

## SEA SCREENING REPORT (COVER NOTE)

### PART 1

To: [SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)  
or  
SEA Gateway  
Scottish Executive  
Area 1 H (Bridge)  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

### PART 2

An SEA Screening Report is attached for the plan, programme or strategy (PPS) entitled:

The Inverness West Link Design Project

The Responsible Authority is:

The Highland Council

### COMPLETE PART 3 or 4 or 5

### PART 3

Screening is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Our view is that:

- an SEA is required** because the PPS falls under the scope of Section 5(3) of the Act and is likely to have significant environmental effects
- an SEA is required** because the PPS falls under the scope of Section 5(4) of the Act and is likely to have significant environmental effects
- an SEA is not required** because the PPS is unlikely to have significant environmental effects

### PART 4

- The PPS does not require an SEA under the Act. However, we wish to carry out an SEA on a voluntary basis. We accept that, because this SEA is voluntary, the statutory 28 day timescale for views from the Consultation Authorities cannot be guaranteed.

### PART 5

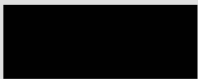
- None of the above apply. We have prepared this screening report because the Council are seeking the views of the Consultation Authorities on the following two points:
- The likelihood of significant environmental effects; and
  - Their opinion on whether the design project is a qualifying plan, programme or strategy

**SEA SCREENING REPORT (COVER NOTE)**

**PART 6**

<b>Contact name</b>	Simon Hindson
<b>Job Title</b>	Planner
<b>Contact address</b>	Planning & Development Highland Council Glenurquhart Road Inverness IV3 5NX
<b>Contact tel no</b>	01408 635372
<b>Contact email</b>	Simon.hindson@highland.gov.uk

**PART 7**

<b>Signature</b> (electronic signature is acceptable)	
<b>Date</b>	25/05/2011

## SEA SCREENING REPORT - KEY FACTS

**Responsible Authority**

The Highland Council

**Title of PPS**

The Inverness West Link Design Project

**Purpose of PPS**

This is a design project which will consider the options for a solution for crossings of the River Ness and the Caledonian Canal to the south of Inverness City Centre.

**What prompted the PPS**

(e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)

A detailed design of a river and canal crossing is required to ensure the road is delivered to facilitate a reduction in congestion within Inverness City Centre and the wider city area, including public transport and active travel improvements.

**Subject**

(e.g. transport)

Transport

**Period covered by PPS**

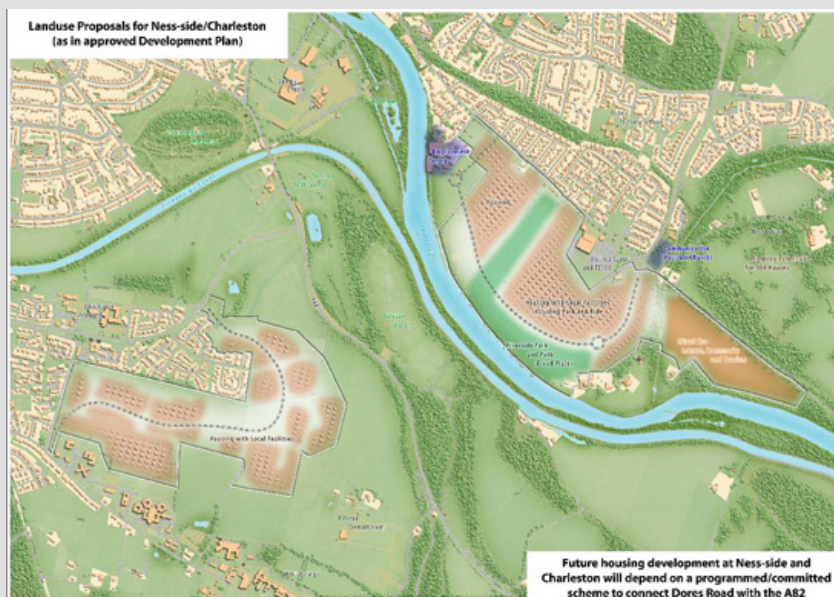
2011 onwards

**Frequency of updates**

As required

**Area covered by PPS**

(e.g. geographical area – it is good practice to attach a map)



**Summary of nature/  
content of PPS**

This is a project which will consider the options for the delivery of a river and canal crossing. It will influence the creation of development briefs and the future Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan as any design solution it has the potential to unlock development potential. It should be noted however that the preparation of development briefs will be carried out separately from the design project, and will be stand alone documents which are likely to have SEA undertaken on them.

**Are there any proposed  
PPS objectives?**

**YES**

**NO**

**Copy of objectives attached**

**YES**

**NO**

**Date**

25/05/11

## SEA SCREENING REPORT

Our determinations regarding the likely significance of effects on the environment of Highland Coastal Development Strategy and Coastal Classification is set out in Table 1.

**TABLE 1 – LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

TITLE OF PPS		
The Inverness West Link Design Project		
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY		
The Highland Council		
Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (1(a), 1(b) etc. refer to paragraphs in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	Likely to have significant environmental effects?  YES/NO	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)
1(a) the degree to which the PPS sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	No	The design project will consider options for the project to deliver delivery of the Inverness River and Canal Crossing.
1(b) the degree to which the PPS influences other PPS including those in a hierarchy	Yes/No	While the design project will solely set out options for the delivery of the Inverness River and Canal Crossing it is likely to influence some elements of the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan as the crossing will unlock some development potential in the south west of Inverness. It should be noted however that land use planning work will be carried out separately to this design project.
1(c) the relevance of the PPS for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	The project delivered through this document may lead to improved air quality within Inverness City Centre due to less congestion and reduction in journey time from the east of the City to the west which may result in increased use of active travel across town.

<b>Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment</b> (1(d) etc. refer to paras in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	<b>Likely to have significant environmental effects?</b>  <b>YES/NO</b>	<b>Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)</b>
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the PPS	Yes	Air quality issues in Inverness City Centre may be mitigated by through the delivery of a river and canal crossing which will be designed as part of this project. The project itself may have an affect on the Torvean Landforms Site of Special Scientific Interest as a number of the options may pass through or run adjacent to the designated site. The crossing of the Caledonian Canal may also lead to an affect on the Caledonian Canal which is a Schedule Ancient Monument. Through mitigation identified in the Environmental Impact Assessment of the Project it is likely these adverse affects will be minimal.
1(e) the relevance of the PPS for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, PPS linked to waste management or water protection)	No	The guidance would be produced inline with the Planning Etc (Scotland) Act 2006. It will need to consider the European Directives on habitats and species as well as the UK and Scottish interpretations of these Directives and other national policy.
2 (a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	No	The design project will influence the delivery of a permanent installation therefore any effects are likely to be irreversible.
2 (b) the cumulative nature of the effects	No	The crossing will facilitate further development of the land to the south west of Inverness. This may have an in combination affect on the environment, however mitigation identified through the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan SEA and any sperate SEA for individual development briefs should ensure that this is not significant.
2 (c) transboundary nature of the effects (i.e. environmental effects on other EU Member States)	No	Not Applicable
2 (d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	No	It is not envisaged that there would be a risk to the environment or human health as a result of this project.

<b>Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment</b> (2(e), 2(f) etc refer to paras in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	<b>Likely to have significant environmental effects?</b>  <b>YES/NO</b>	<b>Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)</b>
2 (e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	No	The project will have localised affects within close proximity of the new crossing however there will be more wide spread affects across the City of Inverness and the wider area.
2 (f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to- (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use.	Yes	(i) The project may have an affect on the Torvean Landforms Site of Special Scientific Interest.  (ii) The project is likely to lead to an improvement in environmental quality of the wider City of Inverness.  (iii) The design project itself will not lead to a significant intensification in land use however it may allow for the intensification of land uses in the longer term by unlocking development potential in the south west of Inverness.
2 (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	No	The design project should lead to a solution which will not have an affect on any designations. Appropriate localised mitigation will be identified through the Environmental Impact Assessment.

## SEA SCREENING REPORT

**A summary of our considerations of the significant environmental effects of The Inverness West Link Design Project are given below:**

**TABLE 2 – SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

The design project will deliver a design solution for the Inverness River and Canal Crossing and will not provide detail on how the road will be delivered. The design project for the proposed river and canal crossing is a project and therefore it would not be considered a qualifying plan. However, it will consider a range of options for the delivery of a river and canal crossing and therefore it will set a framework and could be considered to fit within 32(5) Schedule 1, Part 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The principle of a river and canal crossing has been through the SEA process as part of the Highland wide Local Development Plan and Local Transport Strategy Strategic Environmental Assessment. The detailed route has not been subject to SEA.

The project will ultimately lead to the delivery of a design solution for the river and canal crossing. While there may be localised negative effects, which can be mitigated, there will also be wider positive affects on the City of Inverness in terms of an improvement in air quality and an increased use of active travel opportunities.

In submitting this screening report the Council are seeking the views of the Consultation Authorities on the following two points:

- The likelihood of significant environmental effects; and
- Their opinion on whether the design project is as a qualifying plan, programme or strategy.