

SEA SCREENING REPORT (COVER NOTE)

PART 1

To: SEA.gateway@gov.scot

or

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

PART 2

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

‘Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites - Supplementary Guidance SG08

The Responsible Authority is:

Falkirk Council

COMPLETE PART 3 or 4 or 5

PART 3

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

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

PART 4

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

PART 5

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

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PART 6

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PART 7

Signature
(electronic
signature
is acceptable)



Date

5 December 2019

SEA SCREENING REPORT - KEY FACTS

Responsible Authority	Falkirk Council
Title of PPS	Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites - Supplementary Guidance SG08
Purpose of PPS	SG08 will provide updated guidance on the local biodiversity and geodiversity sites found across the Council area. On adoption, SG08 will supersede and replace the 2015 guidance: Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Assessment – Supplementary Guidance SG08 .
What prompted the PPS (e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)	The guidance is required to supplement the policies and proposals of the Proposed Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) , specifically Policy PE19 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
Subject (e.g. transport)	Biodiversity, geodiversity and land-use planning.
Period covered by PPS	July 2020 onwards, depending on the adoption date of the Proposed Falkirk Local Development Plan 2.
Frequency of updates	The guidance will be reviewed as and when necessary.
Area covered by PPS (e.g. geographical area – it is good practice to attach a map)	The guidance will cover the entire administrative area of Falkirk Council.
Summary of nature/content of PPS	The guidance provides further information on the definition, designation and conservation value of non-statutory local biodiversity sites. It will also identify a list of locally important geological and geo-morphological sites.
Are there any proposed PPS objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
Copy of objectives attached	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
Date	5 December 2019

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Table 1 below summarises the findings of the screening exercise undertaken by Falkirk Council in determining the likelihood of significant environment effects from Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites - Supplementary Guidance SG08.

TABLE 1 – LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (1(a), 1(b) etc. refer to paragraphs in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	Likely to have significant environmental effects? YES/NO	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)
1(a) the degree to which the PPS sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	No	SG08 does not set a framework for projects or other activities. It designates areas which should be protected from inappropriate development.
1(b) the degree to which the PPS influences other PPS including those in a hierarchy	No	The local biodiversity and geodiversity sites identified by SG08 will be protected through the implementation of Policy PE19 Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the Falkirk LDP2. SG08 will therefore have a protective (neutral) effect on the environment rather than positive effect. The guidance will supplement but sit under LDP2 which has been subject to a process of SEA.
1(c) the relevance of the PPS for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	SG08 will enable sustainable development through protecting biodiversity and geodiversity sites of local importance from being damaged by inappropriate development. This will have a protective (neutral) effect on the environment rather than a positive one
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the PPS	No	There may be a number of biodiversity and geodiversity sites of local importance which are not currently designated therefore this SG offers the opportunity to bring them within a protective framework. This will have a protective (neutral) effect on the environment rather than a positive one

<p>Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (1(a), 1(b) etc. refer to paragraphs in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)</p>	<p>Likely to have significant environmental effects? YES/NO</p>	<p>Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)</p>
<p>1(e) the relevance of the PPS for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, PPS linked to waste management or water protection)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The Habitats Directive is relevant as European Protected Species (EPS) may be present on or adjacent to sites identified for designation. This SG will have a protective (neutral) effect on the European Protective Species rather than a positive one.</p>
<p>2 (a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effect</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>SG08 will have a protective (neutral) effect on the environment rather than a positive one.</p>
<p>2 (b) the cumulative nature of the effects</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>SG08 will have a protective (neutral) effect on the environment rather than positive one. Cumulative effects are not discernible under the guidance.</p>
<p>2 (c) transboundary nature of the effects (i.e. environmental effects on other EU Member States)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>SG08 will not have any significant transboundary environment effects. The guidance only concerns the Falkirk Council area.</p>
<p>2 (d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No risks to human health or the environment are discernible under this guidance.</p>
<p>2 (e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>SG08 has the potential to affect any part of the Falkirk Council area. But as effects are neutral they will not be significant.</p>
<p>2 (f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to- (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>SG08 will bring areas with special natural characteristics within a protective policy framework. However, this will have a neutral, rather than a significant, effect on the environment</p>

<p>Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment</p> <p>(1(a), 1(b) etc. refer to paragraphs in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)</p>	<p>Likely to have significant environmental effects?</p> <p>YES/NO</p>	<p>Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)</p>
<p>2 (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No such effects are discernible under this guidance. The guidance does not concern itself with national or European protected landscape areas. The acceptability of a development's landscape impacts will be determined by the application of relevant policies of the Falkirk LDP2. These policies have already been subject to SEA.</p>

SEA SCREENING REPORT

Below is a summary of Falkirk Council's consideration of the significant environment effects of 'Local Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites - Supplementary Guidance SG08'.

TABLE 2 – SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Policy PE19 of the Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 indicates that development affecting Local Nature Reserves, Wildlife Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Geodiversity Sites will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the overall integrity of the site will not be compromised, or any adverse effects are clearly outweighed by social or economic benefits of substantial local importance.

The purpose of SG08 is to provide further information on the definition and conservation value of non-statutory local sites and to be the means by which the list of such sites will be reviewed. It also identifies a provisional list of locally important geological and geomorphological sites.

As the overall effect of the SG on the environment is neutral (it will not cause sites of local importance for biodiversity or geodiversity to improve or degrade) it is not considered that it could cause significant positive or negative effects on the environment. Against all the criteria listed within the Table 1, it was determined that the guidance will have no significant environmental effects. Falkirk Council therefore believes SG08 is a qualifying plan or programme which does not require a SEA.