

Our ref: PCS/114131  
SG ref: SEA 00615/scr

Simon Hindson  
The Highland Council

If telephoning ask for:  
Cerian MacInnes

By email only to: [sea.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sea.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

9 June 2011

Dear Mr Hindson

## **Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 The Inverness West Link Design Project - Screening Report**

Thank you for your Screening Report consultation submitted under the above Act in respect of the Inverness West Link. Design Project. This was received by SEPA via the Scottish Government SEA Gateway on 1 June 2011.

In accordance with Section 9(3) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act, 2005, we have considered your screening report using the criteria set out in Schedule 2 for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment.

Having reviewed the Screening Report, we consider that in respect of our main areas of interest (air, water, soil, human health and climatic factors) the project is not likely to have significant strategic environmental effects. Although we are of the view that significant strategic environmental effects are not likely, it is for the Highland Council as Responsible Authority to make a formal determination taking into account the consultation responses received. Although we do not consider that the project will have significant strategic effects on the environment we do consider that it may have some effects. We have already been consulted on the draft project options environmental appraisal and hope to continue to be consulted as the project develops so we can provide comments on issues within our remit.

We note that you have requested our opinion on whether the design project is a qualifying plan, programme or strategy. It is the responsible authority's responsibility to make this determination, not the consultation authorities; however, we understood this proposal was classed as a project as opposed to a programme, plan or strategy.

If it is formally determined that SEA is required, you will be aware that the next stage requires the Responsible Authority to consult the Consultation Authorities on the proposed scope and level of detail to be included within the Environmental Report. The Consultation Authorities typically expect to receive a concise Scoping Report at this stage. Further information about this stage and what should be included in a Scoping Report can be found in Chapter 5 of the Scottish SEA Tool Kit available from [www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/09/13104943/45](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/09/13104943/45). We would encourage you to use the Scoping Report to focus the assessment on those SEA topics upon which there are likely to be significant environmental effects.



Chairman  
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Should you wish to discuss this screening consultation, please do not hesitate to contact me on 01349 860 415 or via our SEA Gateway at [sea.gateway@sepa.org.uk](mailto:sea.gateway@sepa.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

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