



SEA Gateway
Planning and Architecture Division
2F South
Scottish Government
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

18 December 2020

Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005: Section 8(1) Screening determination - Scottish Planning Policy: Housing and the presumption

I refer to the screening report prepared for the Scottish Planning Policy - Housing and the presumption, which was submitted to the SEA Gateway on 26 November 2020. Responses from the Consultation Authorities were received on 9 December 2020, and who agreed that there was no likelihood of significant environmental effects.

I am writing to confirm that the Scottish Government has determined, using the criteria set out in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, that the Scottish Planning Policy - Housing and the presumption is not likely to have significant environmental effects. A Strategic Environmental Assessment is therefore not required.

The statement of reasons as to why no significant effects are expected as a result of the changes was set out in the original screening request and is as follows:

- **The amendments will be time-limited.** The amendments will only be applicable between their adoption and the National Planning Framework 4 being adopted by summer 2022.
- **The amendments do not preclude the application of professional planning judgement in each case.** The Scottish Planning Policy is a non-statutory policy, but a material consideration. The amendments will not directly lead to planning permission being granted or refused, as that is a matter for decision-makers in each case, taking into account the statutory development plan and other material considerations as appropriate.
- **The impact on numbers of homes delivered is unknown but could reasonably be expected to be neutral.** Some respondents to the consultation were of the view that the changes we originally proposed may reduce the number of homes granted planning permission. It is not possible to accurately predict the number of homes that may, or may not, gain planning permission in the absence of the policy amendments. Only developments which are not in accordance with the statutory development plan



and which may not otherwise be considered to be sustainable, are likely to be affected. Based on the approach taken by Reporters to date, we do not expect that unsustainable developments will have benefited from the presumption prior to the Gladman decision being issued, to any significant extent. We accept that the number of homes gaining planning permission on 'exception sites' may reduce as a result of some of the amendments. However, the SPP should be read and applied as a whole. The further amendments now proposed will mean that exceptional housing sites can still be brought forward, and gain consent, where they are considered to be sustainable development.

- **The overarching presumption will be retained, albeit reworded.** As a result, and based on our evaluation of its role to date which shows that it has been a relevant but not a determinative consideration in non-housing cases, we expect that it can still be applied broadly to applications for wider types of development. As a result the effect of the changes on other sectors is expected to be limited.

I enclose a copy of the determination advert which will be placed in the Edinburgh Gazette and Glasgow Herald. I would be grateful if you could forward this to the SEA Consultation Authorities.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours faithfully,

Fiona Simpson
Assistant Chief Planner

Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005: Section 8(1) Screening Determination Scottish Planning Policy - Housing and the presumption

The Scottish Government has determined that the Scottish Planning Policy - Housing and the presumption is not likely to have significant environmental effects and that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is therefore not required. The screening determination can be viewed at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/sea-screening-determinations-october-2019-to-december-2020/>.

A copy of the determination can be obtained by emailing SEA_Gateway@gov.scot or by telephone at 0300 244 4000. Written requests should be addressed to SEA Gateway, Planning and Architecture Division, 2F South, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ.