

### Appendix 3 – How the Assessment will be carried out (Example of Matrix Approach)

The assessment will consider:

- What level of impact the guidance/reasonable alternative may have in the short/medium/long term on each of the SEA Objectives and;
- At what scale the preferred approach/reasonable alternative may have an impact.

The matrix also includes a justification of the assessment for each SEA objective. This is intended to guide the reader through the decision making process. To aid in this the matrix also records assumptions which have been made in the decision making process.

For consistency the following scoring system has been used through out the assessment matrices:

Significant Positive Impact	Minimal positive impact	No or neutral Impact	Minimal negative impact	Significant negative impact	Possible Positive and Negative Impacts	Unknown Impact
++	+	=	-	--	+/-	??

Each assessment will be followed by a concise commentary on the findings of the assessment of the policy/reasonable alternative.

On the following page the SEA Objectives are set out and are accompanied by the key considerations for the assessment of the guidance/reasonable alternative. We seek the views of the consultation authorities on these considerations.

## Key Considerations

1	<p><b>Maintain and enhance designated wildlife sites, biodiversity, valuable habitats and protected species, avoiding irreversible losses</b></p> <p>Will it contribute to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Highland?</p> <p>Will it contribute to achieving local and regional biodiversity action plan targets?</p> <p>Will habitats of importance will biodiversity be protected?</p> <p>Will it safeguard Sites of Special Scientific Interest?</p> <p>Will it ensure the importance of the protected species of the area is made a priority?</p>
2.	<p><b>Protect and enhance important geological features</b></p> <p>Will it protect areas of importance for geodiversity?</p>
3.	<p><b>Protect and where appropriate enhance the cultural heritage</b></p> <p>Will it protect or enhance listed buildings and their settings?</p> <p>Will it protect or enhance the scheduled monuments and their settings?</p> <p>Will it protect or enhance locally important archaeological sites?</p> <p>Will it protect or enhance conservation areas?</p> <p>Will it protect or enhance historic gardens and designed landscapes?</p>
4.	<p><b>Value and protect the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscapes</b></p> <p>Will existing landscape character be maintained or enhanced?</p> <p>Will local diversity and distinctiveness be maintained or enhanced?</p> <p>Will it protect areas with strong qualities of wildness?</p> <p>Will it consider the cumulative landscape impact of proposals?</p> <p>Will it protect and enhance designated landscapes?</p>

## Example Matrix

SEA Objective	Time Scale			Magnitude		Assumptions and Justification
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Local	Regional	
1						

SEA Objective from Environmental Report.

When will the effect become apparent in the short(0-5yrs), medium (5-10yrs), or Long term (10+yrs).

Will the approach have an impact locally or highland wide.

Why the element of the PPS has been given this assessment, in respect of this SEA objective, and any assumptions that have been made.