



SEA SCREENING REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE (SG)

**RENEWABLES & LOW CARBON ENERGY
DEVELOPMENT
(EXCLUDING WIND ENERGY)**

STEP 1 – DETAILS OF THE PLAN

Responsible Authority:

West Lothian Council

Title of the plan:

Supplementary Guidance – Renewables & Low Carbon Energy Development (Excluding Wind Energy)

What prompted the plan:

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

The West Lothian Local Development Plan gives an undertaking to produce guidance in relation to a variety of policy topics including the protection of the natural environment from inappropriate development.

The guidance sets out detailed criteria to assist the development and assessment of proposals for development across the plan area and specifically supports policies NRG 1 (Climate Change and Sustainability), NRG 1a (Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technology) and NRG 4 (Other Renewable Energy Technologies).

Plan subject:

(e.g. transport)

Town and Country Planning

Screening is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Based on Boxes 3 and 4, our view is that:

An SEA is required, as the environmental effects are likely to be significant: Please indicate below what Section of the 2005 Act this plan falls within

Section 5(3)

Section 5(4)

An SEA is not required, as the environmental effects are unlikely to be significant: Please indicate below what Section of the 2005 Act this plan falls within

Section 5(3)

Section 5(4)

Contact details:

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Date:

01 December 2020

STEP 2 – CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

Context of the Plan:

The West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 4 September 2018.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental Report was published in August 2014, which set out the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the strategy for the development contained within the LDP and is the primary means by which development sites are allocated. Each site allocated for development within the LDP has been subject to an individual site assessment.

The principal Report of Examination was issued on 11 December 2017 (augmented with an additional Report of Examination dealing with a single site issue issued on 8 January 2018).

At a meeting of the Council Executive on 22 March 2018, West Lothian Council resolved to accept all of the modifications recommended in the Report of Examination, and agreed to adopt the Local Development Plan (as modified). This was notified to Scottish Ministers on 5 April 2018. At the same time, the council made a determination under Section 8(1) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that the modifications proposed by the DPEA to the West Lothian Local Development Plan were unlikely, overall, to have any major significant negative environmental effects and that a further SEA was not required.

Supplementary Guidance – Renewables & Low Carbon Energy Development (Excluding Wind Energy) is required to support the understanding and delivery of several policies in the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018. The SG will expand on the principles of these policies and will provide detailed guidance to help achieve the outcomes expected from development proposals across West Lothian.

The SG does not include location specific guidance or direct development to specific sites but supports consistent interpretation and application of policies through the development management process. The guidance identifies good practice in-line with the policy and other national guidance.

Description of the Plan:

The SG expands on the principles set out in the policies detailed in Box 3 (above) and provides detailed guidance to help achieve the outcomes expected from development proposals across West Lothian. The guidance provides a basis for most new development in West Lothian.

The SG is intended for use by anyone considering Renewables & Low Carbon Energy Development within West Lothian including:

- Applicants who wish to develop a site;
- Architects and agents working on proposals;
- Officers assessing planning proposals;
- Elected Members representing constituents and making decisions on planning applications;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the public with an interest in development proposals within their local community and • Householders who wish to undertake any domestic scale renewables and low carbon energy development regardless of whether it requires planning permission. <p>The guidance will be reviewed at least every 5 years in line with the statutory review of the West Lothian Local Development Plan (or as required by emerging legislation).</p>
<p>What are the key components of the plan?</p>	<p>The SG will provide further guidance to support the application of the various policies detailed in Box 3 (above) and the delivery of renewables & low carbon energy development in locations across West Lothian.</p>
<p>Have any of the components of the plan been considered in previous SEA work?</p>	<p>Yes. The document is produced to support a number of policies in the West Lothian Local Development Plan which was adopted on 4 September 2018. An Environmental Assessment has previously been undertaken in respect of policies and proposed land allocations in the West Lothian LDP. The Environmental Assessment undertaken in respect of these policies concluded that they would have no significant environmental implications. Any impacts of the policies were considered to be largely positive. In order to ensure compliance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, a Screening Opinion for this Supplementary Guidance is required.</p>
<p>In terms of your response to Boxes 7 and 8 above, set out those components of the plan that are likely to require screening:</p>	<p>The guidance will expand on the principles set out in the aforementioned policies and provide detailed guidance to help achieve the outcomes expected from development proposals in locations across West Lothian. The guidance will support consistent interpretation and application of policies through the development management process in instances where proposals are subject to formal planning controls. The guidance will at the same time encourage good practice in-line with policies and other national guidance and is intended to be instructive to anyone contemplating any renewables & low carbon energy development in locations where some installations may even be beyond the scope of planning controls. The potential environmental effects of any proposed development considered under the terms of the policies can however only be fully assessed at the planning application stage when the specific site and development details are known.</p>

**STEP 3 – IDENTIFYING INTERACTIONS OF THE PLAN WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AND
CONSIDERING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF ANY INTERACTIONS**

Plan Components	Environmental Topic Areas										Explanation of Potential Environmental Effects	Explanation of Significance
	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air	Climatic factors	Material assets	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Inter-relationship issues		
Supplementary Guidance – ‘Renewables & Low Carbon Energy Development (excluding wind energy).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>The SG brings together all of the elements that help contribute towards minimising environmental impact and achieving sustainable development.</p> <p>It provides a clear set of guidance and standards to explain what the council will expect from new developments and identifies what information is required as part of a planning application. It also provides contact details for Council officers and other organisations.</p> <p>The SG shares the strategic objectives of the LDP which include promoting development where its environmental impact can be</p>	<p>The SEA for the LDP considered any potential effects. The SG is not considered to have any additional significant environmental effects.</p>

											<p>ameliorated and having regard to climate change by minimising the carbon footprint of development and supporting mitigation and adaption measures.</p> <p>It is anticipated that new renewables and low carbon energy development which will come to be built over time will be more sensitively located and designed and in better harmony with their surroundings and the natural and built environment.</p> <p>Any impact on the Environmental Topic Areas will be positive and beneficial.</p>	
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STEP 4 – STATEMENT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE SCREENING REPORT

Summary of interactions with the environment and statement of the findings of the Screening:

(Including an outline of the likely significance of any interactions, positive or negative, and explanation of conclusion of the screening exercise.)

The council has prepared this Supplementary Guidance to proactively inform and encourage developers to adopt more considered approach when preparing proposals for new renewables and low carbon energy development.

The guidance has been conceived to help positively influence the nature of new development and to mitigate any adverse effects on both the site and the surrounding environment. It relates to both development in the countryside and development within settlements.

The guidance explicitly supports the principle of sustainability and seeks to secure energy efficient development thereby minimising carbon emissions and arresting climate change

In common with other guidance prepared by West Lothian Council, it has been subject to internal and external consultation, in this case with council service providers community councils, SEPA, Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Environment Scotland, planning consultants and developers and regard has been had to the responses and feedback which has been received.

In conclusion, the guidance will result in no negative environmental effects and therefore it is concluded a SEA is not required.

The guidance sets out detailed criteria to assist the development and assessment of proposals for development across the plan area and specifically supports policies NRG 1 (Climate Change and Sustainability), NRG 1a (Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technology) and NRG 4 (Other Renewable Energy Technologies). Collectively, these policies seek to encourage renewable energy development but always in circumstances where any potentially negative impacts can be satisfactorily addressed.

When completed send to: SEA.gateway@scot.gov or to the SEA Gateway, Scottish Government, Area 2H (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ.