

Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Determination

Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside

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1. Introduction

This statement sets out West Lothian Council's determination under Regulation 10(1) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 on whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required for Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside.

Screening is the first stage in the SEA process. The purpose of screening is to establish whether or not a Plan, Programme or Strategies (PPS) will have significant environmental effects. Screening takes the form of a formal submission, where the responsible authority (the Council) seeks the views of the following Consultation Authorities on whether a PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects and therefore whether a SEA is required:

- ◆ Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
- ◆ Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), and
- ◆ Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)

As well as consulting the above bodies, responsible authorities are required to take into account the criteria set out in Schedule 2 of the 2005 Act when determining whether or not the plan is likely to have significant effects. The details of this process are contained within the Screening Report.

If the responsible authority and the consultation authorities agree that the plan or programme is unlikely to have significant environmental effects, the responsible authority is required to make a determination to that effect under section 8(1) of the 2005 Act.

2. Record of SEA Determination and Publicity Requirements

Title of Plan, Programme or Strategy:	Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside
Responsible Authority:	West Lothian Council

Record of SEA Determination:

In accordance with section 9(1) of the 2005 Act, West Lothian Council submitted to the Consultation Authorities a screening report summarising its views as to whether West Lothian Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance (SG) – Development in the Countryside will have significant environmental effects.

In formally determining under Section 8(1) of the Act whether a SEA is required, the Council has taken into account the views of the three Consultation Authorities; Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage and Historic Environment Scotland which were issued through the SEA Gateway on 29 January 2019.

West Lothian Council and the Consultation Authorities are in agreement that the West Lothian Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside is not likely to have significant environmental effects and the Council has therefore determined that an SEA will not be required for the plan under Regulation 13(1) of the 2005 Act.

CONSULTATION AUTHORITY	LIKELIHOOD OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS
Historic Environment Scotland	No
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	No
Scottish Natural Heritage	No
OVERALL VIEW ON LIKELIHOOD OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS	No

Formal Determination	Statement of Reason
8 February 2019	<p>West Lothian Council's reasoning for determining that there are no overall likelihood of significant environmental effects is as follows:</p> <p>West Lothian Council has prepared a local development plan to replace the West Lothian Local Plan 2009 (WLLP 2009) in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning (Scotland) etc. Act 2006.</p>

	<p>The new West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 4 September 2018 and is consistent with the Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SDP).</p> <p>The LDP focuses on providing for, and managing, future land use change across the council area in line with SESplan SDP requirements. The LDP comprises a development strategy for the period to 2024 and a detailed policy framework to guide future land use in a way which best reflects the SDP vision, strategic aims and objectives.</p> <p>The West Lothian Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside sets out a framework that West Lothian Council will use to assess planning applications for development on sites that are shown as being located outwith settlement boundaries in the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan. The role of the West Lothian Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside is simply to provide further information and detail in respect of a policy that is already set out in the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan which was subject of a full Strategic Environmental Assessment and which will also be reviewed in the Post Adoption Strategic Environmental Assessment.</p>
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Publicity Requirements for the Determination:	
<p>In accordance with section 10(1) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, within 28 days of the determination having been made, the Council will send a copy of the formal determination and related statement of reasons (prepared in accordance with section 8(2)(b) to the Scottish Government SEA Gateway and the three Consultation Authorities.</p> <p>In accordance with section 10(2) of the 2005 Act, within 14 days of the determination having been made, a copy of the determination, along with the Screening Report, shall be provided for inspection by the public at West Lothian Council's principal office at the West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, EH54 6FF or on request from wldp@westlothian.gov.uk.</p>	
<p>The determination shall also be published in the West Lothian Courier and Linlithgow Journal & Gazette newspapers to notify the public and will be available to view at www.westlothian.gov.uk from 14 February 2019. A copy of the statutory notice is provided as Appendix 2.</p>	
Signature:	Craig McCorriston, Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration
Date:	8 February 2019

3. SEA Screening Report

Cover Note

Part 1

To:

SEA.Gateway@gov.scot

or

SEA Gateway
Scottish Government
2-H (South)
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

Part 2

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

Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside

The Responsible Authority is:

West Lothian 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 a SEA under the Act. However we wish to carry out a SEA on a voluntary basis. We accept that because the SEA is voluntary the Statutory 28 days timescale for views from the Consultation Authorities cannot be guaranteed.

Part 5

None of the above apply. We have prepared this screening report because:

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Part 6

Contact Name: Steve Lovell

Job Title: Principal Planning Officer

Contact Address: c/o Civic Centre, Howden South, Livingston, EH54 6FF

Contact Phone: 01506 282430

Contact email: steve.lovell@westlothian.gov.uk

Part 7

Signature: Steve Lovell

Date: 8 February 2019

Key Facts

West Lothian Council has undertaken screening of Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside with regard to the requirements of section 9 of the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

The Screening Report has been submitted to the Scottish Government SEA Gateway, setting out the views of West Lothian Council on the likelihood of the significant environmental effects of Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside with regard to the requirements of section 9 of the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the potential for requiring a SEA.

Responsible Authority:	West Lothian Council
Title of PPS:	Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside

<p>Purpose of PPS:</p>	<p>The purpose of this Supplementary Guidance (SG) is to support Local Development Plan Policies ENV 2 (Housing Development in the Countryside), ENV 3 (Other development in the Countryside), EMP 3 (Employment development outwith settlement boundaries), EMP 7 (Tourism) and HOU 5 (Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People).</p> <p>In particular, this SG further defines the terms used in the policies and explains and interprets other matters necessary for the implementation of the policy; provides general planning criteria applicable to all sites and cases and design guidance.</p>
<p>What promoted the PPS: (e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)</p>	<p>Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) relating to new development in the countryside (but principally housing) was produced to support Policies ENV 31 and ENV 35 of the West Lothian Local Plan (2009).</p> <p>West Lothian Council adopted the West Lothian Local Development Plan on 4 September 2018 after Scottish Ministers confirmed the council could do so. It now forms part of the Development Plan for West Lothian along with the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for Edinburgh and South-east Scotland.</p> <p>The Council has a programme to prepare a suite of new guidance to support the recently adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan,</p> <p>Specifically, <i>Development in the Countryside</i> has been written with the intention of becoming statutory supplementary guidance (SG). SG becomes part of the development plan, giving it the same weight in decision making as the LDP. It has already been subject to consultation but will require to be approved by Scottish Ministers prior to its adoption.</p>
<p>PPS Subject: (e.g. transport)</p>	<p>The policies are integral to the strategic spatial land use strategy which applies across West Lothian. In terms of this SG they are particularly associated with housing, business and tourism related development.</p>
<p>Period covered by the PPS:</p>	<p>Anticipated date of adoption (February 2019) onwards.</p>

Frequency of updates:	Supplementary Guidance will ordinarily be reviewed and updated every 5 years, in tandem with the replacement of the Local Development Plan.
Area Covered by the PPS:	This SG covers the West Lothian Local Development Plan area. It applies specifically to areas defined as 'Countryside' in the Local Development Plan, i.e. areas outwith defined settlements.
Summary of nature/content of PPS:	<p>A Local Development Plan (LDP) is prepared by the local planning authority, in this case West Lothian Council. It sets out a local interpretation of the requirements of national and strategic policy. In particular it must conform to the approved Strategic Development Plan (SDP) which has been prepared by the strategic planning authority (SESplan) and its purpose is to implement requirements on a more detailed site-specific basis than exists within the SDP.</p> <p>The LDP comprises a written statement detailing a spatial strategy, including policies and proposals together with a Proposals Map.</p> <p>LDP's are intended to provide the vision and strategy for how communities will grow and develop in the future and also to provide certainty for communities and prospective investors about where development should take place and where it should not. LDP's also identify the supporting infrastructure required for growth and set out detailed policies and proposals which are the basis for decision making on future planning applications.</p> <p>Policies ENV 2 (Housing Development in the Countryside), ENV 3 (Other development in the Countryside) and EMP 3 (Employment development outwith settlement boundaries) seek to control the proliferation of development in the countryside by clearly setting out the circumstances in which new development will be supported. The SG defines terms used in the policy and further explains how the policy should be implemented in each of the specific circumstances.</p>

	<p>These circumstances can be broadly summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * re-development of rural brownfield sites * conversion of and reuse of existing rural buildings * replacement of an existing house * rural Infill development * a new house which makes an exceptional contribution to the countryside * farm diversification * new agricultural buildings * tourism and recreational related development * very low density rural housing and woodland development (Lowland Crofting) and * new private sites for Gypsies, Travellers and travelling Showpeople <p>The SG also provides general planning criteria and design guidance applicable to all proposals.</p>
Are there any plan objectives?	No
Copy of PPS attached	Yes
Date:	8 February 2019

Likely Significance of Effects on the Environment
<p>The Council has considered the likely significance of effects on the environment of the Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside with regard to the requirements of section 9 of the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The screening was undertaken with references to the criteria in Schedule 2 of the 2005 Act and is set out in Table 1 (below).</p>

Table 1: Likely Significance of Effects on the Environment

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment <i>[The paragraph numbers in the table 1(a), 1(b), 2(a), 2(b) etc. refer to paragraphs in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.]</i>	Likely to have significant environmental effects? (Yes / No)	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)

The characteristics of plans and programme		
1(a): The degree to which the PPS sets a framework for the projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	No	<p>The adopted Local Development Plan sets a framework for assessing applications for new dwellings in predominately rural areas. The SG contributes to that assessment framework.</p> <p>The SG provides information on the constraints and opportunities for development in the environmentally sensitive countryside of West Lothian, It sets out ways in which its character should be managed and indicates opportunities for the long term sustainable development of the rural area.</p>
1(b): The degree to which the PPS influences other PPS including those in the hierarchy.	No	<p>The SG Development in the Countryside although in itself new, is essentially a refresh and an update of previous Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) which supported the now superseded West Lothian Local Plan.</p> <p>The SG provides background guidance to policy within the adopted Local Development Plan and does not seek to directly influence other programmes and strategies.</p> <p>The guidance sets out detailed criteria to assist the development and assessment of proposals for development across the plan area and specifically supports policies ENV 2 (Housing development in the countryside), ENV 3 (Other development in the countryside), EMP 3 (Employment development outwith settlement boundaries), EMP 7 (Tourism) and HOU 5 (Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People). It is at the same time consistent with the wider objectives of the overarching West Lothian Local Development Plan which has itself already undergone SEA.</p>

<p>1(c): The relevance of the PPS for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The location of new development is significant in terms of promoting sustainable development and, in general terms, development outwith settlements is considered less sustainable than development within settlements where it is more likely to be closer to services and facilities.</p> <p>Sustainability is a core element of the spatial strategy and sustainable development is a fundamental concept in the West Lothian Local Development Plan. The SG will serve to re-inforce this.</p> <p>The general premise of policies that govern development on the countryside is that new development will only be permitted in specific circumstances, which the Supplementary Guidance assists in further defining.</p> <p>The SG is not site specific, it covers the entire West Lothian Council area and all planning applications for development in rural areas will require to be assessed against the SG and will be taken into account when decisions are made.</p>
<p>1(d): Environmental problems relevant to the PPS</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The West Lothian Local Development Plan has regard to the multitude of environmental issues which have the potential to affect the countryside of West Lothian.</p> <p>The SG is one of many which are designed to help protect and safeguard its environmental assets.</p> <p>No negative environmental consequences are foreseen as being directly attributable to the SG.</p>
<p>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)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>None identified. The SG does not introduce any new policy considerations and would not be directly relevant to this issue. If applicable, this would be considered in the assessment of individual planning applications.</p>

The characteristics of the effects and the area likely to be effected		
2(a): The probability, duration frequency and reversibility of the effects	No	There are no significant environmental effects that can be attributed to the SG. Any consequences of development authorised by Policies ENV 2 (Housing Development in the Countryside), ENV 3 (Other development in the Countryside), EMP 3 (Employment development outwith settlement boundaries), EMP 7 (Tourism) and HOU 5 (Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People) can be avoided/mitigated/minimised by application of other environmental protection policies within the Local Development Plan and adherence to the SG.
2(b): The cumulative nature of the effects	No	<p>The accumulation of new development in rural locations, or across the plan area, could have cumulative effects, for example in terms of landscape impact and traffic movement.</p> <p>A key purpose of the SG is however to promote and secure sustainable development and encourage best practice and thereby reduce and minimise any significant adverse effects on the environment in cumulative terms. Adherence to the SG should, if anything, have a positive effect on the environment of West Lothian.</p>
2(c): Trans-boundary nature of the effects (i.e. environmental effects on other EU Members States	No	<p>No trans boundary effects have been identified.</p> <p>The SG is in itself unlikely to have significant environmental impact beyond West Lothian, but that is not to diminish the positive value of the policy in a local context.</p>
2(d): The risks to human health or the environment (for example due to accidents)	No	The SG will have a benign effect and will contribute to more sustainable development and which can only be beneficial to human health and wellbeing. Proposals will in any event be assessed in detail as and when planning applications are submitted.

<p>2(e): The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>There are no significant effects identified. The SG will support other relevant policies in the LDP which will be relied upon to help determine the acceptability of new development in the countryside but the SG only applies to development that takes place within the administrative area of West Lothian and its effect is invariably constrained.</p>
<p>2(f): The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <p>(i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</p> <p>(ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;</p> <p><u>or</u></p> <p>(iii) Intensive land use</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The SG seeks to control development to ensure the protection of the character of the countryside. Overall, the strategy of the Local Development Plan looks to protect the countryside from unnecessary and inappropriate development.</p> <p>The SG will have only positive effects on natural and cultural heritage and in a localised area.</p> <p>The overarching SEA for the LDP has previously considered any potential significant environmental effects and provided mitigation measures where necessary.</p> <p>It is considered that adherence to the requirements of the SG will be of negligible consequence and will not in any event adversely affect the value and vulnerability of the criterion.</p>
<p>2(g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Any development will need to comply with the development plan which includes a range of policies to ensure the cumulative impact of different (or the same) types of development do not adversely affect designated landscapes and the principal landscape character/type of the area. There will be no implications for this PPS.</p> <p>The overarching SEA for the LDP has previously considered potential effects. It is considered that adherence to the requirements of the SG will be of negligible consequence and will not in any event adversely affect the value and vulnerability of the criterion.</p>

Summary of Environmental Effects

The Council has considered the likely significance of effects on the environment of the Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside and these are set out below.

Table 2: Summary of Environmental Effects

Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside supports policies ENV 2 (Housing Development in the Countryside), ENV 3 (Other development in the Countryside, EMP 3 (Employment development outwith settlement boundaries), EMP 7 (Tourism) and HOU 5 (Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People) of the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan by providing further guidance and detail on the circumstances in which development out with settlements will be permitted within the West Lothian Local Development Plan area and setting out general planning criteria to be applied in decision-making.

The West Lothian Local Development Plan has itself already undergone an extensive SEA examining its policies, proposals and land use allocations. They demonstrate West Lothian Council's commitment to sustainability and sustainable development and the addition of Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside is considered to strengthen and re-inforce this position.

The Supplementary Guidance does not propose new development in the countryside, instead it forms part of a framework for assessing applications for development. Any new development out with settlements could potentially have significant environmental effects, depending on its design and location in relation to sensitive receptors within the environment. Unchecked, the proliferation of new development out with settlements in rural areas could also have cumulative impacts, arising for example, from increased vehicular movements. Policies seek to manage new development in the countryside to specific circumstances which would assist in avoiding such significant effects and are supported by the Supplementary Guidance. Furthermore, the specific policies referenced and guidance will not be applied in isolation; There are other environmental protection policies included in the Local Development Plan which will additionally be applied in the assessment of planning applications.

The council considers it unlikely that the supporting Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside will have any significant environmental effects and it as it will provide only information for decision makers, the public and other stakeholders and serve as a management tool in relation to development affecting the character, qualities, threats, opportunities and constraints within the countryside of West Lothian.

Overall, it is considered that the Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside is a qualifying plan or programme that will not have significant environmental effects and that, as part of a wider policy framework, significant environmental effects arising from new development in the countryside permitted under the terms of the adopted Local Development Plan and associated Supplementary Guidance will be avoided. It is for this reason that West Lothian Council believes that Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. However, should a particular instance arise where adherence to the SG was considered to be potentially detrimental to the environment, the Development Management process would be expected to have regard to such matters and to apply appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures through planning conditions on any planning permissions released by the Council.

4. Responses from Consultation Authorities

CONSULTATION AUTHORITY	LIKELIHOOD OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS
Historic Environment Scotland	No
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	No
Scottish Natural Heritage	No
OVERALL VIEW ON LIKELIHOOD OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS	No

- SEA GATEWAY
- SEPA
- HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND
- SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Supplementary Guidance (SG) - Development in the Countryside
Appendix 2 - Consolidated Statutory Notice



Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba
nature.scot

Steve Lovell
Principal Planning Officer
West Lothian Council
Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston EH54 6FF

Sent via: sea.gateway@gov.scot

Date: 10 January 2019
Our ref: CEA153724 / A2825695
Your ref: 01434 Screening

Dear Steve,

**Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005: Development in the Countryside
Supplementary Guidance – Screening Determination**

I refer to your screening consultation submitted on 03 January 2019 via the Scottish Government SEA Gateway in respect of the above plan. 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.

We understand that the Supplementary Guidance provides further information on a range of Local Development Plan (LDP) policies where development in the countryside is either the main or a related issue. The Supplementary Guidance does not propose further development or change beyond that already assessed in the SEA of the LDP and we therefore agree that it is not likely to have significant environmental effects.

Please note that this consultation response provides a view solely on the potential for the plan or programme to have significant environmental effects. We cannot comment on whether or not the plan or programme meets other criteria determining the need for SEA as set out in the Act.

Should you wish to discuss this screening determination, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0131 316 2644 or via SNH's SEA Gateway at sea.gateway@nature.scot.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne Gray
Planning Advisor
Supporting Good Development Activity Team

Scottish Natural Heritage, Silvan House, 3rd Floor East, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh EH12 7AT
Tel: 0131 316 2600 www.nature.scot

Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba, Taigh Silvan, 3mh Làr an Ear, 231 Rathad Chros Thoirphin, Dùn Èideann EH12 7AT
Fòn: 0131 316 2600 www.nature.scot



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

By email to: sea.gateway@gov.scot

Steve Lovell
Principal Planning Officer
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
EH45 6PF

Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh
EH9 1SH

Enquiry Line: 0131-668-8716
Switchboard: 0131 668 8600
HMConsultations@hes.scot

Our case ID: 300020246
Your ref: 01434 Screening
28 January 2019

Dear Mr Lovell

[Environmental Assessment \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)
[01434 Screening - West Lothian Council - Supplementary Guidance: Development in the Countryside](#)

Screening Report

Thank you for your consultation which we received on 07 January 2019 about the above screening report. We have reviewed the screening report in our role as a Consultation Authority under the above Act, in accordance with the requirements of Section 9(3). In doing so we have used the criteria set out in Schedule 2 for determining the likely significance of the effects on the environment. Please note that our view is based on main area of interest for the historic environment.

We understand that the Supplementary Guidance – Development in the Countryside (the SG) is required to support the understanding and delivery of a number of policies in the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018. The Environmental Assessment undertaken in respect of these policies concluded that they would have no significant environmental implications. You consider that the SG will not have any significant additional environmental effects. We are content to agree that the SG is unlikely to have significant effects on the historic environment.

However, as you will be aware, it is the responsibility of West Lothian Council as the Responsible Authority to determine whether the guidance requires an environmental assessment and to inform the Consultation Authorities accordingly.

We hope this is helpful. Please contact us if you have any questions about this response. The officer managing this case is Virginia Sharp who can be contacted by phone on 0131 668 8704 or by email on Virginia.Sharp@hes.scot.

Yours sincerely

Historic Environment Scotland

Our ref: PCS/163108
SG ref: SEA01434/scr

If telephoning ask for:
Silvia Cagnoni-Watt

10 January 2019

Stephen Lovell
West Lothian Council
Planning, Economic Development
and Regeneration
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road, Livingston
EH54 6FF

By email only to: SEA_Gateway@gov.scot

Dear Mr Lovell

**Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005
West Lothian Council - Supplementary Guidance: Development in the Countryside -
Screening Report**

Thank you for your Screening Report consultation which SEPA received via the Scottish Government SEA Gateway on 04 January 2019.

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, material assets (of which we have a specific interest in waste) and climatic factors) the Supplementary Guidance (SG): Development in the Countryside is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. Although we are of the view that significant environmental effects are not likely, it is for the West Lothian Council as Responsible Authority to make a formal determination taking into account the consultation responses received.

We understand that the SG will provide further details on the implementation of the Local Development Plan policies and therefore agree that any significant environmental effects have already been assessed as part of the SEA of the LDP.

We provided comments to the SG consultation on the 2 March 2018 (our ref: PCS/157082).

Please note that although we do not consider that the SG will have significant strategic effects on the environment we do consider that it may have some effects. We would therefore welcome consultation on the draft proposals which should be directed to our local Planning Service team at planning.se@sepa.org.uk.



Chairman
Bob Downes
Chief Executive
Terry A'Hearn

SEPA Edinburgh Office
Silvan House, 3rd Floor, 231 Corstorphine Road,
Edinburgh EH12 7AT.
www.sepa.org.uk • customer enquiries 03000 99 66 99

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. This can be undertaken through preparation of a concise Scoping Report. We would encourage you to use the scoping process to focus the assessment on those SEA issues upon which there are likely to be significant environmental effects, to outline the baseline information you consider as most relevant and explain your proposed method of assessment. To assist with this process we have produced [SEA topic guidance](#) for those issues which fall within our remit. Further information on scoping can be found in the [Scottish Government SEA Guidance](#) (sections 3.4 to 3.8 in particular).

We are committed to providing early and focused advice and supporting continuous engagement and therefore if it is determined that SEA is required we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and discuss these issues prior to the formal consultation.

Should you wish to discuss this screening consultation please do not hesitate to contact me on 01786 452430 or via our SEA Gateway at sea.gateway@sepa.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Silvia Cagnoni-Watt
Senior Planning Officer

Ecopy: sea.gateway@hes.scot; SEA_GATEWAY@nature.scot