

SEA Screening Report – Cover Note

Cover Note Section 1

To: SEA.gateway@scotland.gis.gov.uk
Or
William Carling, SEA Gateway Manager
SEA Gateway
Scottish Executive
Area 1 H (Bridge)
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

Cover Note Section 2

An SEA screening report is attached for the plan entitled:	Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Farm Development in North Ayrshire, including Supplementary Landscape Wind Capacity Study - Main Study Report
The Responsible Authority is:	North Ayrshire Council

Cover Note Section 3

Screening is required because the plan/programme falls under Section 5(3)(c) or Section 8(1) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Our view is that: -

An SEA is not required because the plan is not likely to have significant environmental effects

Cover Note Section 6

Contact Name:	Andrew McNair
Job Title:	Planning Officer
Contact Address:	Development Plans North Ayrshire Council Cunninghame House Irvine KA12 8EE
Contact Tel. No:	01294 324769
Contact e-mail:	amcnair@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

Cover Note Section 7

Signature:

Andrew McNair

Date:

11 December 2013

SEA Screening Report

SEA Screening Report Section 1: Key Facts

Responsible Authority:	North Ayrshire Council (NAC)
Title of Plan:	Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Farm Development in North Ayrshire, including Supplementary Landscape Wind Capacity Study - Main Study Report
Plan purpose:	The aim of this study is to provide advice to the Council on landscape and visual issues related to wind turbine development sited within North Ayrshire, identifying areas where turbines could be located causing least visual intrusion and impact on landscape character and where development would. The study will supplement the policies of the North Ayrshire Local Development Plan, covering landscape and visual issues.
What prompted the plan:	Administrative decision.
Plan subject:	Wind turbine development and land-use planning.
Period covered by plan:	October 2009 onwards.
Frequency of plan updates:	The study will be reviewed as and when necessary.
Plan area:	The guidance concerns itself with the geographical area of North Ayrshire
Summary of nature/content of the Plan:	The study consists of a policy context, aims and objectives and a landscape and visual assessment, identifying areas with potential or no landscape capacity for certain typologies of wind turbine development.
Proposed plan objectives:	Objectives are stated in the study.
Copy of PPS attached?	Yes.
Date:	17 December 2013

SEA Screening Report Section 2: Considering the Likely Significance of Effects on the Environment

Table 1 below summarises the findings of the screening exercise undertaken by North Ayrshire Council in determining the likelihood of significant environment effects from Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Farm Development in North Ayrshire, including Supplementary Landscape Wind Capacity Study - Main Study Report

Table 1 – Likely Significance of Effects on the Environment

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effect?	Summary of significant environmental effects
1(a) the degree to which the plan or programme 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 Council's policy on wind turbine development is set out in Policy PI 9 of the North Ayrshire Local Development Plan (LDP). The policies to which the study relates have already been fully considered through the SEA of the LDP. The guidance will supplement and support these policies against which planning applications for wind turbine development would be considered. Importantly, it does not change existing local planning policy nor introduce new ones for wind turbine development.
1(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No.	The study will supplement, but sit under, the LDP, which has been subject to SEA. It is not intended that the study will directly influence any other PPS.
1(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No.	The study will help promote the principles of sustainable development, supplementing the LDP's policies requiring environmental considerations to be taken into account when making decisions on planning applications for wind turbine development
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	No.	There are no discernible environmental problems with this guidance. No additional environmental effects have been identified beyond those identified for the SEA of the LDP.
1(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment	No.	No significant effects are anticipated with the Ayrshire Supplementary Planning Guidance: Wind Farm Development identifying Natura 2000 sites as areas of significant protection from wind turbine development.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effect?	Summary of significant environmental effects
2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	No.	No such effects are discernible under this study. The study supplements the policies of the LDP, the SEA for which identified no effects in relation to this criterion
2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	No.	The main purpose of the guidance is to direct developers away from locations which are likely to have significant adverse effects on the environment in cumulative terms. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the guidance will have significant effects in relation to this criterion.
2(c) transboundary nature of the effects	No.	The study will not have any significant transboundary environment effects.
2(d) the risks to human health or the environment	No.	No risks to human or the environment are discernible under this guidance.
2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects	No.	No significant effects identified. The study will supplement relevant policies in the LDP, which will help determine the acceptability of the principle of wind turbine development.
2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, (ii) exceeds environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use	No.	No significant effects identified. The study will supplement relevant policies in the LDP, whose potential effects have been considered acceptable as part of the SEA for that plan. The study will assist developers to propose wind turbine development in locations away from sensitive locations, which may have reached, or have no, visual and landscape capacity for such development
2(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status	No.	No significant effects identified. The Ayrshire Supplementary Planning Guidance: Wind Farm Development and the revised Scottish Planning Policy (2013) have a presumption against wind turbine development within the North Arran Scenic Area.

A summary of the Council's consideration of the significant environment effects of Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Farm Development in North Ayrshire, including Supplementary Landscape Wind Capacity Study - Main Study Report

Table 2 – Summary of Environmental Effects

The study is intended to provide guidance, helping officers to consider visual and landscape impacts, relating to proposals for new wind turbine development against the relevant provisions of the North Ayrshire Local Development Plan.

Against all the criteria listed within the Table 1, it was determined that the SG will have no significant environmental effects. It is for this reason that North Ayrshire Council believes the SG is a qualifying PPS which does not require a SEA.

SEA Screening Report Section 3: Summary of Record of Comments from the Consultation Authorities

Table 3: Summary Record of Comments from the Consultation Authorities

Title of Plan:	Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Farm Development in North Ayrshire, including Supplementary Landscape Wind Capacity Study - Main Study Report
Responsible Authority:	North Ayrshire Council
Date comments received:	13 January 2014

Consultation Authority	Views
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Significant environmental effects: No
	If yes, please note SEA topic/issues here:
Scottish Natural Heritage	Significant environmental effects: No
	If yes, please note SEA topic/issues here:
Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland)	Significant environmental effects: No
	If yes, please note SEA topic/issues here: