




# Natural Heritage

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE  
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT



Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Consultation May 2010

## Supplementary Planning Guidance - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

### Public Consultation

Monday 24 May to Friday 24 September 2010

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) sets out detailed advice to help people meet the requirements of the policies in the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan and the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) is presently developing a number of SPG documents.

These will go out for a four month public consultation before publication – from Monday 24 May to Friday 24 September 2010.

This SEA Environmental Report is the result of an Strategic Environmental Assessment carried out on the supplementary planning guidance document of the same name, and it is also available for public consultation.

### How to Comment

- A form is available on the following page. Comments \*, which must include your name and address, should be returned to the CNPA by **Friday 24 September**, to the following address:

**FREEPOST (RSHS-BHKL-KXHS)  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
Albert Memorial Hall, Station Square  
Ballater AB35 5QB**

- You can download, or complete this form online, at [www.cairngorms.co.uk/planning/localplan](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/planning/localplan)
- To discuss any aspect of the Supplementary Planning Guidance documents, or to arrange a meeting, please contact the CNPA's Ballater office.

- All SPG documents are available to view at the CNPA offices in Ballater and Grantown-on-Spey (see addresses below) and at a number of council offices within the Park. Comment forms will also be available at all these locations.

Albert Memorial Hall  
Station Square  
Ballater  
Aberdeenshire AB35 5QB  
Tel: 013397 53601  
Fax: 013397 55334  
Email: [spg@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:spg@cairngorms.co.uk)

14 The Square  
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Tel: 01479 873535  
Fax: 01479 873527  
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### Next Steps

The comments received about this report, and the accompanying SPG, will be considered by the CNPA. Once these have been reviewed, any appropriate changes will be made to the SPG which will then be prepared for formal approval at the end of 2010. At this point, an SEA post adoption statement will be produced, setting out the final details of the SEA assessment process

\*Please note that all responses will be made public but will not be attributed to any named individual/organisation.

Data protection: These details will only be used for purposes associated with the Supplementary Planning Guidance consultation. You may request to see personal information held by the CNPA at any time.

For a large print version of this publication, please contact the Cairngorms National Park Authority on 01479 873535.

# Cairngorms National Park Local Plan

## Consultation on Supplementary Planning Guidance documents Monday 24 May – Friday 24 September 2010

### Comments form

#### How to make a comment

- Please use a separate form for each of your comments.
- You must state which Supplementary Planning Guidance document, and which part of it, your comment relates to.
- You must indicate clearly your proposed changes, for example deletion of a proposal, deletion of a paragraph, amended wording, amendments to diagram/photograph.
- This form can be photocopied or further copies obtained from the CNPA offices.
- You can also complete the form online at [www.cairngorms.co.uk/planning/localplan](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/planning/localplan)
- The deadline for submitting completed forms is **Friday 24 September 2010**.

1.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

2.

If you are appointing someone to act as your agent, please give their details.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

To which address should correspondence to be sent? Own

Agent

**3.**  
Which Supplementary Planning Guidance document does your comment relate to? You must include the document title, the page number and the paragraph number where relevant.

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**4.**  
Please state clearly and fully your comment(s), continuing on additional sheets if necessary.

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**5.**  
If you are suggesting a specific change to the Supplementary Planning Guidance, please explain clearly what this is.

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**6.**  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed forms, by **Friday 24 September 2010**, to:

**FREEPOST (RSHS-BHKL-KXHS)**  
**Cairngorms National Park Authority**  
**Albert Memorial Hall, Station Square**  
**Ballater AB35 5QB**

Tel: 013397 53601  
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**Preface**

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to assess the environmental impact of the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) Natural Heritage Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. This PPS is considered to fall within Section 5 (4) of the Act.

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## Non-Technical Summary

### Introduction

This is a non-technical summary of the Environmental Report of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Natural Heritage Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for the Cairngorms National Park.

It explains:

- What the SEA is;
- Why it has been done;
- What effects the Natural Heritage SPG would be likely to have on the environment.

This non-technical summary can be read on its own or as part of the full SEA Environmental Report.

Strategic Environmental Assessment, or SEA for short, is a way of making sure that environmental issues are carefully considered when a plan, policy or strategy (PPS) is developed. This includes supplementary planning guidance such as this Natural Heritage SPG. In this instance the SEA is a formal part of the SPG preparation process and was determined to be required by a screening exercise carried out under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

The idea behind SEA is that by making sure that environmental features such as plants and animals, air quality, human health, landscape or historic remains are considered as the PPS is developed then it is less likely that the PPS will harm them. SEA helps to make sure that environmental considerations are taken into account by the PPS in two main ways.

Firstly, the SEA predicts what effects the PPS is likely to have on the environment and whether they are considered significant. Secondly, if the SEA does predict 'significant effects' the PPS must be changed to introduce measures that will make the effects less harmful or serious. The end result should be a PPS that is less likely to lead to significant harm to the environment.

The SEA process is also about giving the public the information used to predict the effects and explaining how they were predicted. When the Environmental Report of the SEA process is published the public have an opportunity to comment on the SEA.

### Summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process

The SEA process can be broken down into a series of steps that happen as the Natural Heritage SPG is being prepared. These can be summarised as:

1. Describe the condition of the environment at the moment and how it is changing or has changed in the past. Predict what the environment would be like in the future without the SPG.
2. Predict how different ways of making the SPG could have different environmental effects.
3. Predict what the effects of the principles and guidance in the SPG would have on the environment.

4. Decide on ways of reducing any harmful effects of the SPG on the environment.
5. Publish the SPG and the SEA Environmental Report that explains what the SEA is and how it has been done and make them available for consultation so that people can comment on them. This is the stage the SPG is at just now.
6. Take note of the comments on the Environmental Report and make any changes to the SPG or SEA because of them.
7. Adopt and publish the SPG with an up to date Environmental Report of the SEA and write a formal statement of how the SEA was carried out with the SPG, and how it affected the SPG.
8. Keep measuring what effects the SPG actually has on the environment when it is used so that changes can be made in the future if they are needed and so that it is possible to predict effects more accurately in future.

The SEA of the Supplementary Planning Guidance should be seen within the hierarchy of other plans and their SEA's. The Natural Heritage SPG is part of the Local Plan. An SEA was carried out as part of the local plan process. A separate SEA was carried out for the Cairngorms National Park Plan. All of these assessments influence each other to ensure that environmental effects of all related plans are known and addressed.

### **Summary of the likely significant effects of the Supplementary Planning Guidance**

The four principles and associated guidance in the SPG have been assessed and the Environmental Report of the SEA prepared.

The principles of the SPG are considered likely to have positive effects on the environment. This might be expected given that the SPG sets out to deliver more sustainable management of water resources in development. The SPG works to provide additional guidance and information on Local Plan policies 1-5. Many of the policies in the Local Plan are designed to protect and improve the quality of the environment, so that few harmful effects could be caused by development. The aim of the SPG is to make development as sustainable as possible. In so doing it helps to deliver the aims of the Park and relevant objectives of the Cairngorms National Park Plan.

The SPG does not set environmental policy, nor does it allocate sites for development. This is the role of the Local Plan. The SPG provides guidance on minimising environmental impacts from development on any aspect of the Natural Heritage interests and assets of the National Park. As such it would be expected to have a positive impact in terms of the SEA.

The Local Plan has policies to ensure development land allocations and development activities do not cause significant harm to the environment. The SPG has been specifically prepared to address environmental issues as a key part of its approach to making development more sustainable.

No significant negative environmental effects of the SPG were identified. Some principles will have a greater impact on certain environmental features. The key to the SPG is that all the principles work together to ensure that environmental (and wider sustainability) issues are addressed by development. The principles should therefore not be considered in isolation from each other.

Any significant effects that have been predicted from the principles are explained in Section 5 (see p16) and Appendix 6 (see p40) of the full Environmental Report. A summary of impacts is provided below:

**Principle 1: Hierarchy of key principles**

The SPG highlights that the protection of Natural Heritage is a key objective of the Cairngorms National Park Plan. There is a set of principles that sets out a sequence of acceptable levels of change to any development site. It starts with the first principle, which is that no development on site should adversely affect the Natural Heritage. Deviation from this position requires full justification and subsequent mitigation.

**Principle 2: How do you assess the importance of Natural Heritage interest on a development site?**

There are two aspects to the information required for a development proposal. First, to fully survey the appropriate flora and fauna. Second, to assess the impact of the development and explain the significance of that impact. This should be undertaken at appropriate times and using acceptable methodologies. The assessor must be properly trained and experienced for the work to be undertaken.

**Principle 3: Key considerations for all developments**

There are a number of additional considerations that must be included within the survey, assessment and any subsequent mitigation of the development;

- Site designations
- Protected species
- Other priority species
- Landforms / geodiversity
- Connectivity of habitats and fragmentation
- Positive measures and mitigation
- Invasive non-native species
- Bio security

**The differences Strategic Environmental Assessment has made to the Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Because the SPG has been written with environmental considerations in mind, it has avoided leading to harm to the environment from the start. This means that no changes to the SPG have been made due to the SEA itself.

However, the SEA has helped provide a systematic method for assessing environmental factors that are important to the SPG and recording the predicted effects of it in a transparent way. In addition to this clear links to the Local Plan and Cairngorms National Park Plan SEAs have enabled environmental issues to be considered consistently throughout the planning hierarchy.



## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of this Environmental Report

As part of the preparation of the Natural Heritage Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) is carrying out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is a systematic method for considering the likely environmental effects of certain plans, policies and strategies (PPS). SEA aims to:

- Integrate environmental factors into PPS preparation and decision-making;
- Improve PPS and enhance environmental protection;
- Increase public participation in decision-making; and
- Facilitate openness and transparency of decision-making.

SEA is a requirement of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The key SEA stages are:

- Screening: determining whether the PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects and whether an SEA is required;
- Scoping: deciding on the scope and level of detail of the Environmental Report, and the consultation period for the report – this is done in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, and Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland);
- Environmental Report: publishing an Environmental Report on the PPS and its environmental effects, and consulting on that report;
- Adoption: providing information on the adopted PPS, how consultation comments have been taken into account and methods for considering the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the PPS;
- Monitoring: monitoring significant environmental effects in such a way so as to also enable the Responsible Authority to identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and undertake appropriate remedial action.

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to:

- Provide information on the SPG;
- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the SPG and its reasonable alternatives;
- Provide an early and effective opportunity for the Consultation Authorities and the public to offer views on any aspect of this Environmental Report.

## 1.2 Key Facts

The key facts relating to the SPG are set out in Table 1, below.

**Table 1: Key Facts Relating to the Supplementary Planning Guidance**

<b>Responsible Authority</b>	Cairngorms National Park Authority
<b>Title of plan, policy or strategy (PPS)</b>	Natural Heritage Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)
<b>What prompted the PPS</b>	The requirement for the SPG has followed the development of policies on Natural Heritage within the Local Plan.
<b>Subject covered by PPS</b>	To aid the interpretation of local plan Policies 1-5 on Natural Heritage. This sets out the guidance, issues and criteria that must be considered for all developments related to any aspect of Natural Heritage and the standards required for survey and assessment.
<b>Period covered by PPS</b>	2010 onwards
<b>Frequency of updates</b>	The SPG will be reviewed on a regular five year cycle to link in with Development Plan review and preparation.
<b>Area covered by PPS</b>	3816 sq kms – This is the area covered by the Local Plan, and this guidance accompanies the Local Plan.
<b>Purpose and / or objectives of PPS</b>	<p>This SPG on Natural Heritage is being prepared to accompany the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan; and is part of the suite of Local Plan policies that address the sustainable use of resources.</p> <p>It sets out to provide more detailed guidance in order to assist applicants to ensure they comply with policies 1-5 in the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan. This sets out the issues that must be considered for all developments related to any aspect of the Natural Heritage.</p>

### 1.3 Strategic Environment Assessment activities to date

The consideration of environmental issues has been integral to the preparation of this SPG. This is explicitly reflected in the SEA activities throughout the preparation of the SPG.

Table 2 below indicates those SEA activities which have been undertaken to date and those activities which will be undertaken in the next stages of the SPG preparation and adoption.

**Table 2: Strategic Environment Assessment activity relating to the Supplementary Planning Guidance**

SEA activity / task	SPG activity / task	Timetable
Screening opinion sought from SEA Gateway	Commitment to prepare SPG contained in Draft Local Plan	August 2009
Preparation of Scoping Report	Identification and research of key issues / topics	November / December 2009
Consultation on Scoping Report 5 weeks		January / February 2010
Environmental assessment and preparation of the Environmental Report	Preparation of consultative draft SPG	March / April 2010
Consultation on Environmental Report 4 months	Consultation on draft SPG	May 2010 – Sept 2010
Analysis of consultation responses and revision of Environmental Report as required	Analysis of consultation responses and revision of SPG as required	Sept 2010-Oct 2010
Preparation of Post-Adoption Statement	Preparation of finalised SPG	Nov 2010
Submission of Post-Adoption Statement	Submission of finalised SPG to CNPA Board for adoption	Dec 2010

## 2. Background to this report

### 2.1 The Strategic Environmental Assessment context

The Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) is carrying out a SEA of the Natural Heritage SPG which it is currently engaged in preparing. The requirement for the SPG is set out in the

Cairngorms National Park Local Plan. Once adopted the SPG will be a material consideration for the CNPA and the four local authorities with responsibility for determining planning applications within the Park.

This report is an Environmental Report in terms of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The purpose of this report is to:

- (a) describe the current condition of the environment and predict what the environment would be like in the future without the SPG;
- (b) predict what effect the SPG will have on the environment;
- (c) identify ways of reducing any harmful effects the SPG may have;
- (d) explain what the SEA is and how it has been carried out; and
- (e) to set out how comments on the SEA can be submitted to the CNPA.

The Environmental Report follows the initial screening and scoping consultations issued to the consultation authorities in January and February 2010 respectively. The views of the consultees have been taken into consideration in the preparation of this report.

The SEA of the SPG should be seen in the context of SEA work previously undertaken by the CNPA for the Park Plan and the Local Plan.

## **2.2 The Cairngorms National Park context**

The Cairngorms National Park currently extends to 3,800 sq km and covers parts of four local authority areas (Highland, Moray, Aberdeenshire and Angus). The Park is centred on the Cairngorm mountains and extends to Grantown-on-Spey, Strathdon, Ballater, the heads of the Angus Glens, Dalwhinnie and Laggan. A Scottish Government consultation is taking place for extending the boundary into Perthshire, towards the end of 2010.

The Cairngorms National Park was established in September 2003, on the basis of:

- the outstanding national importance of its natural and cultural heritage;
- the area's distinctive character and coherent identity; and
- the special management needs of the area.

The general purpose of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, as set out in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, is to ensure that the National Park aims are collectively achieved in a co-ordinated way. The Park Authority is therefore an enabling organisation that must work with and through other bodies to bring added value to the management of the Park, to achieve the four aims.

The aims of the National Park are:

- to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage;
- to promote sustainable use of the natural resources;
- to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public;
- to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority must ensure that the four aims are achieved collectively. However, if there appears to be a conflict between the first aim and the other aims, greater weight must be given to the first aim (Section 9(6) of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000).

The CNPA is not a full planning authority, but shares planning powers in the Park with the four constituent local authorities. The Park Authority is responsible for preparing a Local Plan and supplementary planning guidance for the Park, but only operates the development management function on applications that are considered to be of significance to the aims of the National Park.

Development management functions within the National Park are shared by the Park Authority and the four constituent local authorities. Planning applications are made to the local authorities in the first instance, and the Cairngorms National Park Authority has a power to ‘call-in’ applications to be determined by the Park Authority, where it considers they have some significance to the aims of the National Park. In practice, this has meant that, to date, the Park Authority has called in around 16 per cent of the planning applications within the National Park for determination.

As supplementary planning guidance, the Natural Heritage SPG will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The SPG is informed by the finalised Local Plan for the Cairngorms National Park which replaces the four Local Plans which existed previously. The Local Plan takes its strategic context from the Cairngorms National Park Plan.

### **3. Natural Heritage Supplementary Planning Guidance**

#### **3.1 Outline and objectives of Supplementary Planning Guidance**

The objective of the guidance is to set out how the natural heritage of the Cairngorms National Park must be taken into account when considering all development proposals. It will explain:

- What evidence should be gathered and what information should accompany any planning application;
- How the importance of natural heritage on any site proposed for development should be assessed;
- When information should be submitted to the planning authority.

The SPG sets out the definition of Natural Heritage, for example it includes geology. It goes on to set out a sequence of Principles designed to establish a principle of minimum impact. The first principle states that development should have no impact and then, if that it is not possible in terms of the development a sequence of assessments required to demonstrate that the minimum impact is achieved. The guidance goes on to explain other important considerations to be taken into account and finally guidance on the scope of designations and the ideal times for certain key biodiversity surveys.

The list of topics to be covered in the SPG is shown in Table 3 (below).

**Table 3: Topics covered by the Natural Heritage Supplementary Planning Guidance**

<b>Issue to be covered in Natural Heritage Supplementary Planning Guidance</b>
<b>Key principles</b>
Six key principles that establish the importance of maintaining unharmed the natural heritage on any proposed development site.
<b>What information do applicants need to produce regarding natural heritage interests?</b>
Applicants need to produce two separate pieces of information; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A description of the natural heritage interest on the development site and possibly the surrounding area including its significance and value;</li> <li>• An assessment of any effect of the development upon that interest.</li> </ul>
<b>How do applicants find out the importance of the natural heritage interest of the development site?</b>
This section guides the developer to the use of appropriately qualified ecology or other specialist. It then discussed the standards expected for the survey and assessment of the site by these specialists.
<b>Key considerations</b>
There are a number of additional key considerations that must be included within the assessment of a site they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site designations</li> <li>• Protected species</li> <li>• Other priority species</li> <li>• Landforms / geodiversity</li> <li>• Connectivity of habitats and fragmentation</li> <li>• Positive measures and mitigation</li> <li>• Invasive non-native species</li> <li>• Bio-security</li> </ul>

### 3.2 The Supplementary Planning Guidance’s relationship with other plans and policies

There are a wide range of plans, policies and strategies (PPS) that are relevant to the SPG and help to influence its content and direction. A full list of relevant PPS can be found in Appendix I (see p21). Appendix I also identifies the key issues of these PPS which are relevant to the SPG.

In summary the SPG has a relationship with other PPS in the following categories:

- International and European;
- National;

- National planning guidance (Scottish Planning Policy and Planning Advice Notes);
- Local statutory plans, for example Parks constituent local authorities); and
- Cairngorms National Park specific.

The Cairngorms National Park Local Plan, together with the Cairngorms National Park Plan, set the planning policy context for the Park. The SPG provides further detailed guidance on particular aspects of this planning context in relation to natural heritage.

The Cairngorms National Park Plan was approved by the Minister on 15 March 2007. The finalised Local Plan is likely to be adopted by the end of 2010. Both the Park Plan and the Local Plan have been subject to SEA.

Other statutory local PPS include those prepared by or on behalf of the constituent local authorities and other public bodies which are active in the Park area. This includes local authority Development Plans, Core Path Plans, Forestry Strategies, Housing Plans, Waste Management Plans etc.

The Scottish Government's consolidated SPP (2010), and any remaining SPP's, set the national planning context which is interpreted by local development plans.

National and international PPS may also set the context for how the planning system should interpret various policies set at European and International levels. European Directives are the most common example of this type of PPS.

#### **4. Environmental perspectives and Strategic Environmental Assessment objectives**

##### **4.1 The State of the Park Report**

SEA requires the collation of environmental baseline information. A State of the Park Report has been prepared by the CNPA. This report, which has been used in previous SEA work, draws together existing information on the Park's resources as a baseline to inform development and assessment of Park plans and policies. The report covers:

- natural resources
- cultural resources
- visitor resources
- economic and social resources

In each section the report identifies as far as possible:

- current extent of the resource
- relative importance of the resource
- current state of the resource
- key trends affecting the resource
- limitations on existing data and future research needs

The report provides the environmental baseline data against which the potential impacts of the SPG have been assessed and against which future implementation of such plans will be monitored. Further details can be found in Appendix 2 (see p24).

#### 4.2 Existing environmental issues in the Cairngorms National Park

The State of the Park Report identified a number of current trends and key issues in relation to environmental resources in the Cairngorms. Further details of this can be found in Appendix 3. These informed the SEA of the Park Plan and the Local Plan.

SEA guidance identifies the need to ensure that issues addressed in assessments are appropriate to the level and scale of the PPS, and to ensure that assessments lower down the PPS hierarchy do not duplicate assessments which have already been carried out higher up the PPS hierarchy. The SEA of the Local Plan identified a number of potentially negative effects of the Local Plan proposals:

- Loss, damage or disturbance to important species or habitats and ecosystems;
- Damage to the water environment including streams, rivers, lochs, ground water, wetland habitats, floodplains.

The purpose of the SPG is to avoid and / or mitigate the above effects. The SEA of the SPG has therefore sought to ensure that these issues have been adequately addressed. Issues such as the strategic location of development, previously assessed at the Local Plan level, have not been re-assessed in this SEA.

#### 4.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment objectives

The policy context for the SPG is set by plans and policy higher up the planning hierarchy; principally the Cairngorms National Park Plan and the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan. Both of these plans were subject to SEA.

The SPG Scoping Report identified a set of objectives against which to assess the environmental impacts of the SPG. These objectives reflected the findings of the previous SEA's together with the comments received from the Consultation Authorities in response to the SPG Scoping Report. The final SEA objectives used to assess the SPG are listed in Table 4, below.

**Table 4: Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives**

SEA criteria	SEA objective	Key considerations
Biodiversity, fauna and flora	I. To conserve and enhance the diversity of species, habitats and ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• loss of priority species and habitats;</li> <li>• disturbance to priority species and their habitats;</li> <li>• barriers to species movement and habitat fragmentation;</li> <li>• introduction and spread of non-native species.</li> </ul>



Water	2. To conserve and enhance the water environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• water quality and quantity;</li> <li>• conservation of riparian habitats;</li> <li>• waste water management;</li> <li>• floodplain management.</li> </ul>
Material assets	3. To use material assets in a sustainable way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minimise need for travel by private car;</li> <li>• access networks, open space, new and safe access opportunities;</li> <li>• reduce waste, increase reuse and recycling;</li> </ul>
Air and climatic factors	4. To minimise contributions to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maximise energy efficiency of new development;</li> <li>• increase sustainable energy generation;</li> <li>• encourage use of local timber products in construction;</li> <li>• climate-proof new development.</li> </ul>
Soil	5. Maintain or improve soil and peat quality and avoid exacerbating pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conserve mineral resources;</li> <li>• conserve soil resources;</li> <li>• minimise soil and peat disturbance.</li> </ul>
Population and human health	6. To maintain a sustainable and healthy population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide for housing needs of local communities;</li> <li>• ensure access to services for communities.</li> </ul>
Landscape	7. To maintain and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• existing landscape character;</li> <li>• settlement character;</li> <li>• setting of towns and villages.</li> </ul>

#### 4.4 Likely evolution of the environment without the Supplementary Planning Guidance – Alternatives

The Directive requires the likely evolution of the environment without the PPS to be considered. The trends identified in the State of the Park Report are expected to continue in the absence of new policy or actions to address them. The underlying purpose of the National Park designation is to integrate the management of different sectors and areas within the Park

in order to take a co-ordinated approach to addressing these issues and delivering the Park aims.

The Local Plan is the main tool for influencing development planning in the Park. The Local Plan sets out the requirement for the SPG, recognising the lack of detailed policy in this area. In the absence of the Natural Heritage SPG it may be more likely that development would be permitted which had an adverse impact on the Natural Heritage of the National Park – a significant negative effect.

### **Alternatives/Options Considered**

Although alternatives to the Natural Heritage SPG are limited- two alternatives have been considered. Alternatives are outlined here in order to set the context for this report.

**Option 1 – Do Nothing:** This is not developing the Natural Heritage SPG. However, this is not an acceptable option because, in the absence of the Natural Heritage SPG, it may be more likely that development would be permitted which had an adverse impact on water quantity or quality – a significant negative effect.

**Option 2 – Do Optimum:** Under this option, we would develop a Natural Heritage SPG. This would include the opportunity to provide guidance, issues and criteria that must be considered for all developments related to any aspect of the water environment.

## **5. Summary of assessment findings**

### **5.1 Assessment of Supplementary Planning Guidance Principles**

The SPG contains three principles and associated guidance. Environmental issues were considered throughout the development of the principles contained within the SPG. The principles are a direct response to the environmental issues which the Cairngorms National Park faces, the aims of the Cairngorms National Park Plan and the planning policy established by the Local Plan. The principles support the wider aims of sustainable development within the Park.

The special qualities of the Park are closely linked to the natural and cultural heritage of the area. The principles contained in the SPG are specifically intended to provide support to Local Plan Policies 1-5 and Park Plan policies which aim to provide robust protection to a wide range of Natural Heritage interests, which are also reflected in the SEA objectives.

Table 5 (see p17) presents a summary of the predicted significant environmental effects of the principles contained in the SPG. The full assessment results can be found in Appendix 4 (see p28).

**Table 5: Summary of assessment findings**

<b>Principle 1: Hierarchy of key principles</b>	
<p><b>Outcome:</b></p> <p>The protection of the Natural Heritage resource is a key objective of the SPG. The hierarchy of key principles sets out clearly that the prime aim is to ensure that Natural Heritage is not harmed and that where effects are inevitable then they will be minimised and then fully mitigated.</p>	<p><b>Assessment summary:</b></p> <p>Generally a strongly positive or positive impact on the SEA criteria.</p>
<b>Principle 2: How do you assess the importance of Natural Heritage interest on a development site</b>	
<p><b>Outcome:</b></p> <p>The SPG gives clear guidance on the two stages of assessment. Firstly the quality of survey and secondly the significance of impact with appropriate mitigation</p>	<p><b>Assessment summary:</b></p> <p>Generally a positive impact on the SEA criteria.</p>
<b>Principle 3: Other Considerations for all developments</b>	
<p><b>Outcome:</b></p> <p>This directly addresses a number of factors related Natural Heritage that should be explicitly covered within the assessment of a site.</p>	<p><b>Assessment summary:</b></p> <p>Generally a strongly positive impact on the SEA criteria.</p>

Some principles are shown overall to have a stronger positive impact on the SEA objectives than others. Whilst significant positive impacts are not recorded for all SEA objectives, all objectives are judged to be positive. This is perhaps not surprising due to the subject matter of the SPG itself. This is shown in Table 6 (see p19).

All three principles of the SPG have been designed to work together hence not all individual principles will have a significant positive impact on all SEA objectives, but taken as a whole the SPG will have positive impacts, on all SEA objectives.

Assessment sheets for each principle outline and describe the predicted effects in more detail. These can be found in Appendix 4 (see p28).

Local Plan policies support all the SEA objectives, as demonstrated in the Local Plan SEA. Further supplementary planning guidance will provide more detailed support to SEA objectives in due course. The SPG should be seen within this wider context of supplementary topic-based guidance. Following the SEA process from the Cairngorms National Park Plan, through the Local Plan and down to topic based supplementary planning guidance, ensures that all SEA objectives are addressed within the overall land-use planning activity for the Park.

### **5.2 Cumulative and synergistic effects**

The principles are all aimed at ensuring development promoted through Local Plan policy is pursued in a sustainable fashion. In addition to this, the protective policies in the Local Plan also apply and would avoid, minimise or mitigate the negative effects. The SPG will combine with the SPGs on Landscape, wild land, water resources and developer contribution to offer a suite of guidance that combined will provide a comprehensive set of environmental protection.

### **5.3 Proposed Mitigation**

No mitigation is considered necessary.

**Table 6: Summary of environmental impacts**

	SEA Objectives						
<b>SPG Principles</b>	1. To conserve and enhance the diversity of species, habitats and ecosystems	2. To conserve and enhance the water environment	3. To maintain and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the Park, including the historic environment	4. To use material assets in a sustainable way	5. To minimise contributions to climate change	6. To maintain or improve soil and peat quality and avoid creating or exacerbating pollution	7. To maintain a sustainable and healthy population
Principle 1: The 6 Principles	++	+	++	+	+	++	+
Principle 2: Methods and standards of survey and assessment	++	++	+	+	+	+	+
Principle 3: Key consideration	++	++	++	++	+	++	+

+ Positive impact      ++ Strongly positive impact      = Neutral impact  
 - Negative impact      -- Strongly negative impact

## **6. Monitoring**

The SEA of the SPG sits within the hierarchy of plans and SEA's as identified above. In addition to this it also sits within the monitoring framework for the National Park Plan, the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan, and other associated plans and strategies and guidance prepared for the Park.

Monitoring of the effects of the implementation of these various plans, programmes and strategies (including this SPG) will be undertaken and will influence the shape of future plans and policies for the Park.

## **7. Next Steps**

The Natural Heritage SPG and this Environmental Report will be available for public consultation.

Once the consultation period has ended, the next steps and estimated timescale will be:

- Assess comments and make any necessary amendments to the SPG
- Prepare the finalised SPG
- Update the Environmental Report to reflect any comments as required.
- Prepare a post adoption statement setting out how the SEA process has informed the SPG, the reasons for the decisions made and framework for future assessment in line with local plan and park plan monitoring schemes.
- Adopt and publish the SPG.

**Appendix I: Relationship with other plans**

<b>International / European PPS</b>	<b>Key issues addressed</b>
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	The treaty is aimed at reducing emissions of greenhouse gases in order to combat global warming
EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 79/409/EEC 1979	Requires Member States to sustain populations of naturally occurring wild birds by sustaining areas of habitats to maintain ecologically and scientifically sound levels.
EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats of Wild Fauna and Flora 92/42/EEC 1992	Requires Member States to sustain populations of naturally occurring flora and fauna by sustaining areas of habitats to maintain ecologically and scientifically sound levels.
Directive 2000/60/EC The Water Framework Directive	Requires Member States to achieve good ecological status of inland water bodies.
European Landscape Convention Milan 2000	Requires Member States to consider Landscape issues in all relevant PPS.

<b>National PPS</b>	<b>Issues relevance to SPG</b>
Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act	Flooding and land use
Nature Conservation Act (Scotland) 2004	Biodiversity
UK Climate Change Programme (2006)	Reduction of carbon emissions.
Changing our Ways – Scotland's Climate Change Programme (2006)	National interpretation of global climate change challenge.
Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009	Considers a raft of issues relating to climate change
The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Amendment (Scotland) Regulations 2007	Conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora. 007 amendment provides greater protection of European Protected Species.
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended	Provides varying levels of protection for certain species of conservation concern and for nesting wild birds. Provides further protection for sites of at least national importance for nature conservation.
Scottish Biodiversity Strategy	Conservation and enhancement of Scotland's biodiversity

UK Biodiversity Action Plan	Identifies species and habitats of conservation concern and provides action plans to conserve these species and habitats.
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<b>SPP / NPPG / PAN</b>	<b>Issues relevant to SPG</b>
Scottish Planning Policy (February 2010 consolidated document)	Sets out the purpose of planning and overarching role of planning authorities. Includes subject policies including Natural Heritage, Flood Risk
PAN 60 Planning for natural heritage	Covers planning issues relating to natural heritage

<b>Local PPS</b>	<b>Relevance to SPG</b>
Structure Plans	The Highland, Moray, Aberdeenshire (NEST) and Angus Council Structure Plans set out the strategic framework for the Cairngorms National Park.
Community Plans	The Highland, Moray, Aberdeenshire and Angus Council Community Plan', set out how public services will be planned and delivered, through consultation and co-operation (among all public bodies, and with community bodies).
Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan Project	A long-term initiative that seeks to initiate actions for biodiversity across the whole Cairngorms area and raise the awareness of protecting, enhancing and appreciating the biodiversity of the Park area.

<b>Cairngorms National Park Plan Strategic Objectives</b>		<b>Relevance to SPG</b>
Biodiversity	e) Ensure that populations of species given special protection under the Habitat Regulations, the Wildlife and Countryside Act, the Nature Conservation Act and European Directives are stable or, where appropriate, increasing.	Natural Heritage SPG



	g) Identify, prioritise and take action to address non-native species that pose a threat to the natural heritage and land management of the Park.	Natural Heritage SPG
Sustainable Use of Resources	a) All management and development in the Park should seek to make the most sustainable use of natural resources, including water and energy	Natural Heritage SPG
Water	a) Maintain or where necessary enhance the existing high water quality and physical condition of waterbodies in the Park	Natural Heritage SPG
	d) Promote sustainable flood management consistent with natural fluvial processes	Natural Heritage SPG

<b>Cairngorms National Park Local Plan policy</b>	<b>Relevance to SPG</b>
1: Natura 2000 Sites 2: National Natural Heritage Designation 3: Other Important Natural and Earth Heritage Sites and Interests 4: Protected Species 5: Biodiversity 6: Landscape	Sets the basis and approach for the SPG
SPG Water resources provides additional background information	Has some links to Natural Heritage issues, specifically relating to water

**Appendix 2: Environmental Baseline**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Key facts</b>
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25% of UK's threatened species present</li> <li>• 12.5% of Scotland's semi-natural woodland cover</li> <li>• Habitat types present include: montane; dwarf shrub heath; conifer woodland; broadleaved and mixed woodland; acid grassland; fen, marsh and swamp; standing water; rivers and streams.</li> <li>• UK Biodiversity Action Plan species include: upland oak and birch woodland; bog woodland (largest extent in Scotland); juniper; capercaillie; black grouse; Scottish crossbill.</li> <li>• Habitats listed under Annex I of EU Habitats Directive include: dry heaths; alpine and boreal heaths; sub-arctic willow scrub; siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands, Nardus grasslands; calcareous flushes</li> <li>• Close proximity of lowground, woodland, water, upland and montane habitats</li> </ul>
Designated Nature Conservation Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 39% of Park designated for natural heritage</li> <li>• 19 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)</li> <li>• 12 Special Protection Areas (SPA)</li> <li>• 46 Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSIs) – some of which are of geological importance</li> <li>• 3 Ramsar Sites</li> <li>• 6 National Nature Reserves</li> </ul>
Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 SSSIs with soils of international importance</li> <li>• 12 SSSIs with soils of national importance</li> <li>• High proportion of undisturbed soils (only 2% cultivated)</li> <li>• Podzols form 50% of soil cover including internationally significant alpine podzols on the plateau</li> <li>• Peat forms 13% of soil cover</li> </ul>
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2001 Census: 16,024 people</li> <li>• Population density 0.04 people/Ha (lower than Scottish average)</li> <li>• 25.8% of population over 60 (higher than Scottish average)</li> <li>• Average health index in top 25% of Scotland (based on deprivation indices)</li> </ul>
Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 designated Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes</li> <li>• 60 Scheduled Ancient Monuments</li> <li>• 424 listed buildings</li> <li>• 3 Conservation Areas</li> <li>• 4778 records in National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS)</li> <li>• large number of historic landscapes</li> <li>• Potential for survival of many unknown remains in upland areas</li> </ul>
Earth Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 National Scenic Areas</li> </ul>

Landforms and Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 Geological Conservation Review sites – of which some are part or all SSSI</li> <li>• Granite massif and plateau</li> <li>• Internationally important landform record</li> <li>• Coherent identity of landscape across park from landform and landcover.</li> <li>• Extensive areas where the special quality of wildness can be experienced.</li> <li>• Landscapes of a distinctive character that are an integral part of the outstanding national importance and value of the Park.</li> <li>• Land-use cover:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42% dwarf shrub heath</li> <li>• 28% montane habitats</li> <li>• 11% coniferous woodland</li> <li>• 2% broadleaved/mixed woodland</li> <li>• 3% improved grassland</li> <li>• 0.4% built areas</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3,362km of running water habitat</li> <li>• 81% of streams classified as excellent (A1) or good (A2) (SEPA 2003)</li> <li>• 20 sq km standing waters</li> <li>• Catchments of 6 major rivers</li> </ul>
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively low atmospheric pollution</li> </ul>
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual precipitation over 2250mm on summits and under 900mm in straths</li> <li>• Average annual snow cover 200 days on summits and 50 days on low-ground</li> <li>• Prevailing winds from south-west</li> </ul>
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public right of responsible access</li> <li>• 49 Munros including 5 summits over 4000 feet</li> <li>• 3 ski centres</li> <li>• National Cycle Network Route 7</li> <li>• 1 Long Distance Route (Speyside Way)</li> <li>• 179 Rights of Way</li> <li>• around 40 promoted path networks</li> </ul>
Energy & Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No significant energy generation within the Park</li> </ul>
Built Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Conservation Areas</li> <li>• Distinctive local vernacular architecture</li> </ul>

**Appendix 3: Key trends and issues in the Cairngorms National Park**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Key trends</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some continued habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration</li> <li>• Vegetation limited by grazing pressure</li> <li>• Continued spread and introductions of non-native species</li> <li>• Increase in native woodland cover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecosystem integrity and connectivity</li> <li>• Impact of non-native species</li> <li>• Impact of climate change</li> <li>• impact of recreation</li> <li>• Impact of development</li> <li>• Incomplete data</li> </ul>
Designated Nature Conservation Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing account of external impacts to sites (Nature Conservation Act 2004)</li> <li>• Recent expansion of Natura 2000 designations</li> <li>• Review of NNR designations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management practices</li> <li>• Long-term security of management objectives</li> <li>• integration with wider land-use</li> </ul>
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implications for community dynamics – growth/shrinkage</li> <li>• Implications for development patterns</li> <li>• Implications for human resources,</li> <li>• Socio-Economic value of water ie employment, recreation uses</li> </ul>
Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land-use change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of new development</li> <li>• Extension of forest cover</li> <li>• Impact of visitors</li> </ul>
Landforms and Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in woodland cover</li> <li>• Decline in heather moorland cover</li> <li>• Increase in research on landscape</li> <li>• Decrease in area with wildland attributes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of development</li> <li>• Recreation pressure and impacts of tracks and footpaths</li> <li>• Connectivity of land cover</li> <li>• Impact of transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Impact of renewable energy developments, energy transmission and telecommunications</li> </ul>

		infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of 'wildness'</li> <li>• Impact of forest design and management</li> </ul>
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil erosion on higher slopes and plateaux</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts of recreation</li> <li>• Lack of information on soil use and development</li> <li>• Trampling and grazing by herbivores</li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acidification (atmospheric)</li> <li>• Decline in native fish stocks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diffuse pollution from agricultural ground</li> <li>• River modification</li> <li>• Catchment processes and flood management</li> <li>• Availability for consumption</li> <li>• Impact of recreation</li> <li>• Impact of water abstraction</li> <li>• Land drainage impacts</li> </ul>
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change - increasing temperature and precipitation expected.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atmospheric pollution</li> <li>• Flood management</li> </ul>
Access & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing range of outdoor recreation activities</li> <li>• New public right of responsible access</li> <li>• More managed path networks</li> <li>• Increased level of upland path provision and repair</li> <li>• Diversification of ski centres into summer activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development increasing or reducing access opportunities</li> <li>• impact of access on habitats and species</li> <li>• landscape impact of access infrastructure</li> <li>• accessibility of environment for all</li> </ul>
Energy and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing demand for renewable (particularly windfarm) sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential impact of transmission pylons and windfarm developments</li> <li>• use of non-renewable energy sources</li> </ul>
Built Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• abandonment or conversion of farm steadings</li> <li>• significant demand for new housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decay of listed buildings</li> <li>• impact of development on settlement character</li> </ul>

**Appendix 4: Summary Comments from Consultation Authorities**

**Summary Comments from Consultation Authorities - Screening**

<b>CONSULTATION AUTHORITY</b>	<b>LIKELIHOOD OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS</b>
Historic Scotland	yes
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	yes
Scottish Natural Heritage	yes
Overall view on likelihood of significant environmental effects	yes

**Summary Scoping comments from Consultation Authorities –Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Comment</b>
General Comments	SNH is content with the scope and level of detail proposed for the Environmental Report. We note that your consultation period is 6 weeks though they would prefer 8
Detailed comments	We are content with the proposed scope of the environmental report, and the approach of grouping some of the SEA criteria.
	The list of NH policies should include number 7 Landscape
	It should be made clear if the CNPA has baseline data on Green networks
	We accept that the SEA will not repeat assessments which were in the Local Plan SEA, but it would be helpful if these could be summarised in the final document so that it is clear what assessments have been made.
	So that the document can be understood without need to refer to the CNP Local Plan

	<p>It could be mentioned that SEA ought to consider 'reasonable' alternatives, and this is not picked up in the scoping report. This could be (a) alternatives to producing this SPG, and (b) alternative policies within the SPG. To cover alternative approaches.</p>
	<p>Relationship with other PPS As well as national and international legislation, and the Park Plan, the LBAP, the Landscape Character Assessment and the Core Path Plan are likely to be key documents. Presumably the SEA will also take into account the relevant Planning Advice Notes and other national guidance. To ensure that the work is in line with Scottish Government Guidance and local guidance.</p>
	<p>Under Biodiversity, flora and fauna – other key considerations could be –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Protection of designated areas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Protected species</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Improvement of green networks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Impact of climate change</li> </ul> <p>To include these key areas of work.</p>
	<p>Under Biodiversity, key considerations, two listed are 'loss of priority species and habitats' and 'disturbance to priority species and habitats'. Could 'priority' be defined? To assist understanding of which species and habitats are being protected from loss.</p>
	<p>Under biodiversity, fauna and flora, key considerations, we recommend the addition of 'non' as in 'barriers to non-native species movement and habitat fragmentation'. Barriers to the movement of non-native species such as the grey squirrel, are generally seen as desirable. On the other hand barriers to native species movement are not desirable, so two separate considerations are required.</p>

	<p>Under Water, key considerations. The impact of riparian management could be added, in particular, the protection and canalisation of river and stream banks. Development can have the effect of canalising streams and it can result in additional river bank protection, which should be assessed in the SEA.</p>
	<p>Under Water, key considerations. Maintaining hydrology where this is important, could be added to the key considerations. A high water table is important for a number of habitats such as bog woodland and various types of wetland.</p>
	<p>Under Air and climatic factors – perhaps more accurately this proposed Objective should be ‘To minimise contributions to the causes of climate change’. Another key consideration under this could be ‘protect carbon sinks’. To clarify this objective.</p>
	<p>Under Soil – although not an optimum fit, this would appear to be the best place to include considerations re geodiversity. So Objective 5 should read ‘Maintain or improve soil and peat quality and geodiversity and avoid exacerbating pollution’. Then another key consideration would be ‘conserve geodiversity’. To expand on the objective.</p>
	<p>Population and human health – the SEA Objective here is not environmental in nature. A suggested alternative would be ‘To maintain and enhance the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors’. Then key considerations should be in the fields of pollution, noise, nuisance, exercise and amenity. To clarify the objective.</p>



	<p>The landscape objective is presumably in terms of natural heritage rather than landscape in its own right, given the need to add coverage of Policy 7. This would make a difference in what would be considered under this heading. To clarify the objective.</p>
	<p>Cultural heritage is omitted from this table, but is included in Table 2 which is scoping this in. Presumably it should be added to Table 3. To increase consistency of the report. Page 12 Proposed assessment Methodology It would be helpful if, when mitigation is identified, the location of this in the SPG is clearly provided. To increase the usefulness and clarity of the SEA.</p>
	<p>Proposed assessment methodology Scoring should not be limited to 'single' scores (e.g. '+' or '-') but could depend on uncertainties and options be a combination, i.e. '+/-'. This helps in analysis and developing mitigation. To clarify the SEA.</p>
	<p>Proposed assessment methodology Subject to the comments above, we are content with the proposed methodology for monitoring the environmental effects of the supplementary planning guidance as part of monitoring the effects of the Local Plan. Page 13 In the third paragraph there is a reference to Typo Monitoring the Open Space Supplementary Guidance, rather than Natural Heritage.</p>
	<p>Key trends and issues in the Cairngorms Under 'Population' it may be better to consider issues that have an environmental rather than a social theme. This is probably best gained through considering population in terms of human health. So 'key issues' may be in the fields of opportunities for outdoor exercise, the avoidance of pollution (including noise and light), and the avoidance of any other nuisance or amenity impacts. Because this SEA is about likely significant environmental effects.</p>

**Summary Scoping comments from Consultation Authorities –Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)**

Issue	Comment
General Comments	Generally the proposals outlined in the Scoping Report are acceptable to us, however to allow us to provide detailed advice it would have been helpful if some aspects had been expanded.
Detailed Comments Scoping in/out of SEA objectives	We are satisfied with the proposal to scope in all environmental receptors however it is not clear how there may be strategically significant effects on material assets and air and climatic factors. As a result we would have no concerns if these were subsequently scoped out of the assessment and the work instead concentrated on these aspects of the environment where strategically significant effects are likely.
Baseline information	We are aware that you have prepared a State of the Park Report for the Cairngorms National Park for other SEA work and a summary of it is provided in Appendix I. The summary is very short so there is little specific comment we can make on this aspect. We would be very happy to provide more detailed comment on the current State of the Park Report if you sent it do us.
Relationship with other Plans, Policies and Strategies (PPS)	<p>Limited PPS are mentioned in the scoping report; we presume this work has still to be undertaken. We would expect the full range of possible international, national and local PPS to be considered. Your previous SEA work could provide a basis for this.</p> <p>In addition we bring the following PPS relating to climate change, human health and material assets to your attention for consideration. We provide a brief synopsis of the PPS aim, and where available, a link to the original document.</p> <p>Climate Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is an international environmental treaty produced at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) (informally known as the Earth Summit) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The treaty is aimed at reducing emissions of greenhouse gases in order to combat global warming;</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing Our Ways – Scotland’s Climate Change Programme (2006) which provides national interpretation of broader climate change objectives (<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/03/3009103910">www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/03/3009103910</a>); the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 which places duties on public bodies to contribute to the delivery of the targets set in the Act in exercising its functions;</li> <li>• The Second European Climate Change Programme (currently in preparation) which notes that the work identified in the first programme is being undertaken according to plan, but that further measures will be required in order to meet the EU’s commitments under the Kyoto agreement (<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/eccpii.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/eccpii.htm</a>);</li> <li>• Tomorrow’s Climate, Today’s Challenge: UK Climate Change Programme (2006) which sets out measures to reduce emissions target every sector of the economy (<a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/ukcccp/index.htm">www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/ukcccp/index.htm</a>);</li> <li>• Planning Advice Note 84 Reducing Carbon Emissions in New Development (PAN 84) provides advice on moving towards low and zero carbon developments (<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/214728/0057273.pdf">www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/214728/0057273.pdf</a>);</li> </ul> <p>Planning Advice Note 45 Renewable Energy Technologies (PAN 45) provided advice for both large and small scale renewable proposals (<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/publications/pans/O/editmode/on/forceupdate/on">www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/publications/pans/O/editmode/on/forceupdate/on</a>).</p> <p>Material Assets (including waste management - the extent to which this requires to be covered depends of what is proposed in the Guidance)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking Sustainable Use of Resources Forward: A Thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste (EU, 2005), one of several sector-focused strategies produced under the Environmental Action Programme (<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/pdf/sec_2005_1682_en.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/pdf/sec_2005_1682_en.pdf</a>);</li> </ul>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building a Better Scotland Infrastructure Investment Plan: Investing in the Future of Scotland, (2005) sets out the delivery plan for achieving significant investment in transport, education, health, water, waste management, sports, business, flood prevention and regeneration programmes in Scotland (<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/02/20756/53560">www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/02/20756/53560</a>);</li> <li>• Zero Waste Scotland, new policy and targets on waste management (<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/waste-and-pollution/Waste-1">www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/waste-and-pollution/Waste-1</a>);</li> <li>• The relevant councils Waste Strategy;</li> <li>• SEPA Guidelines for Thermal Treatment of Municipal Waste (<a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_regulation/energy_from_waste.aspx">www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_regulation/energy_from_waste.aspx</a>);</li> <li>• EU Council Directive 99/31/EC Landfill Directive which states the need for national strategies that set out how biodegradable waste being disposed of in landfill sites can be reduced in favour of recycling, composting biogas or materials / energy recovery (<a href="http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/1999/1_182/1_182_19990716en00010019.pdf">http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/1999/1_182/1_182_19990716en00010019.pdf</a>);</li> <li>• EC Framework on Waste 75/442/EEC Waste Framework Directive which establishes a framework for the management of waste across the European Community (<a href="http://www.wasteonline.org.uk/resources/InformationSheets/Legislation.htm#75442">www.wasteonline.org.uk/resources/InformationSheets/Legislation.htm#75442</a>);</li> <li>• National Waste Plan 2003 which brings together Area Waste Plans and sets out an action plan for radical change to waste management in Scotland. Key challenges include reducing landfilled waste in line with EU targets and increasing recycling, composting and energy from waste (<a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk/pdf/nws/guidance/national_plan_2003.pdf">www.sepa.org.uk/pdf/nws/guidance/national_plan_2003.pdf</a>);</li> </ul>	
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	<p>Planning Advice Note 63 Waste Management Planning, which provides advice in support of SPP10 (<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/publications/pans/Q/editmode/on/forceupdate/on">www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/publications/pans/Q/editmode/on/forceupdate/on</a>).</p> <p>Human Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive list of primary and some secondary legislation on human health is available from the following SNIFFER publication - <a href="http://www.sniffer.org.uk/project-search-results.aspx?searchterm=UKCC02">www.sniffer.org.uk/project-search-results.aspx?searchterm=UKCC02</a>;</li> </ul> <p>In relation to human health and waste the following reports: Incineration of Waste and Reported Human Health Effects; (<a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/news/2009/report_on_incineration_of_wast.aspx">www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/news/2009/report_on_incineration_of_wast.aspx</a>) and The Impact on Health of Emissions to Air from Municipal Waste Incinerators (<a href="http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1251473372218">www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1251473372218</a>)</p> <p>We are satisfied with the proposed SEA Objectives.</p>
<p>Methodology for assessing environmental effects</p>	<p>The proposed recording template looks useful. We welcome the inclusion of 'key considerations' to help understand how the assessments have been made. In relation to the water SEA Objective we would expect key considerations to include reduction in local water quality and protection of the functional flood plain.</p> <p>When it comes to providing the assessment of effects please provide enough information to clearly justify the reasons for each of the assessments presented. It would also be helpful to set out assumptions that are made during the assessment and difficulties and limitations encountered.</p> <p>We understand that each of the Guidance principles and their outcomes will be assessed, along with a draft list of topics to be covered. For the avoidance of any doubt we would expect all aspects of the Guidance which could have significant effects to be assessed.</p>

	<p>We would encourage you to use the assessment as a way to improve the environmental performance of individual aspects of the final option. Proposals for enhancement would also be supported.</p> <p>We welcome the proposal to also include a summary matrix to help consider accumulative effects.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>We remind you that if the assessment of the Guidance results in negative effects, then the clearest form of mitigation is to modify that aspect of the Guidance. We would like the ER to make it clear how carrying out SEA informed the Guidance which is being consulted upon at the same time.</p> <p>Where the mitigation proposed does not relate to modifications to the Guidance itself then it should be clear how the mitigation will be achieved and by whom. These should follow the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate). It would be extremely helpful to set out all mitigation measures in a way that clearly identified: (1) the measures required, (2) when they would be required and (3) who will be required to implement them.</p>
<p>Monitoring</p>	<p>Although not specifically required at this stage, monitoring is a requirement of the Act and early consideration should be given to a monitoring approach particularly in the choice of indicators. It would be helpful if the ER included a description of the measures envisaged to monitor the significant environmental effects of the Guidance</p>
<p>Alternatives</p>	<p>No information is provided on the consideration of alternatives.</p> <p>Any reasonable alternatives identified during the preparation of the Guidance should be assessed as part of the SEA process and the findings of the assessment should inform the choice of the preferred option. This should be documented in the ER.</p>
<p>Next Steps</p>	<p>We are satisfied with the proposal for a 6 week consultation period for the ER.</p> <p>We would also find helpful if the ER included a summary record of the scoping outcomes, and how comments from the consultation authorities were taken into account.</p>

## Summary Scoping comments from Consultation Authorities – Historic Scotland

Issue	Comment
Scope of assessment and level of detail	They welcome that the historic environment has been scoped into the assessment.
Consultation period for the Environmental Report	I note that a consultation period of 6 weeks is proposed for the Environmental Report. I am content with this timescale. For administrative purposes, Historic Scotland consider that the consultation period commences on receipt of the relevant documents by the SEA Secretariat.
<b>Relationship with Other Plans, Policies and Strategies</b>	I note that this section does not contain the wide range of PPS's that will be relevant to this SPG. For information, I would draw your attention to the recent change in the national policy background. All NPPGs and SPPs (e.g. SPP23 Planning and the Historic Environment) have been consolidated into Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). This document was published on 4 February 2010, a copy of which can be downloaded at <a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf">http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf</a>
<b>SEA Objectives</b>	I note that, despite the historic environment being scoped into the assessment, there is no objective for the historic environment. It will be important for the assessment to have an objective against which the SPG can be assessed. In light of this I suggest the addition of an objective along the following lines SEA criteria: Cultural Heritage SEA objective: To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment Key considerations: (These considerations could pick up on the trends identified in Appendix 2 such as the extension of forest cover, visitor impact and impact of new development).
<b>Proposed Assessment Methodology</b>	They welcome the proposed assessment methodology. The proposed assessment recording template is likely to prove particularly useful with the inclusion of commentary, mitigation and monitoring



<p><b>Monitoring</b></p>	<p>When monitoring the effects of the SPG, indicators chosen for the historic environment should reflect both the actions to be taken within the SPG and the potential impacts identified in the course of the SEA. I would be happy to discuss this further should you find it helpful.</p>
<p><b>Appendix I: Environmental Baseline</b></p>	<p>To note that there are 9 Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes within the Cairngorms National Park. These are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castle Grant</li> <li>• Aultmore</li> <li>• Candacraig House</li> <li>• Doune of Rothiemurchus</li> <li>• Kinrara</li> <li>• Inshriach Nursery</li> <li>• Glen Tanar</li> <li>• Balmoral Castle</li> <li>• Invercauld</li> </ul> <p>Our records also indicate that there are 95 scheduled monuments within the park and 4 conservation areas (Grantwon-on-Spey, Ballater, Braemar and Inverey).</p> <p>For information, Historic Scotland can provide GIS datasets under licence for these scheduled monuments, listed buildings and gardens and designed landscapes (contact <a href="mailto:hsgsmanager@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">hsgsmanager@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a>. This information is also available to download from <a href="http://hsewsf.sedsh.gov.uk/pls/htmldb/f?p=500:1:8448412299472048421">http://hsewsf.sedsh.gov.uk/pls/htmldb/f?p=500:1:8448412299472048421</a> ). Information on Conservation Areas and the Sites and Monuments Record can be obtained from the relevant local authorities.</p>



### Appendix 5: Alternatives/Options Considered

Although alternatives to the Natural Heritage SPG are limited- two alternatives have been considered. Alternatives are outlined here in order to set the context for this report.

**Option 1 – Do Nothing:** This is not developing the Natural Heritage SPG. This is however not an option, in the absence of the Natural Heritage SPG it may be more likely that development would be permitted which had an adverse impact on the natural heritage of the area - a significant negative effect.

**Option 2 – Do Optimum:** Under this option, we would develop a Natural Heritage SPG. This would include the opportunity to provide guidance, issues and criteria that must be considered for all developments related to any aspect of natural heritage. The SPG will include proposals for ongoing monitoring and feedback, as well as detailed legislative, policy and regulatory background to the key organisations responsible for natural heritage.

#### Scoping in/out of SEA issues

SEA Issue	Scoped in, Scoped out (If scoped out, why)	Comments
Biodiversity, flora, fauna	Yes	
Population and Human health	Yes	
Soil	Yes	
Water	Yes	
Climatic factors	Yes	
Material assets	Yes	
Cultural Heritage	Yes	
Landscape	Yes	

Appendix 6: Full assessment results

<p><b>SPG Principle 1:</b> Hierarchy of Key principles of Key principles that establish the importance of maintaining unharmed the natural heritage on any proposed development site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Biodiversity, fauna and flora</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To conserve and enhance the diversity of species, habitats and ecosystems.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid loss of priority species and habitats.</li> <li>• Avoid disturbance to priority species and their habitats.</li> <li>• Avoid barriers to native species movement and habitat fragmentation.</li> <li>• Avoid introduction and continued spread of non-native species and bio-security measures.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a positive impact on biodiversity, fauna and flora as it aims to ensure that the impact on the Natural Heritage of any proposed development site and its surroundings is assessed and opportunities for enhancement are identified as part of the development proposal.</p> <p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b> ++</p>
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<p><b>SPG guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b>          The SEA objective is explicitly addressed by the whole SPG. It sets out specific requirements for proper survey and assessment of the natural heritage of any site and any subsequent mitigation as well as enhancement.</p> <p>This principle works in conjunction with following Local Plan policies which aim to ensure the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity; 1: Natura 2000 sites; 2: National Natural Heritage Designations; 3: Other Important Natural and Earth Heritage Sites and Interests; 4: Protected Species; 5: Biodiversity 6: Landscape</p> <p>Monitoring of the success of the SPG will be undertaken on a case by case basis. The improvement in supply of survey and assessment in planning cases as well as more beneficial outcome during and after development will be noted on a rolling programme.</p>	
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<p><b>SPG Principle 1:</b> Hierarchy of Key principles of Key principles that establish the importance of maintaining unharmed the natural heritage on any proposed development site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Water</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To conserve and enhance the water environment.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid reductions in water quality and quantity</li> <li>• Avoid development on floodplains;</li> <li>• Conservation and enhancement of riparian habitats;</li> <li>• Avoid physical modifications to the water environment;</li> <li>• Enhance water quality and quantity;</li> <li>• River basin management;</li> <li>• Avoid pressures and impacts on ecological status;</li> <li>• Water pollution;</li> <li>• Waste water management;</li> <li>• Floodplain management;</li> <li>• Conservation of geomorphology;</li> <li>• Impacts from abstraction/treatment;</li> <li>• Private water abstractions</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b> Positive impacts on the objectives derives from the conservation of riparian habitats (and conservation of soils). Frequently, riparian habitats act as a barrier to developments, and so maintain water quality.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective is dealt with throughout and in general conservation of riparian habitats in particular will have a direct water quality benefit.</p>
	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>

<p><b>SPG Principle 1:</b> Hierarchy of Key principles of Key principles that establish the importance of maintaining unharmed the natural heritage on any proposed development site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Landscape</p>	<p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the Park, including the historic environment.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and enhance where appropriate existing landscape character including designed landscapes.</li> <li>• Maintain and enhance the opportunities for experiencing wildness in the Park.</li> <li>• Minimise the damage or disturbance to key geodiversity interests.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p>++</p>
	<p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a positive impact on landscape as it aims to conserve and enhance the natural habitats of the park which are themselves essential component of the landscape and hence landscape character.</p>	<p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective will be delivered as a consequence of the successful delivery of the NH SPG itself</p> <p>This principle works in conjunction with following Local Plan policies which aim to protect and where appropriate enhance the landscape character and the historic environment: 6: Landscape.</p> <p>The SPG Landscape provide further background information on implementing this principle.</p>	

<p><b>SPG Principle 1:</b> Hierarchy of Key principles of Six Key principles that establish the importance of maintaining unharmed the natural heritage on any proposed development site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Material assets</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To use material assets in a sustainable way.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce waste, increase reuse and recycling;</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a positive impact on material assets. Positive impacts may result from encouraging the location of development in sensitive locations, retaining existing vegetation such as woodland and replanting if necessary as mitigation and though enhancements.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The purpose of the SPG is to ensure that all three principles work together and that all issues are addressed at an early stage in the development process.</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 1:</b> Hierarchy of Key principles maintaining unharmed the natural heritage on any proposed development site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Climatic factors</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To minimise contributions to climate change.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maximise energy efficiency of new development;</li> <li>• increase sustainable energy generation;</li> <li>• encourage use of local timber products in construction;</li> <li>• climate-proof new development.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a positive impact on climatic factors as it aims to ensure that any development adopts the conservation of habitats. These will maintain the robustness of habitats and habitat networks that will support adaptation to climate change. Retention of existing vegetation will decrease soil disturbance and reduce carbon emissions as a consequence..</p>
	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>

**Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:**

The SEA objective is implicitly addressed throughout the SPG.

This principle works in conjunction with following Local Plan policies which aim to reduce emissions which contribute to climate change and to address the challenges presented by the impacts of climate change: 16: Design Standards for Development; 17: Reducing Carbon Emissions in Development; 31: Waste Management; 29: Integrated and Sustainable Transport Network; 27: Conversion and Re-use of Existing Traditional and Vernacular Buildings; 26: Retail Development; 34: Outdoor Access.

The SPG on Reducing Carbon Emissions provides additional background information.



<p><b>SPG Principle 1:</b> Hierarchy of Key principles that establish the importance of maintaining the natural heritage on any proposed development site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Soil</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain or improve soil and peat quality and avoid erosion and disturbance.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve mineral resources</li> <li>• Conserve soil resources</li> <li>• Minimise soil and peat erosion and disturbance</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p>++</p> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a strongly positive impact on the soil environment. These impacts may result from retention of existing natural heritage features especially habitats and geology. This will conserve the soils supporting them. Enhancements may also introduce new areas of undisturbed soils.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective will be delivered as a direct consequence of the successful delivery of the NH SPG itself</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 1:</b> Hierarchy of Key principles Six Key principles that establish the importance of maintaining unharmed the natural heritage on any proposed development site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Population and human health</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain a sustainable and healthy population.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide for housing needs of local communities;</li> <li>• ensure access to services for communities.</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a positive impact on population and human health through the of natural habitats that have a positive effect upon mental and physical well being.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective will be delivered as a direct consequence of the successful delivery of the NH SPG itself</p>
	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>

<p><b>SPG Principle 2:</b> How do you assess the importance of Natural Heritage interest on a development site</p> <p>The SPG Gives clear guidance on the two stages of assessment. Firstly the quality of survey and secondly the significance of impact with appropriate mitigation</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Biodiversity, fauna and flora</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To conserve and enhance the diversity of species, habitats and ecosystems.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid loss of priority species and habitats.</li> <li>• Avoid disturbance to priority species and their habitats.</li> <li>• Avoid barriers to native species movement and habitat fragmentation.</li> <li>• Avoid introduction and spread of non-native species.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a strongly positive impact on biodiversity, fauna and flora through the setting of clear requirements for information before and during applications.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective is explicitly addressed throughout the SPG. These highlight the need to understand the existing natural environment and to seek out opportunities for enhancing the environment.</p> <p>This principle works in conjunction with following Local Plan policies which aim to ensure the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity; 1: Natura 2000 sites; 2: National Natural Heritage Designations; 3: Other Important Natural and Earth Heritage Sites and Interests; 4: Protected Species; 5: Biodiversity, 6: Landscape</p> <p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b> ++</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 2:</b> How do you assess the importance of Natural Heritage interest on a development site</p> <p>The SPG Gives clear guidance on the two stages of assessment. Firstly the quality of survey and secondly the significance of impact with appropriate mitigation</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Water</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To conserve and enhance the water environment.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid reductions in water quality and quantity</li> <li>• Avoid development on floodplains;</li> <li>• Conservation and enhancement of riparian habitats;</li> <li>• Avoid physical modifications to the water environment;</li> <li>• Enhance water quality and quantity;</li> <li>• River basin management;</li> <li>• Avoid pressures and impacts on ecological status;</li> <li>• Water pollution;</li> <li>• Waste water management;</li> <li>• Floodplain management;</li> <li>• Conservation of geomorphology;</li> <li>• Impacts from abstraction/treatment;</li> <li>• Private water abstractions</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a strong positive impact on the water environment as it will clearly set out survey and assessment requirements that will allow for good practice in riparian corridors. This will have a benefit in maintaining water quality by the elimination of poor practice leading to water pollution issues.</p> <p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b> ++</p>
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<p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective is dealt with throughout and in general the conservation of riparian habitats in particular will have a direct water quality benefit. This principle will combine with the other two to give the benefits with regard to this SEA principle.</p>	
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<p><b>SPG Principle 2:</b> How do you assess the importance of Natural Heritage interest on a development site</p> <p>The SPG Gives clear guidance on the two stages of assessment. Firstly the quality of survey and secondly the significance of impact with appropriate mitigation</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Landscape</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="229 398 647 1756"> <tr> <td data-bbox="229 667 647 1756"> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the Park, including the historic environment.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and enhance where appropriate existing landscape character including designed landscapes.</li> <li>• Maintain and enhance the opportunities for experiencing wildness in the Park.</li> <li>• Minimise the damage or disturbance to key geodiversity interests.</li> </ul> </td> <td data-bbox="229 398 647 667"> <p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a positive impact on landscape as it aims to ensure that habitats are conserved that are a component of landscape and hence landscape character. This principle particularly seeks to ensure consideration of landscape at an early stage in the development process.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective will be delivered as a direct consequence of the successful delivery of the NH SPG itself</p> <p>This principle works in conjunction with following Local Plan policies which aim to protect and where appropriate enhance the landscape character and the historic environment: 6: Landscape.</p> <p>The SPG on Landscape will provide further background information on implementing this principle.</p>	<p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the Park, including the historic environment.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and enhance where appropriate existing landscape character including designed landscapes.</li> <li>• Maintain and enhance the opportunities for experiencing wildness in the Park.</li> <li>• Minimise the damage or disturbance to key geodiversity interests.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>
<p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the Park, including the historic environment.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and enhance where appropriate existing landscape character including designed landscapes.</li> <li>• Maintain and enhance the opportunities for experiencing wildness in the Park.</li> <li>• Minimise the damage or disturbance to key geodiversity interests.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>		

<p><b>SPG Principle 2:</b> How do you assess the importance of Natural Heritage interest on a development site</p> <p>The SPG Gives clear guidance on the two stages of assessment. Firstly the quality of survey and secondly the significance of impact with appropriate mitigation</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Material assets</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To use material assets in a sustainable way.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimise need for abstraction/treatment of water;</li> <li>• Not increase risk of flooding;</li> <li>• Promote good water quantity and quality;</li> <li>• Need for and risk to infrastructure;</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b></p> <p>This principle is likely to have a positive impact on material assets. Positive impacts may result from encouraging the location of development in sensitive locations, promoting sustainable use of water and requiring developers to consider the water environment sensitively.</p> <p>This SEA objective is delivered through this principle by ensuring that a full assessment of the natural assets is submitted in the planning process.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b></p> <p>The purpose of the SPG is to ensure that all three principles work together and that all issues are addressed at an early stage in the development process.</p>	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 2:</b> How do you assess the importance of Natural Heritage interest on a development site</p> <p>The SPG Gives clear guidance on the two stages of assessment. Firstly the quality of survey and secondly the significance of impact with appropriate mitigation</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Population and human health</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain a sustainable and healthy population.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for clean drinking water supplies and foul drainage provision,</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle is likely to have a positive impact on population and human health through the promotion general aims of the SPG to conserve natural habitats and the subsequent benefits to mental and physical health.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The purpose of the SPG is to ensure that all three principles work together and that all issues are addressed at an early stage in the development process.</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 3:</b> Principle 3: Other Considerations for all developments This directly addresses a number of factors related to Natural Heritage that should be explicitly covered within the assessment of a site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Biodiversity, fauna and flora</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To conserve and enhance the diversity of species, habitats and ecosystems.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid loss of priority species and habitats.</li> <li>• Avoid disturbance to priority species and their habitats.</li> <li>• Avoid barriers to native species movement and habitat fragmentation.</li> <li>• Avoid introduction and spread of non-native species.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle adds to the criteria to be considered within the survey and assessment of the natural heritage assets for any development site. It increased the scope and importantly to clarity of the information required in the survey and assessments.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Impact on SEA objective</b> ++</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 3:</b> Other Considerations for all developments          This directly addresses a number of factors related Natural Heritage that should be explicitly covered within the assessment of a site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Water</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To conserve and enhance the water environment.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid reductions in water quality and quantity</li> <li>• Avoid development on floodplains;</li> <li>• Conservation and enhancement of riparian habitats;</li> <li>• Avoid physical modifications to the water environment;</li> <li>• Enhance water quality and quantity;</li> <li>• River basin management;</li> <li>• Avoid pressures and impacts on ecological status;</li> <li>• Water pollution;</li> <li>• Waste water management;</li> <li>• Floodplain management;</li> <li>• Conservation of geomorphology;</li> <li>• Impacts from abstraction/treatment;</li> <li>• Private water abstractions</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b>          In addition to the benefits outlined in principles 1 and 2 above the specific measures for bio-security are aimed at the riparian environments.</p>	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p>++</p>
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<p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective is dealt with throughout and in general the conservation of riparian habitats in particular will have a direct water quality benefit. This principle will combine with the other two to give the benefits with regard to this SEA principle.</p>	
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<p><b>SPG Principle 3:</b> Other Considerations for all developments This directly addresses a number of factors related Natural Heritage that should be explicitly covered within the assessment of a site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Landscape</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the Park, including the historic environment.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and enhance where appropriate existing landscape character including designed landscapes.</li> <li>• Maintain and enhance the opportunities for experiencing wildness in the Park.</li> <li>• Minimise the damage or disturbance to key geodiversity interests.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle add detail to the measures under 1 and 2 above and is therefore likely to have a strongly positive impact on landscape as it aims to conserve and enhance the natural habitats of the park which are themselves essential component of the landscape and hence landscape character.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective will be delivered as a direct consequence of the successful delivery of the NH SPG itself</p> <p>This principle works in conjunction with following Local Plan policies which aim to protect and where appropriate enhance the landscape character and the historic environment: <b>6:</b> Landscape.</p> <p>The SPG Landscape provide further background information on implementing this principle.</p>	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p>++</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 3:</b> Other Considerations for all developments                  This directly addresses a number of factors related Natural Heritage that should be explicitly covered within the assessment of a site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Material assets</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To use material assets in a sustainable way.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimise need for abstraction/treatment of water.</li> <li>• Not increase risk of flooding.</li> <li>• Promote good water quantity and quality</li> </ul> <p><b>Commentary:</b>                  This principle is likely to have a positive impact on material assets. Positive impacts may result from encouraging the location of development in sensitive locations, retaining existing vegetation such as woodland and replanting if necessary as mitigation and though enhancements.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b>                  The purpose of the SPG is to ensure that all three principles work together and that all issues are addressed at an early stage in the development process.</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 3:</b> Other Considerations for all developments This directly addresses a number of factors related Natural Heritage that should be explicitly covered within the assessment of a site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Climatic factors</p> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To minimise contributions to climate change.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise sustainable use of water resources.</li> <li>• Increase water efficiency</li> <li>• Improve water quality</li> <li>• Climate-proof new development</li> <li>• Reduce air pollution</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p><b>Commentary:</b> This principle will deliver this objective through the accurate identification of the main contributors to habitat condition and network connectivity. This is an important component of maintain robustness of the landscape for climate change adaptation.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b> The SEA objective is implicitly addressed throughout the SPG.</p> <p>This principle works in conjunction with following Local Plan policies which aim to reduce emissions which contribute to climate change and to address the challenges presented by the impacts of climate change: 16: Design Standards for Development; 17: Reducing Carbon Emissions in Development; 31: Waste Management; 29: Integrated and Sustainable Transport Network; 27: Conversion and Re-use of Existing Traditional and Vernacular Buildings; 26: Retail Development; 34: Outdoor Access.</p> <p>The SPG on Reducing Carbon Emissions provides additional background information.</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 3:</b> Other Considerations for all developments This directly addresses a number of factors related Natural Heritage that should be explicitly covered within the assessment of a site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Soil</p>	<p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain or improve soil and peat quality and avoid creating or exacerbating pollution.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve mineral resources</li> <li>• Conserve soil resources</li> <li>• Minimise soil and peat disturbance</li> </ul>	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>
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<p><b>SPG Principle 3:</b> Other Considerations for all developments                  This directly addresses a number of factors related Natural Heritage that should be explicitly covered within the assessment of a site.</p>	<p><b>SEA criteria:</b> Population and human health</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 403 606 1758"> <tr> <td data-bbox="231 667 606 1758"> <p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain a sustainable and healthy population.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for clean drinking water supplies and foul drainage provision,</li> </ul> </td> <td data-bbox="231 403 606 667"> <p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Commentary:</b>                  This principle is likely to have a positive impact on population and human health through the promotion general aims of the SPG to conserve natural habitats and the subsequent benefits to mental and physical health.</p> <p><b>Guidance, key factors for success, mitigation and monitoring:</b>                  The purpose of the SPG is to ensure that all three principles work together and that all issues are addressed at an early stage in the development process.</p>	<p><b>SEA objective:</b> To maintain a sustainable and healthy population.</p> <p><b>Key considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for clean drinking water supplies and foul drainage provision,</li> </ul>	<p><b>Impact on SEA objective</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>
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