Biodiversity, flora, fauna
 - SNH caution against applying baseline data with relation to a site within X miles of a site with Biodiversity value as this may not always be suitable, a more selective definition should be applied.
 - Proposed baseline information for the proportion of land designated for particular quality/amenity/biodiversity value is too vague need baseline on more specific indicator such as number of nature reserves and the number of visits to them.
- iv. Material Assets
 - SNH agree that existing audits are one of the most important sources of information.
 - Baseline should include the extent and distribution of paths and cycle tracks in and around settlements
 - Scottish Recreation Surveys - Summary Reports could be a key information source.
- v. Population
 - Safety/Crime should be added as a consideration
 - Baseline information on community involvement in the management of open space could be added from this issue
- vi. Landscape
 - Clarification is required on what is meant by “% of conservation areas”
 - Most appropriate baseline would be derived from the distribution and nature of designated areas.
- vii. Air, Climatic Factors
 - Sources of information could include Scottish Government Transport Statistics and the Scottish Household Survey
- viii. Water
 - Some baseline information needs to be added regarding water quality and the water environment
 - May be helpful to consider the identification of SEA indicators which could more specifically provide a means through which the SPG can be measured. Such as;
 - Total area of open space (by type) in good condition
 - % of population within 200m of public open space in good condition
 - Number of management/maintenance plans for open space areas
 - Number and distribution of habitats or species recorded on open space areas

- % of open space that links to green corridors (e.g. Woodland, rivers, green wedges)
- Total length of footpath/cycle way in good condition in open space
- % of open space footpath/cycle way that links to a wider core path network

Significant Issues

- ix. Below is a list setting out the issues SNH believe could be scoped in/scoped out of the SEA.

Scoped In

Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna
 Human Health
 Material Assets (recreation and Access)
 Water
 Landscape
 Population

Scoped Out

Soil
 Cultural Heritage
 Air
 Climate

- **SEA Objectives**

- i. SNH have suggested inclusion of the following SEA objectives and rewording of some others;
- Reduce and prevent crime and fear of crime
 - Enhance access and opportunities for all
 - Avoid damage and disturbance to designated wildlife sites and protected species
 - Reword SEA objective #3 to - Provide opportunities for people of all ages to come into contact with and appreciate nature/natural environments (or wildlife and greenspace)
 - Reword SEA objective #7 to - Enhance less valued landscapes or those with less strong identity
 - Reword SEA objective #8 to - Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights, including rights of way and core paths

- **Report Structure**

i. **Future changes to the environment without this plan**

- Could expand this section to consider the greater difficulty towards making networks of green open space that would have enhanced benefits for biodiversity and recreation through wildlife corridors and through travel routes for walking and cycling

ii. **Alternatives**

- Option 2 could be made clearer to the effect that a design brief would have to have been prepared for each housing site allocated in a local plan.
- Possibility of two other possible alternative;

- Including this SPG with the Council's open space audit and strategy
- For the larger settlements and residential growth areas, alternative strategic spatial approaches to open space provision

iii. Mitigation

- SNH suggest one of the aims should be to identify where the SPG would not deliver as effective and optimized level of positive effects to the environment as possible.

iv. Assessment Methodology

- SNH recommend the following strategic objectives are broad enough to cater for the different potential circumstances of the open space provision across Highland Communities;
 - Where new open space areas are needed for new developments
 - Where there is a deficiency of open space from previous developments
 - Where existing open spaces should be improved
 - Where off site open space areas should be provided
 - Both urban and residential areas in the countryside/small settlements
- A matrix analysis is recommended to evaluate the environmental impact.
- A Monitoring framework should be set out in the Environmental Report

Historic Scotland

- **Scope of assessment and level of detail**
 - i. Historic Scotland are content that Historic Environment has been scoped out as the issue of open space in the curtilage of the historic environment including battlefields is raised.
 - ii. For information - Historic Scotland is currently developing a Battlefield Scotland's Historic Environment Policy.
- **Period of Consultation**
 - i. Historic Scotland is content with the 8 week period of consultation on the environmental report.

6. Environmental Report produced.

All of the previous SEA activity can be viewed online at <http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/osspg.htm>.

Context

Outline and objectives of Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Developments

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

In addition to maintaining existing Supplementary Guidance as up to date as possible, the Highland Council Development Plan Scheme sets out the need to prepare four specific new supplementary guidance documents to support the ongoing work on the Highland-wide local development plan, one of which is the Open Space in New Residential Development supplementary guidance. This SPG sets out very clearly who is responsible for providing open spaces and managing them well.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP11) on physical activity on open space had created a requirement for each local authority in Scotland to produce an open space strategy. The strategy should provide a strategic vision for the future of open space. While a Highland wide open space strategy is currently not in production it is envisaged that this will be produced in the future in line with national policy.

The Supplementary Guidance on Open Space in New Residential Developments will sit along side the desired Highland open space audit and strategy.

The principle proposed outcomes of the Supplementary Guidance on Open Space in New Residential Developments are as follows;

- Provide guidance to applicants for planning permission for a residential development with the information they will need on the Council's requirements in relation to open space provision
- Set out the provision standards the Council has adopted for open space, sport and recreation provision which will be sought in order to enable high levels of accessibility to open space.
- Provide a network of quality, fit for purpose, accessible open spaces
- To enhance the quality and maintenance of existing open spaces to maximise benefits for health, well being and biodiversity

The delivery of these outcomes will be measured against a set of indicators which will be set out in the monitoring framework later in the Environmental Report.

The SPG can be viewed online at

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

Relationship with other PPS and environmental protection objectives

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes an outline of the relationships with other relevant PPS, and how environmental protection objectives have been taken into account in the preparation of the supplementary guidance. This section covers these issues and describes the policy context within which the PPS operates, and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the PPS.

Table 1 lists the plans programmes and environmental objectives that are to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship to the Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Developments.

Table 1: Relationship with other Plans, Programs or Strategies

Name of PPS / Environmental protection objective	Objective/Requirements of Plan/Programme	How it affects, or is affected by Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New residential Development in terms of SEA issues* at Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005
International		
EC Birds Directive	The Directive provides a framework for the conservation and management of, and human interactions with, wild birds in Europe	Biodiversity, fauna. SPG will need to take into consideration the objectives of the directive in order to protect wild birds in the UK
Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC	The provisions of the Directive require Member States to introduce a range of measures including the protection of species listed in the Annexes	Biodiversity, flora and fauna SPG will need to ensure any new open spaces will not affect any habitat of protected species
Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EEC	Requires Member states to achieve good ecological status of inland water bodies by 2015.	Water, Biodiversity The SPG will need to ensure that there is no adverse affect on the water courses of the area.
Convention on Biodiversity 1992	The Convention is aimed at the conservation of biodiversity.	Biodiversity, flora, fauna The SPG will aim to prevent loss of biodiversity and protect and enhance current biodiversity levels
European Biodiversity Strategy 1998	The strategy aims to anticipate, prevent and attack the causes of significant reduction or loss of biodiversity at the source.	Biodiversity, flora, fauna The SPG will take into consideration the potential effects on biodiversity in the area.
National		
UK Biodiversity Action Plan and Scottish Biodiversity Strategy	The UK BAP describes the UK's biological resources and commits a detailed plan for the protection of these resources. The targets for priorities are set out in the document.	Biodiversity, flora, fauna The plan will take into consideration the requirements of the plan to ensure biodiversity is not affected.
PAN 44: Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape	Ensure that the character of an area is not lost through development	Material Assets, Landscape SPG will take into consideration the design of open space, sport and recreational facilities. This will be done alongside other residential design layout work being carried out by the council.

Name of PPS / Environmental protection objective	Objective/Requirements of Plan/Programme	How it affects, or is affected by Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New residential Development in terms of SEA issues* at Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005
PAN 52: Planning and Small Towns	The policy aims to retain, restore and enhance what is best and remove, improve or rehabilitate what is worst	Material Assets, Landscape, cultural heritage The SPG will take into consideration the principles from the document to protect and enhance existing open spaces in Scotland.
PAN 60: Planning for Natural Heritage	Development Plans should set out policies to conserve and enhance designated natural heritage areas and the wider natural heritage	Cultural Heritage The SPG will take into consideration the implications of the policy on the wider natural heritage.
PAN 61: Planning and SUDS	Planning policy should set the framework in structure and local plans and in masterplanning exercises for the inclusion of SUDS in developments.	Water, soil The SPG will take into consideration the guidance and that contained in SPP7 with regard to SUDS
PAN 76: New Residential Streets	Provides advice on the design of better quality residential streets.	Material assets, population, human health The SPG will help to enable better design of residential streets through the provision of well designed, fit for purpose open space.
PAN 77: Designing Safer Places	Highlights the positive role that planning can play in helping to create attractive, well-managed environments which help to discourage antisocial and criminal behaviour.	Material assets, population The SPG will help to ensure the building of safer places by the better design of open spaces.
PAN 78: Inclusive Design	The PAN aims to: Explain the importance of inclusive design, identify the nature of the problems experienced in designing inclusive environments, describe the legislative context, outline the roles of the different stakeholders in delivering inclusive design, identify the particular challenges of applying inclusive design to the historic environment, provide a useful reference list of more detailed or technical advice.	Material assets, population, human health, cultural heritage The SPG will take into consideration the aims and objectives of the SPG to make sure that there are no groups which are left out due to the design of open space
Designing Places	<i>Designing Places</i> sets out the policy context for important areas of planning policy, design guidance, professional practice, and education and training.	Material Assets, population The SPG will follow the design principles of Designing Places and use these to promote the design of open space.
Let's Make Scotland More Active	The document aims to make Scotland more active and sets out a range of benchmarks as targets for this.	Human Health Population The SPG can actively encourage people to be more active by giving them high quality open spaces to use for physical activities.
Improving Health in Scotland - The Challenge	This document sets out the challenges to improve health in Scotland and how they can be met.	Population, human health The SPG can play a role in improving peoples health by getting them to take part in physical activity in fit for purpose open spaces.

Name of PPS / Environmental protection objective	Objective/Requirements of Plan/Programme	How it affects, or is affected by Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New residential Development in terms of SEA issues* at Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005
Delivering Health in Scotland - Meeting the Challenge	This is the first annual report on the progress of Improving health in Scotland and sets out further measures to improve health in Scotland.	Population, human health As with Improving Health in Scotland - The Challenge the SPG can play a role in improving people's health by getting them to take part in physical activity in fit for purpose open spaces.
SPP7: Planning and Flooding	The central purpose of this SPP is to prevent further development which would have a significant probability of being affected by flooding or which would increase the probability of flooding elsewhere.	Water, human health, population, soil The SPG has a role to play as increased areas of soft landscaping such as open space can improve the drainage into the water course to
SPP11: Open Space and Physical Activity	The key objectives of the SPP are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect and enhance open space; • To ensure a strategic approach to open space and other opportunities for sport and recreation by requiring local authorities to undertake an open space audit and prepare an open space strategy for their area; • To protect and support opportunities for sport and recreation; • To provide guidance on the quality and accessibility of open space in new developments and on providing for its long-term maintenance and management; • To provide guidance on planning for development of new indoor and outdoor facilities for sport and recreation. 	Biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape The SPG has an important role to play in the delivery of all of the objectives of SPP11. The SPG is partially being developed due to the requirements of SPP11.
PAN 65: Planning and Open Space	The PAN gives guidance on the production of open space strategies and best practice on design and use of open space.	Biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape The SPG has an important role to play in the delivery of PAN 65. While the SPG does not contain an audit it does set out provision standards for quality, quantity and accessibility. The SPG will sit alongside a future Highland wide Open Space Strategy.
Regional		
SNH Natural Heritage Futures - Settlements	The document guides the future development of Scotland's Natural Heritage up to 2025	Cultural Heritage, biodiversity, flora, fauna The SPG will take into consideration the cultural heritage of the area and the affect any new open space may have on it. The SPG will not alter in anyway the protection afforded to open space around the curtilage of a historic building. This includes battlefields.

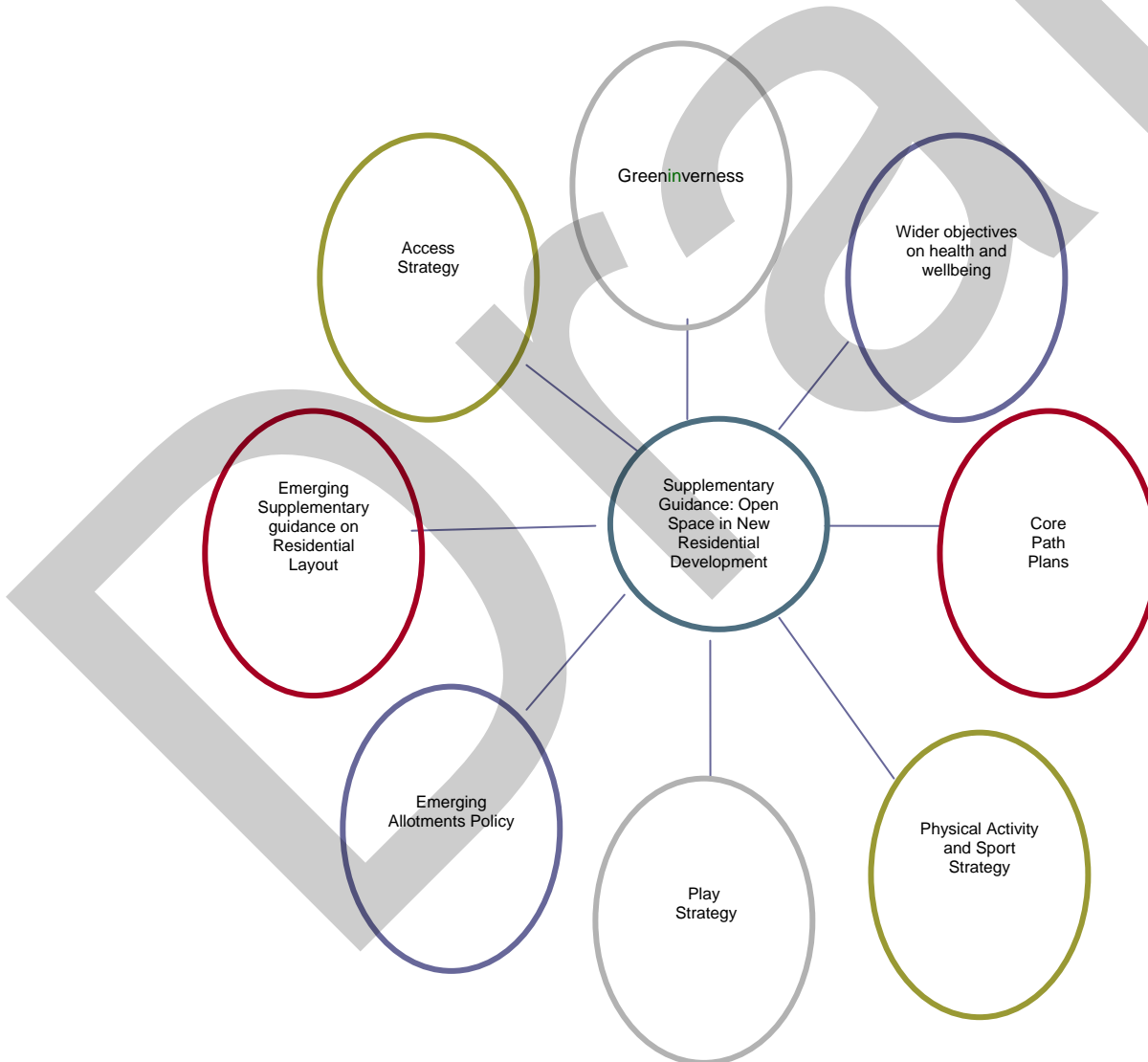
Name of PPS / Environmental protection objective	Objective/Requirements of Plan/Programme	How it affects, or is affected by Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New residential Development in terms of SEA issues* at Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005
Housing Landscape Capacity Studies	These documents set out the housing capacity of the landscape of the area and inform the local plan reviews	Landscape, Cultural Heritage, Population The SPG will take into consideration the findings of the housing landscape capacity studies
Landscape Character Assessments	These documents have been prepared and indicate any specific landscape designations and how the landscape influences the character of the area	Landscape, cultural heritage, material assets The SPG will take into consideration the findings of the landscape character studies and the designations contained within.
Highland Structure Plan (Adopted 2001)	Sets out the broad principles on which individual planning decisions are made and gives a framework for local plans.	Landscape, population, human health The SPG will take into consideration the policies and aims which encourage strategic growth of the Highlands as a whole specifically policies SR1-SR9
Highland Biodiversity Strategy	Sets out the framework for biodiversity in the Highlands as a whole and what the LBAP may contain	Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna SPG will take into consideration the advice given in the Highland Biodiversity action plan
Local		
Current Local Plans	Set out the general policies for land use planning in the highlands and also specific settlement policies.	Population, human health, soil, water, air, material assets, heritage and landscape The SPG will work alongside other development plan policies to deliver high quality public space across the highlands
Emerging Local Plans	Set out the general policies for land use planning in the highlands and also specific settlement policies.	Population, human health, soil, water, air, material assets, heritage and landscape The SPG will work alongside other development plan policies to deliver high quality public space across the highlands
Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP)	Identifies the main issues and threats to biodiversity in the Highlands	Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna The SPG will take into consideration the rich biodiversity of the area.
Other Plans, Policies and Strategies		
All to Play for, Highland Play Strategy (2007)	This sets out the council's policy on play in the Highlands and sets outcomes for the future of play development. This document is to be reviewed.	Population, Human Health The SPG may influence future development of the Play Strategy as it will contain quality, quantity and accessibility standards for the provision of open space for children and teenagers.
GreenInverness Strategy (2007)	The strategy sets out the strategic vision of GreenInverness and identifies how this vision can be worked towards by delivering all elements of a two year rolling programme	Biodiversity, flora, fauna, landscape, material assets The strategy and accompanying audit will be used as a key source of information for both monitoring and for formulation of provision standards.
Core Paths Plans	The core paths plans provide a basic framework for recreation and everyday journeys by locals and visitors of all ages and abilities.	Material assets, biodiversity, flora, fauna Take into consideration the core paths network in the Highlands and look at how green networks can be created/maintained using these core paths.

* Biodiversity, flora, fauna, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage), landscape, inter-relationship between these issues; secondary and cumulative effects.

As it can be seen in the table above, there is a wide range of international and national strategies which will influence the supplementary guidance. In addition there are a number of different local and regional plans, policies and strategies which the supplementary guidance may influence in order to meet the objectives of the supplementary guidance which are;

- To enhance the quality and maintenance of existing open spaces to maximise benefits for health, well being and biodiversity
- To provide new open spaces that are maintained to a high quality and that are fit for purpose

The diagram below also shows how the Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development acts as the 'hub' which ties together much current or emerging guidance on a range of matters within Highland.



Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment

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

The Scoping report identified a number of issues which were relevant aspects of the current state of the environment. Following the responses from the consultation authorities, a number of other issues have also been identified and some have been clarified, these will be included. Table 2 below summarises the data collected, the source and any area where there may be a gap in the data;

Table 2: Summary of collected data

Type of Information	Information Source	Comments
Biodiversity, flora & fauna		
LBAP Targets % achieved	Local Biodiversity Action Plans for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badenoch and Strathspey • Caithness • Inverness and Nairn • Lochaber • Ross and Cromarty • Skye and Lochalsh • Sutherland • Wester Ross 	LBAP targets for each of the areas will be accessed as part of the LBAP.
Number of visits to designated sites	Scottish Recreation Survey (SNH)	This survey is published yearly with the information broken down into months which enables more detailed analysis of trends.
Number of designated sites	SNH records e.g. Ramsar, Wildlife Site, SSSI, Special Protection Area, Special Areas of Conservation, Local Nature Reserve, Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation, Natura sites.	SNH hold this information and it is made available to The Highland Council.
Distribution of protected species and native habitats	Local Biodiversity Action Plans for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badenoch and Strathspey • Caithness • Inverness and Nairn • Lochaber • Ross and Cromarty • Skye and Lochalsh • Sutherland • Wester Ross 	The Local Biodiversity Action Plans are available online at http://www.highlandbiodiversity.com .
Native species at risk	Local Biodiversity Action Plans	The Local Biodiversity Action Plans are

Type of Information	Information Source	Comments
	for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badenoch and Strathspey • Caithness • Inverness and Nairn • Lochaber • Ross and Cromarty • Skye and Lochalsh • Sutherland • Wester Ross NPPG14: Natural Heritage Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 EU Birds and Habitats Directive European Protected Species Scottish Rural Development Plan	available online at http://www.highlandbiodiversity.com .
% of open space that links to create green corridors	GreenInverness Audit 2005 Green Inverness Strategy 2007 Highland Council Green Space Audit	The Highland Council Green Space Audit is yet to be commenced. An audit methodology is currently being formulated in line with SPP11.
Population		
Scottish Multiple Indices of Deprivation	Deprivation Statistics on Health SCROL (Income and employment)	
Crime Rates	Northern Constabulary Deprivation Statistics on Crime	
Perception of Safety	Northern Constabulary	
Community involvement in the management of open space	Highland Council	Dependant on the outcomes of the public consultation into maintenance arrangements
% of population with 200m of public open space in "good" condition	GreenInverness Audit 2005 Highland Council Green Space Audit	The Highland Council Green Space Audit is yet to be commenced. An audit methodology is currently being formulated in line with SPP11.
Human Health		
General Health of Highland Population	NHS Highland Highland Community Health Partnership SCROL (Health)	
Proportion of people taking exercise	Highland Community Health Partnership	
Life expectancy in Highland	SCROL (life expectancy) NHS Highland	
Air, Water, Soil & Climatic Factors		
Reduce the need to travel	Transport Scotland Scottish Household Survey	
Flood Risk Probability	Indicative River and Coastal Flood Map - SEPA	
River water Quality	River Water Quality - SEPA	
Ground Water Quality	Ground Water Quality - SEPA	

Type of Information	Information Source	Comments
Cultural Heritage		
Historic Parks and Gardens	Inventory of Gardens and designed landscapes	
Archaeological Sites at risk	Sites and Monuments Record Historic Environment Record - THC	
Material Assets		
Total area of open space (by type) in "good" condition	GreenInverness Audit 2005 Highland Council Green Space Audit	The Highland Council Green Space Audit is yet to be commenced. An audit methodology is currently being formulated in line with SPP11.
Total length of footpath/cycleway in "good" condition in an open space	Highland Core Paths Plans Highland Council GIS	
% of open space footpath/cycleway that links to a wider core path network	Highland Core Paths Plans Highland Council GIS GreenInverness Audit 2005 Highland Council Green Space Audit	The Highland Council Green Space Audit is yet to be commenced. An audit methodology is currently being formulated in line with SPP11.
Distribution of paths and cycle tracks in and around settlements	Highland Core Paths Plans Highland Council GIS	
Protect and enhance access along rights of ways and core paths	Highland Core Paths Plans Highland Council GIS	
Landscape		
Distribution and nature of designated sites	Local Plans SNH	
Retain and Improve quality of publicly accessible open space	GreenInverness Audit 2005 Highland Council Green Space Audit	The Highland Council Green Space Audit is yet to be commenced. An audit methodology is currently being formulated in line with SPP11.
Enhance landscape and townscape character	GreenInverness Audit 2005 Highland Council Green Space Audit Highland Landscape Character Assessments	The Highland Council Green Space Audit is yet to be commenced. An audit methodology is currently being formulated in line with SPP11.

Environmental Baseline

In this section it is appropriate to include any baseline data which has been collected. At the scoping stage of the Strategic Environmental Assessment some information was identified however more detailed information is provided below. While the issues of Population, Soil, Climatic Factors and Cultural Heritage have been scoped out, baseline information on these topics has been included for information purposes.

Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

- The UK Biodiversity Action Plan identifies 238 priority species and 42 priority habitats that occur in Scotland. Highland supports 192 of the priority species and 455 of the “other species of conservation importance”. 40 of the 42 priority habitats are present in Highland.
- **Existing Problems?**
 - Fragmented wildlife habitats within urban, semi-urban residential developments.

Population and Human Health

- **Population Data and Trends**
 - Figures released on 27th April 2006 by the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) estimate the population of Highland to have been 213,590 on 30th June 2005, an increase of 2,250 (1.1%) since last year and an increase of 4,670 (2.2)% since 2001.
 - If the trends experienced during the period from 2001 to 2006 continue, the population of Highland is expected to grow by 11% to 238,795 in 2031. Deaths will exceed births across Highland as a whole and growth will be the result of net inward migration of 1,200 people per year.
- **Age Data Trends**
 - In mid-2005 it was estimated that 18.5% of the population were aged under 16; 63.9% were aged 16-64 and 17.5% were aged 65 and over. There were more females (51.1%) than males (48.9%) in Highland.
 - As people are living longer, the level of health care provision needs to increase. The average age of people in the UK is quite high this means that in the future there will be greater pressure on the provision of services for an ageing population. The Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Developments aims to create easily accessible open spaces for all.
- **Existing Problems?**
 - Ageing population, Scotland wide health issues.

Water

- **Water Sources**
 - In Highland there are a number of water sources which are utilised and delivered through the infrastructure put in place by Scottish Water.

- **Water Quality**

- The 1999-2002 North Of Scotland Water Quality Report showed that much of the water in the North of Scotland (which includes Aberdeenshire and Cairngorms National Park) is high quality the following tables summarise this information.

Rivers

Table 3: River Quality

Year	A1 (km)	A2 (km)	B (km)	C (km)	D (km)	U (km)	Total (km)
1999	N/A	N/A	477.6	153.3	29.0	N/A	11404.2
2000	960.9	1645.8	385.7	138.0	14.6	8259.3	11404.2
2001	1421.0	1560.9	384.6	85.9	21.8	7950.3	11424.6
2002	2019.6	3482.8	868.4	86.1	13.2	6143.7	11403.8

A1 - Excellent

A2 - Good

B - Fair

C - Poor

D - Seriously Polluted

U - Unclassified

Estuaries

Table 4: Estuary Quality

Year	A (km)	B (km)	C (km)	D (km)	Total (km)
1999	235.9	26.3	4.8	0.0	267.0
2000	253.1	10.9	2.9	0.0	266.9
2001	255.6	8.4	2.9	0.0	266.9
2002	267.83	6.14	2.86	0.0	266.9

A - Excellent

B - Good

C - Unsatisfactory

D - Seriously Polluted

Coastal Water

Table 5: Coastal Water Quality

Year	A (km)	B (km)	C (km)	D (km)	Total (km)
1999	8137.6	225.7	120.2	19.1	8502.6
2000	8178.0	206.9	104.6	13.6	8503.1
2001	8190.3	204.0	93.1	16.0	8503.8
2002	8208.7	194.8	84.2	14.6	8602.0

- A - Excellent
- B - Good
- C - Unsatisfactory
- D - Seriously Polluted

- **Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems**

- The Council will promote the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), in association with SEPA. Information on developments incorporating SUDS is not currently monitored but there is an intention to do so in the future.
- The Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development makes it clear that developments should be using SUDS but inclusion of this does not eliminate the need for open space

- **Ground Water**

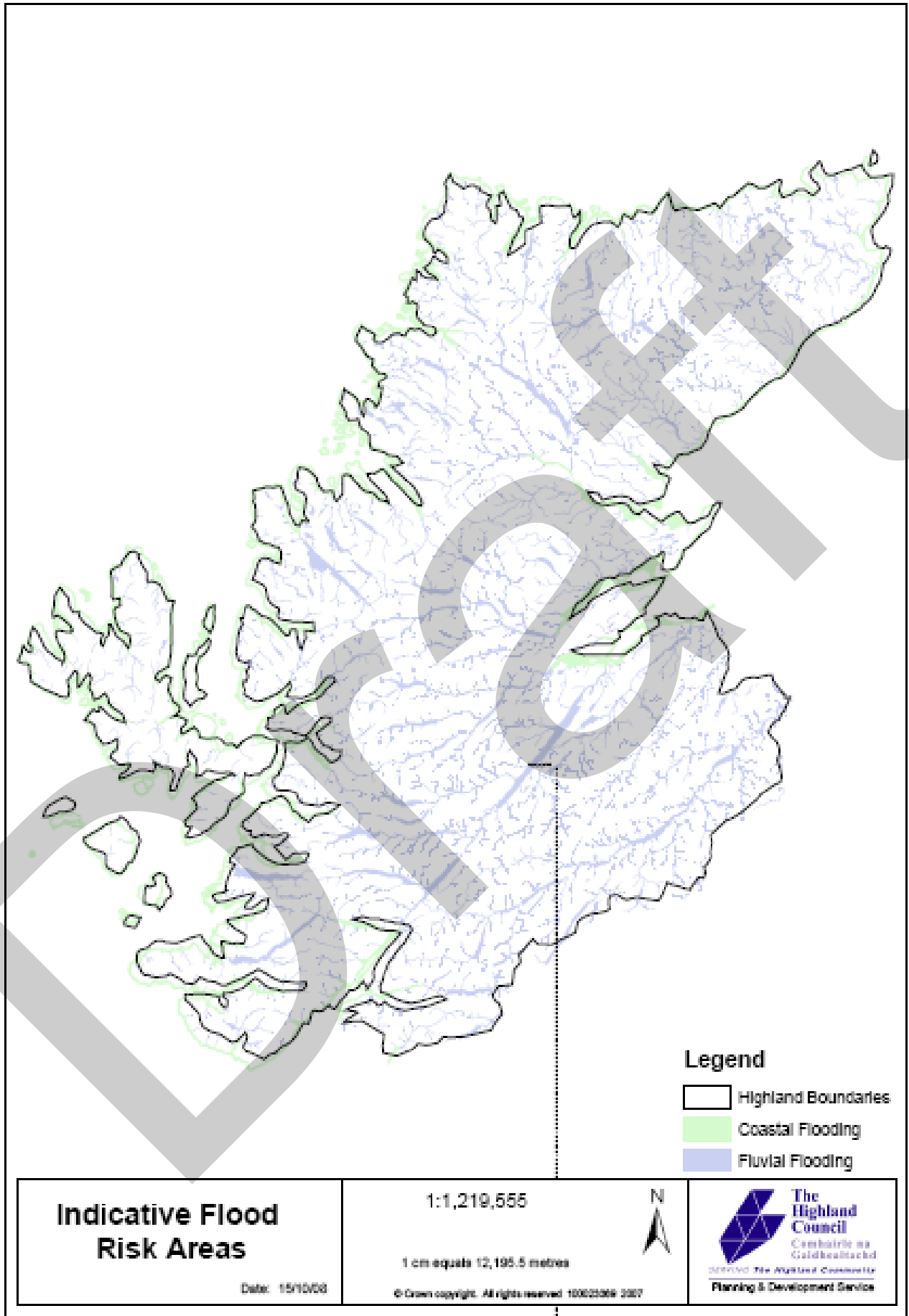
- Information on ground water quality is not kept at a local level but has been kept at a national level since the 2005 Ground Water Directive. This information is available at <http://www.sepa.org.uk>. This information is reported each year and will be monitored to ensure the quality of water is kept high.

- **Flooding**

- As open spaces create a permeable surface in a development, it is envisaged that the supplementary guidance will aid in the prevention of flooding in more urban areas.
- An indicative flood risk map is produced by SEPA, showing areas that may potentially be at risk of coastal or river flooding. This is shown on the following page.

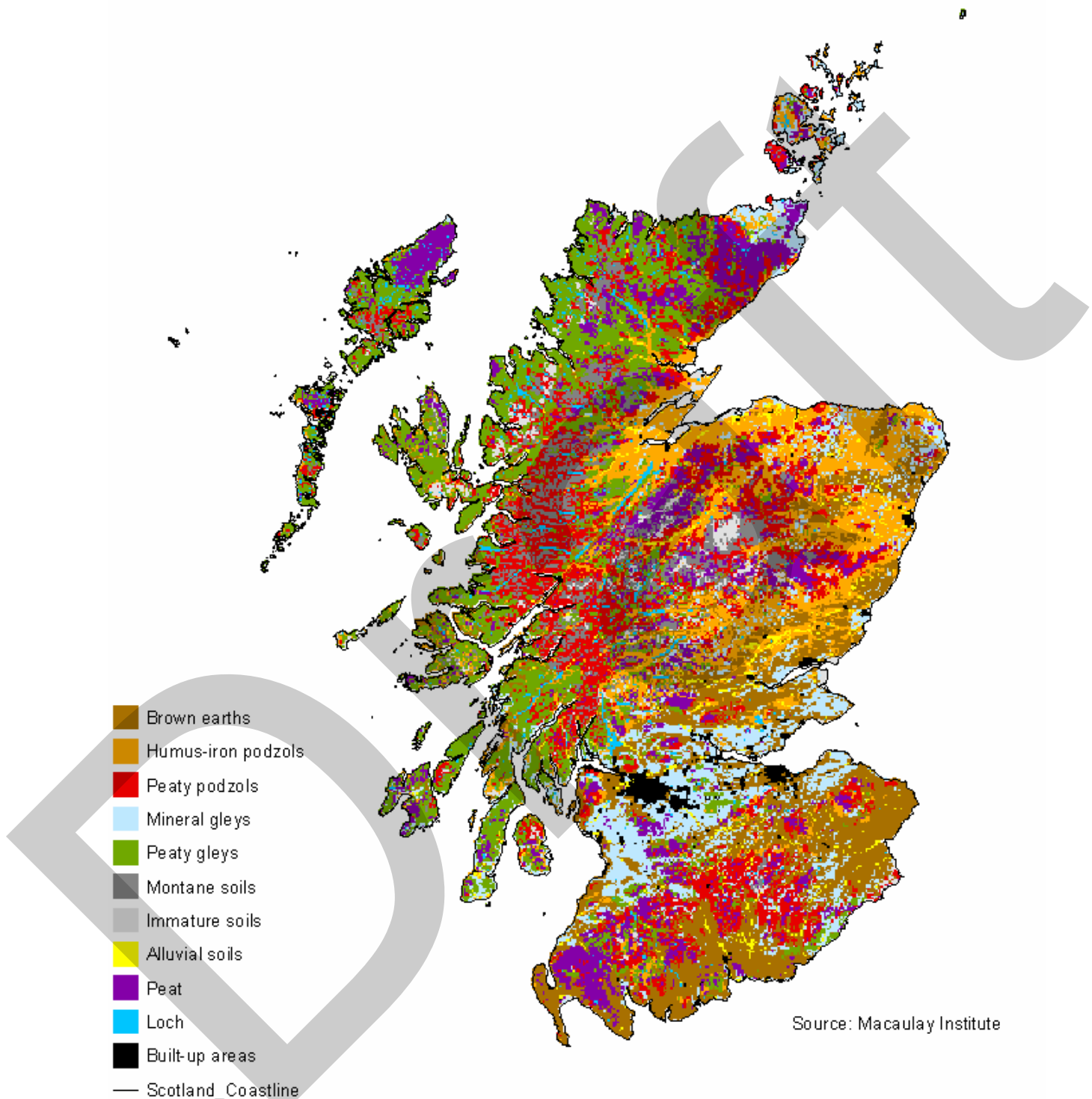
- **Existing Problems?**

- Existing areas of flood risk are shown on the map on the following page, however it is not believed that the outcomes of this supplementary guidance will have a significant affect on these areas.



Soil

- o Highland has a wide variety of types of soil with Podzols being the dominant soil type. The image below shows the soil types throughout Scotland and indicates the wide variety of soil types in the Highland area.



Digital Soil map of Scotland (Source: Scotland's Soil Resource - Current State and Threats, Scottish Executive, 2006)

- o As with any development, there is to be some element of soil sealing which may lead to an increase in surface run off. This however can be mitigated with the use of appropriate

materials to provide a semi-permeable surface rather than total soil sealing which may occur through use of materials such as wet pour concrete.

- Any impact on soil would not be as a result of the supplementary guidance rather the decision to allocate land for residential development which has already been assessed through the local plan process. However, the opportunity for biodiversity may result in planting that could have a positive effect on soils.
- **Existing Problems?**
 - Maintaining the current quality of soil, and the use of appropriate materials should mitigate any potential future environmental impacts. However this is outwith the scope of this supplementary guidance.

Air and Climatic Factors

• Air Quality

- There are three air quality monitoring stations in Highland; Inverness, Fort William and Strath Vaich. At the time of writing this environmental report the level of air pollution was below an index of 2 for all sites. However, it is recognised this will vary and air pollution can be affected by the weather.
- There is potential for open spaces which will be secured through this supplementary guidance to have a positive affect on the local air quality of an area as green spaces can 'breathe'.

• Existing Problems?

- None - Despite there being no current problems it is important to make sure that the quality of the air in Highland does not deteriorate. This can be done through encouraging the use of sustainable transport and other methods, however that is outwith the scope of the supplementary guidance.

Material Assets

Core Paths

The Core Path Plans have been produced for all areas across highland while these may play a key role in accessibility of open spaces. The supplementary guidance will not offer any additional protection to paths but will emphasise the linkages to existing paths and encourage provision of links between the paths and open spaces.

Existing Problems?

None- while there are currently no existing issues it is important to make sure that the material assets of are not compromised, however the protection of core paths is the remit of the Core Paths Plans and not for this supplementary guidance which can only promote their use to link open spaces.

Cultural Heritage

Historic Environment

The Historic Environment in and around Highland needs to be protected for the future as it has reference to our cultural past. The Highland Council keeps a Historic environment record which is a record of all known archaeological and historical sites, monuments and buildings throughout the Highland Council area. This SPG will not afford any additional protection to the historic environment.

Natural Environment

The natural environment around Highland includes a number of SSSI as well as other European, national and local designations. While access to these and other areas of natural environment are to be promoted it is important to make sure that the natural environment is not affected by any future development. It is envisaged that the supplementary guidance will encourage improvements to the current natural environment by securing developer contributions to natural greenspaces as well as other forms of open space. This would link in with the SEA objectives of

- Improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses; and
- Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate wildlife

Landscape

Landscape in Highland is considered to be some of the most stunning in Europe there are a number of areas of great landscape value (AGLV) designated. Local landscape may be enhanced through the inclusion of well designed fit for purpose open spaces which are promoted through this supplementary guidance.

Existing Problems?

None

Baseline Data Issues

It is hoped that all the baseline data to which the Council has access to use in the monitoring of the effects of the supplementary guidance can be considered accurate and up to date. However, there are a number of limitations or inaccuracies in the data. Table 6 summarises the potential issues and the possibility of mitigation, this is potentially for all of the SEA indicators and therefore is quite broad. Analysis of each indicator follows this table.

Table 6: Identified Baseline data issues

Potential Issue	Mitigation
Lack of Information	Every effort has been made to ensure that the information needed for the monitoring of the potential impacts of this supplementary guidance is available. However, as some of the information is sourced from parties outwith the Highland Council, they may change or withdraw their information. If this occurs the Council will work with the affected party to ensure that monitoring of the affects of supplementary guidance can continue
Inaccurate Information	While much of the information is sought from parties outside the Council, there has to be an element of trust to ensure the data is accurate. However if the data is found to be inaccurate the Council will work with the affected party to ensure more accurate data can be delivered
Missing Information	If data is found to be missing, the Council will work to rectify this situation and 'fill in the gaps' or use other data which is appropriate to monitor the affected indicator.

Table 7: Individual Baseline Data Issues

SEA Topic	Indicator	Quantified Information	Comparators and Targets	Potential Issues/Constraints
Biodiversity, flora & fauna	LBAP targets % achieved	Dependent on area covered by LBAP	Targets are identified in the LBAP for each area	None
	Number of Visits to designated Sites	Visit to designated sites at a national level from 2007 Scottish Recreation Survey	Increase in visits	Availability of up to date data.
	Number of designated sites	Number of designated sites gathered from THC GIS	No target or trend identified. Hope for no decrease in number designated	None
	Distribution of protected species and native habitats	Location of all designated sites plotted on GIS	No trend available	None
	Native Species at Risk	List of native species at risk nationally and locally.	No trend available. Hope for a decrease in number of species at risk	Availability of data
	% of open space that links to create green corridors	Unknown in the Highlands as a whole	No trend available. Baseline will be established following completion of the Highland Green Space Audit.	Data is unavailable until completion of the Highland Green Space Audit.
Population	Scottish Multiple Indices of Deprivation	Deprivation statistics on health and SCROL figures on income and employment	Trend varies across indicators	None
	Crime Rates	Northern Constabulary. Deprivation statistics on crime	Trend varies across indicators.	Availability of data from Northern Constabulary
	Perception of safety	Northern Constabulary	No Trend Available	Inaccuracy of data if same sample of population is not used with each survey.
	Community involvement in the management of open space	None available. New indicator.	No Trend Available	Information dependent on outcomes of the public consultation into open space maintenance arrangements

SEA Topic	Indicator	Quantified Information	Comparators and Targets	Potential Issues/Constraints
	% of population within 200m of public open space in "good" condition	GreenInverness Audit has established location/distribution of open space in Inverness but information is yet to be established for the whole of the Highlands.	No Trend Available	Most data is unavailable until completion of the Highland Green Space Audit.
Human Health	General Health of Highland Population	SCROL figures on health. Working on more local figures with Highland Community Health Partnership	The trend figures are dependant on indicator	None
	Proportion of People taking exercise	Highland Community Health Partnership have information on this to a local level	Increased participation	None
	Life Expectancy	SCROL figures on life expectancy	Increase	None
Air, Water, Soil and Climatic Factors	Reduce the need to travel	Scottish Household survey asks specific questions on this indicator	Increase in those using sustainable transport, walking or cycling	None
	Flood Risk Probability	Map showing indicative fluvial and coastal flood risk probability	Limited increase	Frequency of updates to the Flood Risk mapping.
	River Water Quality	Map showing which rivers are of a good quality.	Increase in "good" quality river water	None
	Ground Water Quality	Ground water quality information is held by SEPA under the EC Water Directive	No decrease in quality	None
Cultural Heritage	Historic Parks and Gardens	Number of Historic Parks and gardens in Highland using the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes	No decrease	None
	Archaeological sites at risk	Number and location of sites have been established through use of the Historic Environment Record held by The Highland Council	No increase in sites at risk	None

SEA Topic	Indicator	Quantified Information	Comparators and Targets	Potential Issues/Constraints
Material Assets	Total area of open space (by type) in "good" condition	GreenInverness Audit has established amount of open space and quality of sites in Inverness but information is yet to be established for the whole of the Highlands.	No Trend Available	Most data is unavailable until completion of the Highland Green Space Audit.
	Total length of footpath/cycleway in "good" condition in an open space	No information currently available - new indicator	No Trend Available	Data is unavailable until completion of the Highland Green Space Audit.
	% of open space footpath/cycleway that links to a wider core path network	No information currently available - new indicator	No Trend Available	Data is unavailable until completion of the Highland Green Space Audit.
	Distribution of paths and cycle tracks in and around settlements	Information has mapped from the Core Path Plans	No Trend Available	None
	Protect and enhance access along rights of ways and core paths	No information available - new indicator	No Trend Available	None
Landscape	Distribution and nature of designated sites	Sites are mapped in THC GIS and are established in the local plan	No decrease in distribution and nature of designated sites	Frequency of data updates
	Retain and improve quality of publicly accessible open space	GreenInverness Audit has established quality of open space in Inverness but information is yet to be established for the whole of the Highlands.	No Trend Available. No fall in quality of publicly accessible open space	Data is unavailable until completion of the Highland Green Space Audit.
	Enhance landscape and townscape character	No information available - new indicator. Information will be sought during the Highland Greenspace Audit	No Trend Available. Increase in landscape and townscape character.	Data is unavailable until completion of the Highland Green Space Audit.

Environmental problems

Schedule 3 paragraph 4 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of existing environmental problems, in particular those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance. The purpose of this section is to explain how existing environmental problems will affect or be affected by Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development and whether the PPS is likely to aggravate, reduce or otherwise affect existing environmental problems. Environmental problems were identified and have been identified earlier in this report. Relevant environmental problems are summarised in the table below;

Table 8: Environmental Problems

Problem	Implications
<p>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna Fragmented wildlife habitats within urban, semi-urban residential developments</p>	<p>There is the potential for any new development to disturb the existing habitats of a range of wildlife. Through this supplementary guidance it is envisaged that new open spaces within residential developments will promote biodiversity and avoid further fragmentation of habitats by the creation of greenspaces that link to form green corridors which can be used by wildlife.</p>
<p>Human Health and Population Ageing population, Scotland wide health issues</p>	<p>There is an ageing population in the Highlands and this means that deaths are out numbering births. However this is not affecting the population of Highland as the population continues to grow due to in migration. This supplementary guidance will not lead to a direct increase in the life expectancy of the population but indirectly may do so by promoting high quality, fit for purpose open spaces which may be used for physical recreation.</p> <p>Scotland wide health issues include, chronic liver disease, drug and alcohol related problems and obesity. While the issues are not as prominent in Highland they are still identified as issues that need to be tackled. This supplementary guidance can help to tackle obesity through the provision of high quality fit for purpose and accessible open spaces being made available for people to take part in physical activity.</p>
<p>Air, Water, Soil and Climatic Factors Flood Risk</p>	<p>While there is currently an element of flood risk , both fluvial and coastal, it is not envisaged that there will be any significant reduction or increase in the flood risk of an area through the measures proposed in this supplementary guidance.</p>
<p>Air, Water, Soil and Climatic Factors Maintaining the current quality of soil</p>	<p>Through any type of development there will be an element of soil sealing and therefore damage to the soil. This supplementary guidance requires a developer to deliver open space of a minimum size of at least 200m² which will aid in the protection of the soil. However it should be noted that protecting current quality of soil is outwith the remit of this supplementary guidance.</p>

Likely evolution of the environment without Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development

Schedule 3 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the likely evolution of the state of the environment without the implementation of Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development is considered. Assuming a no action approach is taken and the supplementary guidance is not taken forward for adoption, it is likely that;

- Open space provision would continue to be brought forward by developers on a case by case basis to no specific standard or quality, quantity or accessibility.
- Fit for purpose open space may not be delivered with the possibility of open space that is delivered not being in a suitable location or of a suitable size.
- Open spaces may not connect to create green networks suitable for the potential to create less fragmented wildlife habitats.
- Open spaces may not connect to other open spaces in the area through the network of core paths or wider access paths.
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems may be developed on site in lieu of any open space provision instead of in addition to open space provision.
- Projected population growth may not be able to have a suitable level of quality, accessible open space provision.
- Potential affect on the quality of the landscape and/or character of an area as the site may not be designed to high requirements.
- Potential development of housing estates with no where for neighbours to socialise, exercise or play.

SEA Objectives

This section will layout the objectives of this SEA. The SEA objectives are;

Table 9: SEA Objectives

No.	SEA Objective
1	Protect and Enhance human health
2	Improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses
3	Provide opportunities for people of all ages to come into contact with and appreciate nature/natural environments
4	Reduce the need to travel/increase the opportunity for walking and cycling
5	Reduce the vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as flooding
6	Retain and improve quality and quantity of publicly accessible open space
7	Enhance less valued landscapes or those with a less strong identity landscape/townscape character
8	Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths.
9	Reduce vulnerability to flooding through improved natural drainage within residential developments
10	Reduce and prevent crime and the fear of crime
11	Enhance access and opportunities for all

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

The purpose of this section is to predict and evaluate as far as possible the environmental effects of this PPS and its reasonable alternatives (Section 14 of the Act) and to set out measures envisaged to prevent, reduce, and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment (Schedule 3 paragraph 7 of the Act). The baseline information from the previous sections is applied to consider whether the PPS and its alternatives are likely to have significant environmental effects (positive and negative).

Alternatives to which SEA was applied

Consideration of reasonable alternatives to the supplementary guidance is required by the Act. In the context of the supplementary guidance, alternative locations for open space within residential sites (or off site as appropriate) will not be prescribed by the supplementary guidance, rather guided and judged by the developer and development management officers at the Highland Council. Therefore the alternatives must be as ways of (or not) providing guidance on the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space rather than location of open space in new developments.

Alternative 1 - Do Nothing

This has been outlined in detail earlier in the environmental report. Not having the guidance is a reasonable alternative. Supplementary guidance is non-statutory at present, meaning that it is not required by law and not a legal part of the local plan. However, following the publication of the new Development Plan Regulations by the Scottish Government under the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006, it may be adopted as a legal part of the Strategic Development Plan for an area having followed the provisions set out in the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006. The current process of providing open space through residential development would continue, i.e. required by local planning policy but lacking in detail and resulting in less than optimum benefit to the population and the environment.

Alternative 2 - Consider each site on its own merits

It may be feasible to consider the open space requirements of each development proposal on its own merits, bearing in mind what is set out in the relevant local plan. However, without an agreed set of principles/objectives that applies Highland wide, subjectivity in the decision making process is likely to result in a significantly different quality of open space across the Council area. The results are likely to be similar to that of option 1.

Alternative 3 - Develop Supplementary Guidance on Open Space in New Residential Developments

This option limits subjectivity on the part of decision makers across the Highland Council and allows for a more consistent and defensible approach to requiring open space in development proposals. It also enables open space to be a key focus within the application process and reducing the less than ideal situation where open space in a new

residential development is an afterthought. In addition this alternative gives the Council a clear, robust and transparent approach to acquiring developer contributions to provision of off-site open space where on-site space would not be appropriate thus ensuring that open space may be beneficial to the wider community.

Chosen Approach

The Highland Council have chosen to use Alternative 3. This is due to the following reasons;

- Limits subjectivity in the decision making process.
- Encourages developers to build their site around well designed, fit for purpose open spaces rather than the open space being SLOAP (Space Left Over After Planning).
- Provides a more robust, evidence based approach to securing open space provision.
- Provides a clear, transparent and robust method for securing developer contributions to open space.
- Allows for open space to be provided off-site in order to ensure open space contributions are not avoided by a development which will cause a significant net increase in population but has no suitable space on the site to deliver open space.

At a later stage in this environmental report, the likely significant effects of the supplementary guidance will be assessed. It is envisaged the supplementary guidance will have a significant effect on the following SEA topics;

Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

Any retaining of green space that may otherwise have been built on can contribute to biodiversity improvement. So the Scope of the supplementary guidance in ensuring the quality and quantity of open space provision will have a major impact on the scale and success of new opportunities for biodiversity in the predominantly urban areas. For example a strategic approach to the design and location of open space, with potential links and green corridors between spaces, can contribute to the type of habitats required by flora and fauna to thrive. Paths for humans (including green corridors) to move between open spaces can also be successfully used by wildlife.

Human Health

Open Spaces provide a natural outdoor venue for many activities, including a large range of activities which allow people to exercise. Therefore the type, amount, quality of design and maintenance/management of open spaces can be critical in encouraging as many people as possible to use the spaces to undertake exercise, either formally or informally. The positive benefits of exercising on human health are well known and documented.

The accessibility of open spaced plays an important role in determining whether people will make use of them. Open spaces need to be well related to the population they are intended to serve, and easily accessible by foot, cycle and sustainable forms of transport that serve to benefit other aspects of the environment (climate, air) as well as improving human health.

Material Assets

Core paths (paths for cycling, walking, horse riding) could serve a key role in improving accessibility of open spaces. While the supplementary guidance won't offer additional protection to paths it will emphasise linkages to existing paths and encourage provision of links between the paths and open spaces.

Water

Positive significant effect on drainage can be achieved by incorporating sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) into open spaces to allow flooding and drainage problems to be avoided or overcome. Note: Provision of SUDS in a residential development will not mean that an open space is not included in the development.

Climate/air

It is anticipated that the supplementary guidance will direct the design and location of open space to maximise opportunities for people to access them by foot or cycle. Greater use of foot and cycle to access open space as a result of the supplementary guidance could have positive implications for localised air quality.

Landscape

Design issues addressed by the supplementary guidance with regard to size, location and contents of open space could contribute to improving the local landscape/townscape character.

Assessment methods

The reasonable alternatives described above have been assessed against the range of environmental issues set out in Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Comments from the Consultation Authorities (SNH, SEPA and The Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland) have been taken into account regarding the methods, scope and level of detail in this Environmental Report.

The responses of the consultation authorities to the scoping report on the Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Developments have been summarised earlier in the report in the section titled SEA activities to date.

The Scoping Report stated that the assessment of the chosen alternative would be carried out using the SEA objectives set out in the Scoping Report, which have been modified and added to following comment from the Consultation Authorities. A matrix approach will be used to assess the level of significant impact and the cumulative effects. A panel of officers from the Planning and Development Service have undertaken the SEA of the supplementary guidance. Officers will carry out the assessment against a framework of objectives to assess the potential impacts of the different actions proposed in the PPS. A matrix has been developed setting out environmental objectives for the strategy, with indicators and columns for carrying out the appraisal of potential impacts. This is included on the following pages and a key is contained below.

Significant Positive Impact	No or minimal positive impact	Neutral Impact	No or minimal negative impact	Significant negative impact	Unknown impact
++	+	=	-	--	??

Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development SEA Assessment Matrix

Table 10: Example of Assessment Matrix

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
1.	Protect and Enhance human health	Will the SG give additional benefit to human health? Will human health be significantly reduced? Will it encourage a more healthy lifestyle for the residents within the village? Will it encourage walking and cycling?						
2.	Improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	Will it contribute to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Highland? Will it have a detrimental effect on protected species? Will it contribute to achieving local and regional biodiversity action plan targets? Will it have a detrimental effect on landscape character and/or statutory/non-statutory designations?						

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
3. Provide opportunities for people of all ages to come into contact with an appreciate nature/natural environments	<p>Will it promote the importance of the protected species of the area?</p> <p>Will it contribute to education of local people and tourists in terms of their understanding of the local wildlife?</p> <p>Will it provide or enhance access to areas of high biodiversity value?</p>							
4. Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunity for walking and cycling	<p>Will it encourage walking/cycling?</p> <p>Will it make open spaces more accessible to all?</p>							
5. Reduce the vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as flooding	<p>Will it lessen the likelihood of flooding in new residential developments?</p> <p>Will it enhance natural drainage?</p> <p>Will it reduce the vulnerability of existing areas to flooding?</p>							
6. Retain and improve quality and quantity of publicly accessible open space	<p>Will it increase the level of fit for purpose open spaces?</p> <p>Will it improve existing open spaces?</p> <p>Will it lead to a reduction in the quantity of open spaces?</p>							

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
7.	Enhance less valued landscapes or those with a less strong identity in terms of landscape/townscape character	Will it enhance the feel and identity of the landscape/townscape? Will it improve those sites that are less valued?						
8.	Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths	Will it promote the use of core paths by linking them to fit for purpose open spaces? Will it improve links to the wider countryside? Will it be possible to protect the existing path network?						
9.	Reduce vulnerability to flooding through improved natural drainage within residential developments	Will it enhance natural drainage? Will it prevent soil sealing in new residential development? Will it encourage the use of SUDS in new residential developments?						
10.	Reduce and prevent crime and the fear of crime	Will the SG create spaces which are safe for all? Will the SG encourage well designed and 'safe' open spaces? Will it promote the use of secure by design principles?						

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
11.	Enhance access opportunities for all	Will the SG encourage better access to open space?						
		Will the SG promote the use of open space by all?						
		Will it prevent access to open space being discriminatory?						

Explanation of Assessment Measures

The above assessment method has been chosen from advice contained within the Strategic Environmental Assessment Tool Kit and advice received from the consultation authorities on this and other strategic environmental assessments carried out by The Highland Council. These SEA objectives form the basis on which the plan is assessed. The objectives of the supplementary guidance will be checked against these SEA objectives for compatibility. The process will identify as far as possible what effect the policies and proposals will have on the environment and the SEA objectives. A separate table will be used to assess each of the three alternatives.

The main difficulty in producing the assessment was the lack of data in some areas due to the inclusion of new indicators where no monitoring has yet taken place or where there has been difficulty in establishing a trend for the data. In terms of mitigating these issues, it was a case of having to work with the data we had and predict the significant, cumulative and synergistic effects of the supplementary guidance based upon the limited information that was available at the point of assessment.

Assessment of PPS and its alternatives - Summary

The Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Developments and its alternatives were assessed using the framework shown earlier. A summary of the assessment findings is shown below and a full assessment is included as an appendix.

Alternative 1 - Do Nothing

Objective		Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional
1.	Protect and Enhance human health	=	=	+	=	=	=
2.	Improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	-	=	=	=	=	=
3.	Provide opportunities for people of all ages to come into contact with an appreciate nature/natural environments	=	=	=	=	=	=
4.	Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunity for walking and cycling	=	=	=	=	=	=
5.	Reduce the vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as flooding	-	-	=	=	-	=
6.	Retain and improve quality and quantity of publicly accessible open space	-	-	=	=	-	=
7.	Enhance less valued landscapes or those with a less strong identity in terms of landscape/townscape character	-	-	-	-	-	=
8.	Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths	=	=	=	=	=	=
9.	Reduce vulnerability to flooding through improved natural drainage within residential developments	=	=	-	=	-	=
10.	Reduce and prevent crime and the fear of crime	=	=	=	=	=	=
11.	Enhance access opportunities for all	-	-	-	-	-	=

This alternative had the potential to have an overall neutral effect on the environment as there were some parts of this alternative such as the potential for little or no improvement of biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses, the reduction in the vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as flooding and enhancement of less valued landscape where

there may have been a negative effect on the environment. However countering these were some of the objectives which may have a positive impact on the environment including long term improvements to human health, as this is not linked to the other strategies including the emerging Highland Council Physical Activity and Sport Strategy it falls short of having a significantly positive effect on this.

Draft

Alternative 2 - Consider each site on its own merits

Objective		Time Scale			Impact	Scale	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Severity	Local
1.	Protect and Enhance human health	=	=	+	+	+	=
2.	Improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	+	+	=	=	=	=
3.	Provide opportunities for people of all ages to come into contact with an appreciate nature/natural environments	=	=	=	=	=	=
4.	Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunity for walking and cycling	+	=	=	=	=	=
5.	Reduce the vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as flooding	=	+	+	+	+	=
6.	Retain and improve quality and quantity of publicly accessible open space	-	-	+	=	=	=
7.	Enhance less valued landscapes or those with a less strong identity in terms of landscape/townscape character	=	-	-	-	-	=
8.	Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths	=	=	=	=	=	=
9.	Reduce vulnerability to flooding through improved natural drainage within residential developments	=	+	+	+	+	=
10.	Reduce and prevent crime and the fear of crime	-	-	=	=	=	=
11.	Enhance access opportunities for all	=	=	+	=	=	=

While this alternative has the potential to have a significantly positive effect on the environment there is little room for the approaches in this alternative to be moved forward in a consistent and transparent way. Due to the lack of a consistent approach there may be potential for the alternative to have a negative impact. Again there is the problem of this alternative not linking with the wide range of other guidance that this document acts as the hub for and therefore open space may not be used to its full potential by not bringing to the attention of the development industry or indeed a development management officer the potential benefits of high quality open space provision.

Alternative 3 - Develop Supplementary Guidance on Open Space in New Residential Developments

Objective		Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional
1.	Protect and Enhance human health	=	+	++	+	+	+
2.	Improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	=	+	++	+	++	+
3.	Provide opportunities for people of all ages to come into contact with an appreciate nature/natural environments	=	+	+	+	+	+
4.	Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunity for walking and cycling	=	=	+	+	+	+
5.	Reduce the vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as flooding	=	+	++	+	++	+
6.	Retain and improve quality and quantity of publicly accessible open space	=	+	++	+	+	+
7.	Enhance less valued landscapes or those with a less strong identity in terms of landscape/townscape character	=	=	+	+	+	=
8.	Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths	-	=	+	+	+	=
9.	Reduce vulnerability to flooding through improved natural drainage within residential developments	=	+	++	++	+	=
10.	Reduce and prevent crime and the fear of crime	=	+	+	+	+	=
11.	Enhance access opportunities for all	=	=	+	+	+	=

This alternative has the potential to have a significantly positive impact on the environment as it contains a number of measures which have the potential to lead to significantly improved protection and enhancement of human health, in the long term it may improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses, significantly reduced vulnerability to the effects of climate change and reduction and prevention of crime and the fear of crime. There are some slight neutral effects but this alternative has the potential to have significant positive effect, in the medium and long term, however in the short term there may be some negative effects.

Assessment of Cumulative Effects

The cumulative effects of the Supplementary Guidance have been measured using the matrix below. By assessing the effect by SEA topic and by the sections of the supplementary guidance it is clear where there may be a cumulative effect on the environment as a result of the supplementary guidance.

Table 11: Assessment of Cumulative Effects

SEA Topic	Section of Supplementary Guidance																Potential Cumulative Impact	Comments
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
Biodiversity etc	+	+	=	=	-	+	+	=	++	+	+	+	+	??	??	??	+	It is anticipated that the Supplementary guidance would have slight positive impact on Biodiversity etc. given the potential to create new open spaces with potential for improved biodiversity.
Population	+	+	+	=	=	=	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	??	??	??	+	It is envisaged that there would be a slight positive effect on population. This is due to the potential improvement to human health as the increase in provision of high quality open space can have a significant impact on physical and mental wellbeing.
Human Health	=	+	+	+	=	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	??	??	??	++	It is believed that there may be potential for significant improvements in human health due to this supplementary guidance's link with the emerging Physical Activity and Sport Strategy (PASS). The PASS offers the the strategic overview of what these open spaces could be used to the benefit of human health in Highland.

Soil	=	=	+	??	-	=	+	=	=	=	=	=	+	??	??	??	=	It is unlikely that developer contributions would have an impact on Soil however it is not totally known as there is always an element of soil sealing from any development for which developer contributions would be sought.
Water	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	??	??	??	=	It is thought there would be an overall neutral effect on water as the document promotes measures which have the potential to make the better use of waste water, through SUDS and also aims to promote a better proportion of greenspace which can aid in natural drainage.
Air	=	=	=	=	-	=	+	=	+	+	+	+	+	??	??	??	=	Any new development will create some forms of air pollution, however this will be mitigated by the creation of open space in a new residential development in the long term. Greenspaces allow places to 'breathe' and this has the potential to have a positive effect on the air quality in an area. At present there are no problems with air quality in Highland.
Climatic Factors	=	=	=	=	-	=	++	=	++	++	++	+	++	??	??	??	++	It is anticipated that the Supplementary Guidance would have a significantly positive effect on the vulnerability to climate change, reducing the potential for flooding and allowing for 'urban cooling'.
Material Assets	=	+	+	+	+	+	+	=	+	+	+	=	=	??	??	??	=	It is envisaged that working with developers using this supplementary guidance we will be able to promote the use of core paths and perhaps seek improvements to them through linkages to open space.

Cultural Heritage	=	=	=	=	??	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	=	??	??	??	=	It is envisaged there would be a neutral effect on the cultural heritage of the area as this supplementary guidance does not proposed anything that is likely to have an effect on the heritage of Highland.
Landscape	+	+	+	=	??	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	??	??	??	+	It is envisaged that this supplementary guidandce would have a positive effect on the local landscape of an area, but not on aregional scale. It is debatable whether landscape is affected by phased and large developments, it depends on the way the development is designed to fit in or compliment the landscape.

Note: The information included in the technical appendix section 14, 15, and 16 are unlikely to have an effect but they are largely outwith the control of this guidance as this section largely relates to the background of the document which is policy and guidance at a national level.

Key

Significant Positive Impact	No or minimal positive impact	Neutral Impact	No or minimal negative impact	Significant negative impact	Unknown impact
++	+	=	-	--	??

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----|---|----|---------------------------|----|----------------|
| 1 | Assessing Needs and Securing provision | 6 | General Requirements | 11 | Public Parks and Gardens | 16 | Assessing Need |
| 2 | Design and Specification | 7 | Amenity Greenspace | 12 | Outdoor Sports Facilities | 17 | |
| 3 | Management and Maintenance | 8 | Provision for Children and Young People | 13 | Allotments | | |
| 4 | Developer Contributions | 9 | Green Corridors | 14 | The Policy Background | | |
| 5 | Phased and other large Developments | 10 | Natural Greenspaces | 15 | Provision Standards | | |

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

Schedule 3 paragraph 7 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires an explanation of “the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.” The table below sets out any environmental problems that are likely to remain on implementation of the supplementary guidance and summarises proposed measures for the prevention, reduction and offset of significant adverse effects.

In this section we will only look at the issues which were scoped in at the Scoping stage of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. Table 11 is a reminder of those issues that were scoped in and those which were scoped out.

Table 12: Issues Scoped In/Scoped Out

Scoped In	Scoped Out
Biodiversity	Population
Human Health	Soil
Fauna	Climatic Factors
Flora	Cultural Heritage
Water	
Air	
Material Assets	
Landscape	
Inter-relationship	

Table 13: Measures envisaged for the prevention, reduction and offsetting of any significant adverse effects

SEA issue	Existing problem?	Impact of PPS	Proposed measures for the reduction/prevention and offset of significant adverse effects
Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna	Fragmented wildlife habitats within urban/semi-urban residential developments	Positive - The SG actively encourages the provision and formation of natural greenspaces and green corridors. The SG also encourages other measures such as the inclusion of SUDS which may help to improve biodiversity	It is not envisaged that there will be any significant adverse affects as a direct result of this supplementary guidance. Consultation with the appropriate body will take place when a proposed development may have an impact on biodiversity, flora or fauna.
Human Health	Ageing population, Scotland wide health issues	Positive - While the SG takes into account the ageing population it can not influence it. The SG can have an impact on the Scotland wide health issues, such as obesity and heart disease by giving people a place to be physically active which can reduce the impact of a wide range of health issues.	It is not envisaged that there will be any significant adverse affects as a direct result of this supplementary guidance. The Council will continue to work with NHS Highland to ensure any human health is dealt with appropriately within our local plans.
Water	Flood risk in some areas	Positive - It is envisaged through the creation of open space and the encouragement of SUDS there is the potential for better natural drainage which would lead to a lower risk of flooding, especially in urban areas.	It is not envisaged that there will be any significant adverse affects as a direct result of this supplementary guidance. The Council will build up a relationship with SEPA to help avoid any problems/adverse affects .
Air	None	Positive - open space is often referred to as 'green lungs'. Through the provision of appropriate open spaces it gives potential for the air quality of an area to stay at the current level or be improved despite any increase in pollution there may be through the general nature of development.	It is not envisaged that there will be any significant adverse affects as a direct result of this supplementary guidance. Through the inter- relationship with climatic factors there is the potential for significant positive effect on the environment.
Material Assets	None	Neutral - While the core paths are not afforded any additional status by this guidance they are an important part of it as they can be used to link up open spaces for a higher level of use.	It is not envisaged that there will be any significant adverse affects as a direct result of this supplementary guidance. The planning and development service will continue to work towards promoting the use and establishment of the core path network.
Landscape	None	Positive - Highland is an area with many outstanding landscapes, however these are normally outwith urban areas. The SG may improve the landscapes and townscapes within the more urban areas which can lead to an improved quality of life.	It is not envisaged that there will be any significant adverse affects as a direct result of this supplementary guidance. Emerging guidance on Residential Layout will have an impact on the landscape of new residential developments and will be applied in tandem with this guidance.
Inter-relationship	None	Neutral - There are some inter-relationships between the SEA topics such as those between air and climatic factors, water and soil. However these would not be negative and largely have the potential to improve the current environment. There are no conflicts between the SEA issues.	It is not envisaged that there will be any significant adverse affects as a direct result of this supplementary guidance.

Monitoring

Monitoring of Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Development will take place in order to aid in the identification of any unforeseen adverse effects and to take appropriate remedial action. This is inline with Section 19 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Monitoring will take place following the adoption of the Supplementary Guidance and will use the SEA indicators. In the monitoring of the supplementary guidance it may be appropriate to review the baseline data and the effectiveness of measures proposed for prevention, reduction, and offsetting of significant environmental effects.

The monitoring of the SEA and the SG will be undertaken in house using information gathered from a range of sources including from SEPA, SNH and Historic Scotland.

The proposed SEA objectives are set out in table 6 and the baseline data can be found in table 2.

Next steps

It is recommended that it would be useful to include a list of key dates and any further SEA activities such as notification and monitoring. The key dates are set out in the table below

Key dates in the Production of the Supplementary Guidance: Open Space in New Residential Developments;

Table 14: Key dates in the production of the Supplementary Guidance and the Strategic Environmental Assessment

Date	Activity
November 2008	Draft Supplementary Guidance approved by Planning, Environment and Development committee for public consultation
January 2009	Public consultation to begin on the draft Supplementary Guidance and the draft Environmental Report (8 weeks)
April 2009	Appropriate changes made to the supplementary guidance and environmental report where appropriate
May 2009	Adoption of the Supplementary Guidance pending approval of the Highland Wide Local Development Plan
Autumn 2009	Production of Post-Adoption SEA Statement
Summer 2010	Production of SEA Monitoring Report

Appendix A - Full assessment results

Option 1 - Do Nothing

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
1.	Protect and Enhance human health	Will the SG give additional benefit to human health? Will human health be significantly reduced? Will it encourage a more healthy lifestyle for the residents within the village? Will it encourage walking and cycling?	=	=	+	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is envisaged that in the short and medium term it is likely that while there will be no additional benefit to open space provision there will be no reduction in benefit either. In the long term there will be additional benefit to human health. This would be at a very local level. It is not anticipated that human health will be significantly reduced if we follow this option In the long term it is likely that residents within a village, town etc would feel encouraged to adopt a healthier lifestyle. It is not thought that this option would encourage walking and cycling but it would not discourage people from walking or cycling over the short, mid or long term.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
2. Improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	<p>Will it contribute to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Highland?</p> <p>Will it have a detrimental effect on protected species?</p> <p>Will it contribute to achieving local and regional biodiversity action plan targets?</p> <p>Will it have a detrimental effect on landscape character and/or statutory/non-statutory designations?</p>	-	=	=	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is envisaged that the contribution this option would make to protection and enhancement would be neutral, as there may be loss of habitats through development. It is thought that this would only be problematic in the short term as landscapes within the development site mature they will provide new habitats. It is believed that in the short term there may be a detrimental effect on protected species during the development of a site, with some mitigation and level of control over methods of building this could be avoided. It is only thought that this would be a problem in the short term as over time habitats would be created and protected species may return and re-colonise the area. It is thought that in the short and mid term this option would not contribute to achieving the local and regional biodiversity action plan targets and due to the nature of development may lead to a slow down in any move toward the targets. It is thought that there would be any detrimental or positive effect from the use of this alternative on landscape character and statutory/non-statutory designations. This is because these areas will be protected by the policies in the development plan and the policies at a national level.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
3.	Provide opportunities for people of all ages to come into contact with an appreciate nature/natural environments	Will it promote the importance of the protected species of the area?							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not thought that the alternative would promote the importance of protect species in the area as, contributions to the enhancement of existing open space would not be sought therefore promotion of the importance of protected species would remain the same as it has been where it would be led by communities with support of the Council and other bodies such as SNH. The alternative is unlikely to have a positive effect on the contribution to education of local people and tourists in terms of their understanding of the local wildlife, in addition there would be no negative effect therefore it would be neutral. It is unlikely that the option would provide or enhance access to areas of high biodiversity value with the limited options for locating or encouraging access to sites of open space currently available to the Council.
		Will it contribute to education of local people and tourists in terms of their understanding of the local wildlife?							
		Will it provide or enhance access to areas of high biodiversity value?	="	="	="	="	="	="	

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
4. Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunity for walking and cycling	<p>Will it encourage walking/cycling?</p> <p>Will it make open spaces more accessible to all?</p>	=	=	=	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As this option would not be encouraging links between open spaces or between open spaces and other sites of interest by sustainable means of transport it is unlikely that the option would have a positive or negative effect on encouraging people to walk or cycle. While this option would not give any specific direction to ensure open spaces are accessible to all, it is thought that through negotiation on site design by development management it may be possible to make open spaces more accessible to all. It is therefore thought there would be a neutral impact.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
5.	Reduce the vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as flooding	Will it lessen the likelihood of flooding in new residential developments? Will it enhance natural drainage? Will it reduce the vulnerability of existing areas to flooding?	-	-			-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is envisaged that in the short term, while we are filtering through national guidance on flooding to a more local level that there may be some problems in lessening the likelihood of flooding in new residential developments if this option is used. It is anticipated that if this option was followed there would be a limited level of natural drainage and this would be delivered ad hoc. However as this limited natural drainage would not be sufficient in a situation of prolonged heavy rain which may lead to flooding, it is anticipated there may be a significant negative effect locally in the short, medium and long term. Reduction in vulnerability to flooding of existing areas would not occur as the natural drainage for a new development may not be sufficient for its own reduction in flood risk let alone that of a pre-existing site. There is a possibility if this option is followed that there may be an increase in the vulnerability of the existing areas to flooding.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
6.	Retain and improve quality and quantity of publicly accessible open space	Will it increase the level of fit for purpose open spaces? Will it improve existing open spaces? Will it lead to a reduction in the quantity of open spaces?	-	-	=	=	-	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is unlikely that there would be an increase in the level of fit for purpose open spaces and there may be a percentage decrease in fit for purpose open spaces. If this alternative is followed open spaces may continue to be delivered onsite by developers in inappropriate locations and not suitable for the demographics of the new development but there would still be an increase in open space sites but these may not be fit for purpose. This would be felt at a very local level. It is not thought that by following this option it would be possible to improve existing open spaces namely in the short and medium term. This is due to the way in which negotiations on open space provision currently occur as there is not basis for negotiation. Once the audit of open space provision has been completed for the whole of Highland it will be much easier to negotiate on open space provision as there will be baseline data to work from. It is unlikely that this option would lead to a reduction of open spaces but would lead to a percentage increase. This increase would not be in the desired increase in fit for purpose open spaces but most likely open spaces which are on space left over after planning and are not of an appropriate size, design or type.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
7.	Enhance less valued landscapes or those with a less strong identity in terms of landscape/townscape character	Will it enhance the feel and identity of the landscape/townscape? Will it improve those sites that are less valued?	-	-	-	-	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By using this option it is unlikely that there would be a positive effect on the feel and identity of the landscape of the area locally or regionally. It is anticipated that there may be a slight negative effect as new developments may include poor quality open space which is not in keeping with its surroundings and in turn may reduce the character value of an area. This would be felt at a local level in the short, medium and long term. However, while there may be a significant negative effect locally it is anticipated that this would not filter through to a more regional/Highland wide level. By using this option it would not be possible to improve sites which are less valued as they may be ignored by developers who can favour the approach of providing a completely new open space as this is more economically appealing. Again this would have a significant negative effect at a more local level as existing sites may become devalued through lack of use and the site may be removed leading to a reduction in the sites which are less valued but also an overall reduction in open space provision where it may be demonstrated that it is needed.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
8.	Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths	<p>Will it promote the use of core paths by linking them to fit for purpose open spaces?</p> <p>Will it improve links to the wider countryside?</p> <p>Will it be possible to protect the existing path network?</p>	=	=	=	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option would not directly promote the use of core paths by linking them to fit for purpose open spaces but there is also little scope for promotion through negotiation on site layout and design using the forthcoming layout of new residential development supplementary guidance. This option would not promote links to the wider countryside but in addition it would not limit links to the wider countryside either. Therefore the overall effect would be neutral impact on the environment. As with the other options this option does not and can not afford any additional protection to the existing path network. Where a path is identified in the core paths plan it may be possible to protect the path through it being part of the local development plan. This option will not threaten the existence of any of the currently adopted rights of ways, candidate core paths or any other access route as that is outwith the scope of this option would be looking at each site individually but there would be no specific information on the type, size or location of open space required in a development.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
9. Reduce vulnerability to flooding through improved natural drainage within residential developments	<p>Will it enhance natural drainage?</p> <p>Will it prevent soil sealing in new residential development?</p> <p>Will it encourage the use of SUDS in new residential developments?</p>	=	=	-	=	-	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is believed that in the short and medium term that this option would neither prohibit nor enhance natural drainage however in the long term there is the possibility that due to the ground being compacted by use of the open space there would be reduced benefit of natural drainage. While this would not be severe enough to cause a significant negative impact on the environment it may be possible that there would be some minor negative effects at a local level such as increased surface water run-off. This option may prevent soil sealing over the short to medium term through negotiation on site layout. However over time this benefit may be lessened due to additional development on the site or the development of non-permeable driveways to residential developments. Therefore this option can be seen to have a slightly negative effect on the environment in the long term If this option was to be taken up, there would be no planning policy this time which would actively promote the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). While there is national guidance on the matter in the form of PANs and some information in SPPs a local level policy would be more suitable. This option does not offer this and therefore could have a significant effect on the environment as SUDS are proven to be a successful means of reducing the risk of flooding without altering the groundwater levels or culverting a watercourse etc.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
10. Reduce and prevent crime and the fear of crime	<p>Will it create spaces which are safe for all?</p> <p>Will it encourage well designed and 'safe' open spaces?</p> <p>Will it promote the use of secure by design principles?</p>	=	=	=	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option would not contain any open space design guidance and therefore it would not be possible to create spaces which are safe for all without the production of further guidance. Therefore it is deemed to have a neutral effect as there would not be a significant negative or positive effect on the environment. Again this option would not contain any guidance on design of open space and therefore it would not be possible to encourage well designed and 'safe' open spaces at a local level and would need to rely on national guidance which may not be appropriate for use in some areas of Highland. Therefore it is deemed to have a neutral effect as there would not be a significant negative or positive effect on the environment. Secure by design principles may be implemented to increase the level of safety within open spaces. However as this option contains no specific design guidance on open space any secure by design principles used would need to be negotiated into the design by development management officers. With regard to reducing and preventing crime and the fear of crime it is deemed to have a neutral effect as there would not be a significant negative or positive effect on the environment.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
11.	Enhance access opportunities for all	Will it encourage better access to open space?	-	-	-	-	-	As this option would not contain any accessibility standards as recommended by PAN65 it would be difficult to encourage better access to open space. As open space under this option is likely to be provided by the developer in their own site, access to open space for the residents of the new development would not be a problem but for the existing residents of an area it would be. This option may actually limit access to some forms of open space and therefore have a negative impact on the SEA objective and the environment. This option contains no provision for improving access to facilities either by improving accessibility of open spaces or for increasing quantity of open spaces through a set mechanism. In addition there would be no guidance on the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and therefore would be deemed to have a slight negative impact on the environment.
		Will it promote the use of open space by all?	-	-	-	-	-	
		Will it prevent access to open space being discriminatory?	-	-	-	-	-	

Option 2 - Consider each site on its own merits

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional	

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional		
1.	Protect and Enhance human health	Will the SG give additional benefit to human health? Will human health be significantly reduced? Will it encourage a more healthy lifestyle for the residents within the village? Will it encourage walking and cycling?	=	=	+	+	+	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is envisaged that in the long term there may be a benefit to human health but this would not be present in the short or medium term. There would be a slightly positive impact at a local level in the long term, this will only be possible through careful negotiation with a developer. Without guidelines it will not be possible to apply this consistently. • It is not envisaged human health will be significantly reduced or in fact improved. It is likely the level of human health will fluctuate naturally • This option is unlikely to encourage a more healthy lifestyle as through looking at each site on its own merits it is unable to link with the wider health objectives that this and other PPS' may align with which is necessary for the encouragement of a healthy lifestyle. • Without linkages to the various PPS' such as the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy and the Core Paths plans it is unlikely that the Supplementary guidance will be able to encourage walking and cycling

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional		
2.	Improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	Will it contribute to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Highland? Will it have a detrimental effect on protected species? Will it contribute to achieving local and regional biodiversity action plan targets? Will it have a detrimental effect on landscape character and/or statutory/non-statutory designations?	+	+	=	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a possibility that in the short and medium term there maybe a positive contribution to protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Highland however without linkages to the LBAP it is difficult for a development management officer to condition an application to provide open space with the potential for enhanced biodiversity value. • It is envisaged that there would be no detrimental effect on protected species as their habitats would be protected and this would be recognised by a development management officer when the application is being processed and necessary action would be taken. • It is not envisaged that there would be any detrimental affect on landscape character and/or statutory/ non-statutory designations. This is due to each site being assessed on its merits, statutory/non-statutory designations would be classed as constraints.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional	
3.	Provide opportunities for people of all ages to come into contact with an appreciate nature/natural environments	Will it promote the importance of the protected species of the area? Will it contribute to education of local people and tourists in terms of their understanding of the local wildlife? Will it provide or enhance access to areas of high biodiversity value?	=	=	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is envisaged that this option would not promote the importance of protected species in an area as it would not be feasible to do this while processing a planning application. As this option would not have the linkages to other PPS' such as LBAP and other national directives/strategies it would not be possible to contribute to the education of local people and tourists in terms of their understanding of the local wildlife. It may be possible using this option to provide or enhance access to areas of high biodiversity value, however it may not be possible to apply this constantly or in a transparent manner as the officer would not have a suitable document to use in the application.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional		
4.	Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunity for walking and cycling	Will it encourage walking/cycling? Will it make open spaces more accessible to all?	+	=	=	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is believed that if this option is put into practice it may be possible to encourage walking and cycling in the short term however without links to a strategy such as the Local Transport Strategy it may be difficult to encourage walking and cycling in the medium to long term. In addition the effect may only be slight and at a very local level. While the provision of open space in any new residential development would create an accessible open space, it is not believed that in the medium to long term there would be benefit to the environment.
5.	Reduce the vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as flooding	Will it lessen the likelihood of flooding in new residential developments? Will it enhance natural drainage? Will it reduce the vulnerability of existing areas to flooding?	=	+	+	+	+	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If each site is assessed on its own merits it may be possible to have a positive impact on lessening the likelihood of flooding over the medium to long term, as the level of flood risk would be assessed and it may be possible to negotiate with the developer at the time of the application to ensure appropriate measures are put in place.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional		
6.	Retain and improve quality and quantity of publicly accessible open space	Will it increase the level of fit for purpose open spaces? Will it improve existing open spaces? Will it lead to a reduction in the quantity of open spaces?	-	-	+	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is potential that this would increase the level of open spaces but without guidance on design of open space it may not be possible to provide consistently fit for purpose open spaces. • By assessing each site on its own merits there is potential to improve existing open spaces through a planning agreement but this may not be possible in a number of cases when the site which needs to be improved is not within a reasonable distance of the site boundary. • By using this option it is not believed there would be a reduction in the quantity of open space only the additional provision of open space
7.	Enhance less valued landscapes or those with a less strong identity in terms of landscape/townscape character	Will it enhance the feel and identity of the landscape/townscape? Will it improve those sites that are less valued?	=	-	-	-	-	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is potential to enhance the feel and identity in the short term if this option is used. However as there is not a particular emphasis on creating better quality open spaces, existing spaces may not be improved and this may lead to two tiers of quality, which may in the medium to long term be detrimental to the feel and identity of the landscape and townscape at a local level.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional	
8.	Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths	<p>Will it promote the use of core paths by linking them to fit for purpose open spaces?</p> <p>Will it improve links to the wider countryside?</p> <p>Will it be possible to protect the existing path network?</p>	=	=	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option has limited potential to improve linkages with core path plans except where it can be done on an ad hoc basis through negotiation by development management officers. This option would not be able to improve links to the wider countryside unless done on an ad hoc basis through negotiation by development management officers. This option along with the other options can not provide any additional protection to the existing path network other than the protection already afforded to them in the Development Plan and Core Path Plan.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional	
9. Reduce vulnerability to flooding through improved natural drainage within residential developments	<p>Will it enhance natural drainage?</p> <p>Will it prevent soil sealing in new residential development?</p> <p>Will it encourage the use of SUDS in new residential developments?</p>	=	+	+	+	+	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is potential for natural drainage to be improved in the medium to long term through the provision of green spaces which can provide better natural drainage. This will be a quite local effect and without proper guidance and planning it is unable to provide for a significantly positive outcome. • Through the creation of some greenspace, it will prevent soil sealing, however without this being of an appropriate size in relation to the development is not possible for the additional greenspace to give a more positive impact on the prevention of soil sealing. • It is unlikely without further guidance that this option would be able to encourage the use of SUDS in new residential developments.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional	
10. Reduce and prevent crime and the fear of crime	<p>Will the alternative create spaces which are safe for all?</p> <p>Will the alternative encourage well designed and 'safe' open spaces?</p> <p>Will the alternative promote the use of secure by design principles?</p>	-	-	=	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option is unlikely to create places which are safe for all due to the lack of guidance available to the officer dealing with the application. It may be that a development management officer would be able to negotiate on the safety of new open spaces after training and some experience, however in the short and medium term this may not be possible. • Without guidance on the design of open spaces it may not be possible to for this option to encourage well designed and 'safe' open spaces. With training and experience this may be possible. • This option would not promote the use of secure by design principles in a consistent manner only on an ad hoc basis.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact Severity	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		Local	Regional		
11.	Enhance access opportunities for all	<p>Will the alternative encourage better access to open space?</p> <p>Will the alternative promote the use of open space by all?</p> <p>Will it prevent access to open space being discriminatory?</p>	=	=	+	=	=	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is potential for the alternative to encourage better access to open space on an ad hoc basis but this may not be applied consistently. Without guidance including accessibility standards such as distance threshold it may not be possible for this alternative to encourage better access to open space. • This alternative could not be used to promote the use of open space. There needs to be linkages to other strategies such as the emerging Physical Activity and Sport Strategy and the future Greenspace Strategy. • It is the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 which prevents access to open space being discriminatory not this alternative. It may be possible for the design of the open space to be negotiated on which may improve accessibility for all through the application process.

Option 3 - Adopt Guidance on Open Space in New Residential Development

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
1.	Protect and Enhance human health	<p>Will the alternative give additional benefit to human health?</p> <p>Will human health be significantly reduced?</p> <p>Will it encourage a more healthy lifestyle for the residents within the village?</p> <p>Will it encourage walking and cycling?</p>	=	+	++	+	+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The supplementary guidance will link with the Highland Council's wider health objectives and other strategies for health improvements. By linking with these other strategies there is the potential for significant positive impact on human health in the long term through the implementation of the supplementary guidance. It is not thought that the supplementary guidance will have any negative effect on the human health of an area at either a local or regional scale. Through the linkages to such guidance and strategies like the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, Core Paths Plans and the wider health improvement objectives of the Council it is possible that this guidance will encourage a more healthy lifestyle by providing fit for purpose open spaces in which people can take part in exercise and recreation which accompanied by a number of

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
								<p>other things can lead to health improvements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While it is not the place of the guidance to actively encourage uses of more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and walking, the guidance does create the opportunity for the provision of open space which will effectively link up to other open spaces and the wider access network. Over time this can have a significant long term positive impact on human health.
2.	<p>Improve biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses</p> <p>Will it contribute to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Highland? Will it have a detrimental effect on protected species? Will it contribute to achieving local and regional biodiversity action plan targets? Will it have a detrimental effect on landscape character and/or statutory/non-statutory designations?</p>	=	+	++	+	++	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a local level there is the potential for the guidance to contribute to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Highland. In the short term it will not be possible for the guidance to improved biodiversity but it will be able to protect it. In the medium and long term it will be possible to enhance the biodiversity of open space in as it takes time for the biodiversity to be established. It is unlikely that the supplementary guidance will have a detrimental effect on protected species as these are

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
								<p>identified in the Local Biodiversity Action Plans which are taken into consideration in the determination of planning applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As this guidance will link with the LBAPs for each area of Highland it is quite possible that there will be contributions made towards the targets through the provision of new greenspaces or the enhancement of existing ones. The supplementary guidance gives an outline of how each site should be designed and for each type of new greenspace there are requirements for planting/landscaping which will encourage biodiversity. It is not envisaged that there would be a detrimental effect on the landscape character and/or statutory/non-statutory designations as these would be taken into consideration in the determination of planning applications. This guidance has the potential to greatly improve landscape/townscape character at a more local level.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
3.	Provide opportunities for people of all ages to come into contact with an appreciate nature/natural environments	<p>Will it promote the importance of the protected species of the area?</p> <p>Will it contribute to education of local people and tourists in terms of their understanding of the local wildlife?</p> <p>Will it provide or enhance access to areas of high biodiversity value?</p>	=	+	+	+	+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This document will not directly promote the importance of protected species of the area. Through links with LBAPs it is possible for the guidance to help protect the protected species of an area but not promote their existence. Again through the links with the LBAPs it will be possible to contribute to the education of local people and tourists in terms of their understanding of the local wildlife. In addition when enhancing of providing new natural greenspaces it may be possible to put in place information boards to help educate people about the type of wildlife situated in a particular area. This guidance will promote better use of the core path network through the enhancement of linkages to the network and possible creation of new/improved paths as part of a new open space.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
4.	Reduce the need to travel/increase opportunity for walking and cycling	Will it encourage walking/cycling? Will it make open spaces more accessible to all?	=	=	+	+	+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While it is not the place of the guidance to actively encourage uses of more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and walking, the guidance does create the opportunity for the provision of open space which will effectively link up to other open spaces and the wider access network. There is the potential to make open spaces more accessible through better linkages to existing spaces and the core path network. In addition the guidance makes particular reference to the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 to help promote spaces which are accessible to all no matter what their level of ability.
5.	Reduce the vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as flooding	Will it lessen the likelihood of flooding in new residential developments? Will it enhance natural drainage? Will it reduce the vulnerability of existing areas to flooding?	=	+	++	+	++	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the long term there will be a significant reduction in the likelihood of flooding in new residential developments if this guidance is adopted. The guidance promotes the development of open spaces which will improve natural drainage within new development. In addition the guidance makes clear the Council's policy on the

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
								<p>provision of SUDS in new residential developments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As any open space delivered will prevent soil sealing which is inevitable in any new development not just residential ones, there is the potential to have a significant positive impact in the long term on the enhancement of natural drainage. This will make a significant impact at a local level of the new development and the surrounding area. While this guidance may lessen the likelihood of flooding in new residential developments. It may not be possible to reduce the vulnerability of the existing areas to such a scale as soil sealing has already occurred, but any positive impact of the reduction in likelihood of flooding may be carried over to surrounding areas especially if a SUDS is put in place and is planned to cope with any potential drainage issues from a wider area.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
6. Retain and improve quality and quantity of publicly accessible open space	<p>Will it increase the level of fit for purpose open spaces?</p> <p>Will it improve existing open spaces?</p> <p>Will it lead to a reduction in the quantity of open spaces?</p>	=	+	++	+	+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This guidance has the potential to greatly increase the level of fit for purpose open spaces. The guidance will set out particular guidelines on how new open spaces will be designed to ensure that they are fit for purpose. While in the short term this will not be possible in the medium to long term there will be significant positive effects on the level of fit for purpose open spaces. Through the guidance it may be possible to seek contributions for the improvement of existing open spaces where there is need and provision of new on-site open space would not be possible. Over time there may be the potential for the rationalisation of open spaces which are of poor quality in order to enable the creation of fit for purpose, high quality open spaces. This would be beneficial to local residents, as they would have a better network of linked up, high quality, fit for purpose and accessible open spaces.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
7.	Enhance less valued landscapes or those with a less strong identity in terms of landscape/townscape character	Will it enhance the feel and identity of the landscape/townscape? Will it improve those sites that are less valued?	=	=	+	+	+	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the long term through the creation of better quality new open spaces and the improvement of existing open spaces it would be possible to enhance the overall feel and identity of the landscape/ townscape. This would only be possible in the long term due to the nature of how developer contributions may be sought in order to fund any improvements to existing open spaces. This may have a positive impact at a local level on the quality the environment and if this happens in a number of areas it may be possible for it to have slight positive impacts at a more regional level. It will be possible through this guidance to seek contributions for the enhancement of existing open spaces which are currently less valued. As previously mentioned this would only be achievable in the long term implementation of this guidance due to the nature of how developer contributions may be sought in order to fund any improvements to existing open spaces.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
8.	Protect and enhance outdoor access opportunities and access rights including rights of way and core paths	<p>Will it promote the use of core paths by linking them to fit for purpose open spaces?</p> <p>Will it improve links to the wider countryside?</p> <p>Will it be possible to protect the existing path network?</p>	-	=	+	+	+	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This guidance provides specific links to the core path plans and promotes their use by these links. In the sections on quality and accessibility specific reference is made to the use of Core Path Plans and how they should be used alongside the wider access network to promote the linkages to fit for purpose open spaces. It may be possible to improve links to the wider countryside using this guidance due to its links with the Core Paths Plans and the wider access path network. This will not be possible to do this in the short term but there will be potential for this to be done in the longer term. This option along with the other options can not provide any additional protection to the existing path network other than the protection already afforded to them in the Development Plan and Core Path Plan.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
9.	Reduce vulnerability to flooding through improved natural drainage within residential developments	Will it enhance natural drainage? Will it prevent soil sealing in new residential development? Will it encourage the use of SUDS in new residential developments?	=	+	++	++	+	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As any open space delivered will prevent soil sealing which is inevitable in any new development not just residential ones, there is the potential to have a significant positive impact in the long term on the enhancement of natural drainage. This will make a significant impact at a local level of the new development and the surrounding area. Soil sealing is an issue with any type of new development. By requiring open space which is proportionate to the size of development, it will prevent an excessive amount of soil sealing in the medium to long term. This will have a significant positive effect with a positive effect at a more local level. The guidance makes particular reference to, and makes clear the Council's approach to SUDS in new residential development. The guidance actively promotes the use of SUDS in new residential developments inline with the Council's approach in the Designing for Sustainability Guidance.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional	
10. Reduce and prevent crime and the fear of crime	<p>Will the alternative create spaces which are safe for all?</p> <p>Will the alternative encourage well designed and 'safe' open spaces?</p> <p>Will it promote the use of secure by design principles?</p>	=	+	+	+	+	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The supplementary guidance will promote the creation of open spaces that are safe for all through the way in which it guides the development of new open spaces. Any new open space will use and promote the principles of secure by design. Section two of the guidance sets out guidelines on how new open space should be designed including key features of the open space and the designing in of safety features. This will have a positive effect on reducing and preventing, crime and the fear of crime within any new open space. It may also be possible to do this when enhancing existing open spaces.

Objective	Questions	Time Scale			Impact	Scale		Overall Cumulative Effect and Comments	
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Severity	Local	Regional		
11.	Enhance access opportunities for all	<p>Will the alternative encourage better access to open space?</p> <p>Will the alternative promote the use of open space by all?</p> <p>Will it prevent access to open space being discriminatory?</p>	=	=	+	+	+	=	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The supplementary guidance will apply distance thresholds in order to see which areas have a deficiency of open space provision. This will be based upon research and will then allow us to seek provision of open space in those areas which have a deficiency through future new development. While the guidance will not promote the use of open space, it does encourage open space to be accessible to all, high quality and fit for purpose. By having open spaces like these it will be one way of promoting their use. It will be the subsequent Greenspace Strategy which will promote the use of greenspace and its benefits. The Supplementary guidance makes specific reference to the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and puts it into context in terms of open space. While in the short and medium term there will be no positive or neutral effect on the environment through this guidance, in the long term there will be a positive effect as developer contributions may be used to improve the accessibility of existing spaces to everyone.

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