

# SCREENING REPORT

## DETAILS OF THE PLAN

**Responsible Authority:**

Perth & Kinross Council

**Title of the plan:**

Housing in the Countryside Guide

**What prompted the plan:**

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

Legislative provision – the Housing in the Countryside Guide is Supplementary Guidance (SG) which will support Policy 19: Housing in the Countryside, of the Perth & Kinross Council Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2).

**Plan subject:**

(e.g. transport)

Town and Country Planning

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

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

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

Section 5(3)

Section 5(4)

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

Section 5(3)

Section 5(4)

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**Date:**

28/11/18

## CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

### Context of the Plan:

The SG sits within a hierarchy of Plans: the Perth & Kinross LDP2 and the higher level Strategic Development Plan (TAYplan2). The policy context for the SG is contained within LDP2 and the framework for development has already been set by these higher level plans. The SG expands upon the policy and is used to support the content of the LDP by providing guidance on how Policy 19 is to be interpreted.

### Description of the Plan:

The SG will assist in the delivery of LDP2 Policy 19: Housing in the Countryside. The SG provides guidance for the assessment of development proposals for the erection, or creation through conversion, of single houses and groups of houses in the countryside. It seeks to encourage sustainable development in rural areas whilst safeguarding the character of the countryside, supporting the viability of communities, meeting development needs in appropriate locations, and ensuring that high standards of siting and design are achieved. The SG provides guidance on:

- 1) Building Groups
- 2) Infill Sites
- 3) New Houses in the Open Countryside
- 4) Renovation or replacement of houses
- 5) Conversion or replacement of redundant non-domestic buildings
- 6) Development on rural brownfield land

The SG is applicable to all areas of Perth & Kinross with the exception of the Green Belt where its application is limited to proven economic need, conversions and replacement buildings.

The SG will be adopted as statutory supplementary guidance to LDP2.

Note – representations have been submitted on the Proposed LDP2 requesting that more of the Housing in the Countryside categories be applicable within the Green Belt. Should the Examination Reporter make a change to Policy 19 this may result in a consequential change to the SG and if necessary, this screening report will be revised.

### What are the key components of the plan?

- Sets the criteria which all proposals must meet
- Sets specific criteria for each of the categories of the policy

### Have any of the components of the plan been considered in previous SEA work?

Yes. This is a revision of the existing SG which was the subject of full SEA in 2009 (SEA\00338). The policy to which this SG relates was subsequently included within the adopted LDP 2014 and now within Proposed LDP2.

**In terms of your response to Boxes 7 and 8 above, set out those components of the plan that are likely to require screening:**

See table 1.1 below

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

The Housing in the Countryside Policy (HiCP) itself, together with the associated Supplementary Guidance (SG), underwent full SEA in 2009 when the policy in its current form was first introduced. This screening report will therefore focus on the main changes which are proposed to the SG to determine whether any of these will result in significant environmental effects.

**Table 1.1: Main changes to the SG**

Section	Main changes proposed to SG
<b>Introduction</b>	<p><b>Green Belt</b> Under Local Development Plan (LDP) 1 and the adopted SG the HiCP does not apply within the Green Belt. Under Policy 19 of Proposed LDP2 and the draft revised SG, Policy 19 does now apply within the Green Belt but is restricted to proven economic need (category 3.3) renovation or replacement of houses (category 4), and conversion or replacement of redundant non-domestic buildings (category 5). This reflects the changes to LDP2 Policy 41: Green Belt.</p> <p><b>Lunan Valley Catchment Area</b> Under LDP1 and the adopted SG application of the HiCP was limited within the Lunan Valley Catchment Area to economic need, conversions or replacement. This restriction has now been removed under Proposed LDP2 and the draft revised SG. This reflects the changes to LDP2 Policy 43: Lunan Lochs Catchment Area.</p>
<b>For All Proposals</b>	Proposed changes to provide additional clarity only
<b>Category 1 – Building groups</b>	Proposed changes to provide additional clarity only
<b>Category 2 – Infill sites</b>	Proposed changes to provide additional clarity only
<b>Category 3 – New houses in open countryside</b>	It is not proposed to change the overall aim of this category but more detailed guidance is to be provided on the following sections. The proposed changes to all other sections within this category are to provide additional clarity only.

	<p><b>Economic Activity</b></p> <p>Under the adopted SG, permission for a house under this category may be restricted by an occupancy condition to ensure it remains as essential worker housing in perpetuity. Scottish Planning Policy now directs against the use of such conditions and it is therefore proposed to place more emphasis in the revised SG on the siting and design of houses in the open countryside. It is proposed that the revised SG will provide more detailed information on the criteria to be applied in considering a planning application under this category in order to assist in the decision making process.</p> <p><b>Pilot projects creating eco-friendly houses/ Houses for Sustainable Living</b></p> <p>It is proposed to rename this section of the SG as <i>'Houses for Sustainable Living'</i> to more accurately reflect that proposals under this category are about a lifestyle approach rather than the building itself. Previously this category simply stated that <i>'...proposals may be supported where a rural setting is required and the project is linked to the management of land or use of land for sustainable living.'</i> It is proposed that more detailed guidance will highlight that this category is aimed at proposals for <i>'one-off, bespoke single houses which are at the forefront of sustainability.'</i></p> <p>It is proposed that applicants will be required to demonstrate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the new house in a rural setting is essential as an integral part of an overall scheme for the management or use of land which will allow occupants of the house to be largely self-sufficient; and</li> <li>• proposals go beyond those technologies that are widely available.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p><b>Category 4 – Renovation or replacement of houses</b></p>	<p>Proposed changes to provide additional clarity only</p>
<p><b>Category 5 – Conversion or replacement of redundant non- domestic buildings</b></p>	<p>It is not proposed to change the overall aim of this category but to increase the emphasis placed on the requirement for the applicant to demonstrate that buildings are redundant and cannot be sold or let for an alternative employment use.</p>
<p><b>Category 6 – Development on rural brownfield land</b></p>	<p>Proposed changes to provide additional clarity only</p>

**Table 1.2: Preferred Alternative: Protecting Natural and Cultural Heritage**

The previous SEA identified that the amendments to the policy should focus on reducing the adverse effects on biodiversity, cultural heritage and the landscape. The table below sets out the findings from the full SEA. It then reassesses those categories where the changes proposed to the Supplementary Guidance (SG) will potentially change the scope for additional houses in the countryside and if so, whether this will result in any additional significant impacts on the environment. Sections of the Guidance where the proposed changes are to provide additional clarity only have not been included in the table.

The proposed changes to the Introduction section relating to the Green Belt and the Lunan Lochs Catchment Area are a direct result of the changes to policy 41: Green Belt and Policy 43: Lunan Lochs Catchment Area. The impacts of these proposed changes have already been assessed in the SEA policy assessment for policies 41 and 43 for LDP2. These proposed changes have not therefore been reassessed in the table.

Effect	
Major Positive	++
Minor Positive	+
Unknown	0
Neutral/None	/
Minor Negative	-
Major Negative	--

Findings from 2009 SEA					Proposed Changes to SG (2019) – Significant or Not?		
SEA Topic	SEA Objectives	Significance of Effects	Comments	Proposed Mitigation	Intro	Cat 3	Cat 5
Biodiversity	Maintain, protect and where necessary enhance habitats and species of international, national and regional conservation value, including the populations of	+	Emphasis of policy should ensure that the development of housing in the countryside can be accommodated with limited impact on LBAP habitats and species.	Structure and Local Plan policies already seek to safeguard against impacts on protected areas and species. Siting and Design Guidance needs to emphasise issues and solutions.	The impact of the proposed changes to allow the limited application of the policy within the Green Belt, and within the previously	With the removal of occupancy restrictions under section 3.3, increased emphasis is to be placed on the siting and design criteria.	The proposed increased emphasis on the requirement for applicants to demonstrate that a building is redundant may result in fewer traditional buildings being demolished

	European Protected Species and protection for their resting places.				Awareness raising for developers, architects and planners regarding development / redevelopment proposals to avoid impacts and provide enhancement opportunities.	restricted Lunan Lochs Catchment area, have already been assessed through the policy assessment for policies 41 and 43 in the SEA for LDP2.	Increased emphasis is to be placed on the sustainability element of proposals under section 3.5 and the need to consider not only the house itself but also the use of land.  The proposed changes to this category are therefore likely to result in minor positive effects.	which in turn is likely to have a minor positive effect.
Population and Human Health	Accommodate the desire for people to live in the countryside and direct development to appropriate areas.	--	+	Negative in terms of meeting the requirements of SPP15 in that it would provide significantly reduced opportunities for people to live in the countryside but would provide scope to avoid sensitive areas.	Structure and Local Plan policies already seek to protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage. Policy and Siting Design guidance needs to emphasise issues and solutions.	As above.	The proposed changes will enable new houses to continue to be built in the open countryside under section 3.3 despite the removal of occupancy restrictions. This is likely to result in a minor positive effect.  There may be a slight reduction in the opportunities for new houses	There may be a slight reduction in the opportunities for new houses arising from the proposed changes, but this is likely to be balanced against the positive effects of retaining or creating new employment uses in the countryside (if buildings are not proven to be redundant). Any effects arising from the proposed changes are therefore likely to



						arising from the proposed changes to section 3.5, but any negative effects are likely to be minor.	be neutral.
Soils	Maintain, protect and where necessary enhance the fundamental qualities and productive capacities of soils.	-	Flexibility to avoid sensitive areas, but accommodating development still involves the use of soils.	Local Plan policies to support the re-use of brownfield sites to minimise use of greenfield land and productive soils.	As above.	<p>The proposed changes will enable new houses to continue to be built in the open countryside under section 3.3 despite the removal of occupancy restrictions. There is unlikely to be any additional or new impacts arising as a result of the proposed change.</p> <p>There may be a slight reduction in the opportunities for new houses arising from the proposed changes to section 3.5 so the change is therefore likely to result in a minor positive effect.</p>	Proposed changes to this category are about the use of existing buildings rather than the construction of new buildings. There is unlikely to be any additional or new impacts arising as a result of the proposed changes.
Water	Safeguard water resources and water	-	Flexibility to avoid sensitive areas, but	Where sensitive sites cannot be avoided	As above.	The proposed changes will enable	Proposed changes to this category are

	quality, ensure no deterioration of the ecological status of waterbodies and where possible enhance the ecological value of watercourses and bodies.		accommodating development still likely to impact on waterbodies to some extent.	require mitigation of adverse impacts and enhancement through the planning application process. Need for Drainage Impact Assessments and compliance with the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (CAR) (as amended).		new houses to continue to be built in the open countryside under section 3.3 despite the removal of occupancy restrictions. There is unlikely to be any additional or new impacts arising as a result of the proposed changes.  There may be a slight reduction in the opportunities for new houses arising from the proposed changes to section 3.5 so the change is therefore likely to result in a minor positive effect.	about the use of existing buildings rather than the construction of new buildings. There is unlikely to be any additional or new impacts arising as a result of the proposed changes.
Air Quality and Noise	Direct development to a location which reduces the need to travel and reduces journey length and ensure compliance with Air Quality objectives.	-	In directing development to most appropriate areas in environmental terms, not necessarily reducing journey length. Duration and permanency unknown because it will depend	Local Plan policies to promote homeworking to reduce the need to travel.	As above.	The proposed changes will enable new houses to continue to be built in the open countryside under section 3.3 despite the removal of occupancy restrictions. There	Proposed changes to this category are about the use of existing buildings rather than the construction of new buildings. There is unlikely to be any additional or new impacts arising as a

				on factors outwith Council control – does not address fundamental issue that people will choose to travel regardless.			is unlikely to be any additional or new impacts arising as a result of the proposed changes.  There may be a slight reduction in the opportunities for new houses arising from the proposed changes to section 3.5 so the change is therefore likely to result in a minor positive effect.	result of the changes.
Climatic Factors	Reduce the area's vulnerability to the effects of climate change, especially flooding, through the direction of new development to appropriate areas, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging forms of development that maximise energy efficiency and conservation, and that promote the use of renewable energy where appropriate.	+	-	New development or redevelopment unlikely to be permitted on flood plains, however conversion or rebuilding for residential use (e.g. mills) could be in locations at risk from flooding, which could therefore introduce a more flood sensitive use and therefore could potentially result in negative effects. Seeking to protect natural and cultural	Ensure adequate flood prevention measures are put in place through the planning application process. Seek a Flood Risk Assessment for proposed new development that is itself at risk from flooding or that could potentially increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. LP policies to promote sustainable development	As above.	The proposed changes will enable new houses to continue to be built in the open countryside under section 3.3 despite the removal of occupancy restrictions. There is unlikely to be any additional or new impacts arising as a result of the proposed changes.  Increased	The proposed increased emphasis on the requirement for applicants to demonstrate that a building is redundant may result in fewer conversions to housing which could have a minor positive effect where the building is in a flood risk location.

				heritage will not necessarily encourage forms of development that maximise energy efficiency and conservation, and that promote the use of renewable resources.	practices. For All Proposals section of policy to make reference to sustainable development practices. Restrict scale of development if remote from public transport.		emphasis is to be placed on the sustainability element of proposals under section 3.5 and the need to consider not only the house itself but also the use of land. The proposed changes are therefore likely to result in minor positive effects.	
Cultural Heritage	Maintain, protect, and where appropriate enhance and restore historic buildings, archaeological sites and other culturally important features.	++		Actively positive as has potential to result in the maintenance, protection and enhancement of historically and culturally important areas and sites.		As above.	The proposed changes to this category relate to new development rather than the reuse of existing buildings. There is unlikely to be any new or additional impacts on cultural heritage as a result of the proposed changes.	The proposed increased emphasis on the requirement for applicants to demonstrate that a building is redundant may result in fewer traditional buildings being demolished which in turn is likely to have a minor positive effect.
Landscape	Maintain and where necessary enhance, landscape character, especially those locations designated as having particular worth.	++		Actively positive as seeks to manage historic sites and landscapes.		As above.	With the proposed removal of occupancy restrictions under section 3.3, increased emphasis is to be placed on the siting and design criteria. The	The proposed increased emphasis on the requirement for applicants to demonstrate that a building is redundant may result in fewer traditional buildings being demolished
	Protect and enhance countryside and rural	++		Positive as it allows the maintenance of local		As above.		

	character and respect existing pattern, form and setting of small settlements and building groups.			distinctiveness and respects settlement character.			proposed changes to this category are therefore likely to result in minor positive effects.  There may be a slight reduction in the opportunities for new houses arising from the proposed changes to section 3.5 so the change is therefore likely to result in a minor positive effect.	which in turn is likely to have a minor positive effect.
Material Assets	Minimise the use of resources including fuel and chemicals, and minimise the creation of waste by following the waste hierarchy: Reduce – Reuse – Recycle – Recover	-		Location of new housing according to protection of natural and cultural heritage is not necessarily where the resources are.	Local Plan policies to promote sustainable development practices including sustainable construction.	As above.	With the proposed removal of occupancy restrictions under section 3.3, increased emphasis is to be placed on the siting and design criteria. The proposed changes to this category are therefore likely to result in minor positive effects.	The proposed increased emphasis on the requirement for applicants to demonstrate that a building is redundant may result in more traditional buildings being reused rather than demolished which in turn is likely to have a minor positive effect.
	Maximise the sustainable use/re-use of material assets (land and buildings).	+	-	Whilst re-use of land and buildings generally positive, could also be negative effects as brownfield land may be of higher biodiversity value than greenfield.	Assessment of the biodiversity value of brownfield sites and existing buildings required through the planning application process and where necessary mitigation and enhancement measures put in	As above.	Increased emphasis is to be placed on the sustainability	

				place.		element of proposals under section 3.5 and the need to consider not only the house itself but also the use of land. The proposed changes are therefore likely to result in minor positive effects.	
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## STATEMENT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE SCREENING

**Table 1.3: Summary of Assessment**

<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>The proposed changes to the Introduction section relating to the Green Belt and the Lunan Lochs Catchment Area are a direct result of the changes to policy 41: Green Belt and Policy 43: Lunan Lochs Catchment Area. The impacts of these proposed changes have therefore already been assessed in the SEA policy assessment for policies 41 and 43 for LDP2.</p>
<p><b>Category 3 – New houses in open countryside</b></p> <p>Minor positive effects have been identified relating to biodiversity, population and human health (section 3.3), soils (section 3.5), water (section 3.5), air quality and noise (section 3.5), climatic factors (section 3.5), landscape, and material assets.</p> <p>Minor negative effects have been identified relating to population and human health (section 3.5).</p> <p>In respect of soils (section 3.3), water (section 3.3), air quality and noise (section 3.3), climatic factors (section 3.3), and cultural heritage no new or additional effects have been identified.</p>
<p><b>Overall Conclusions</b></p> <p>No significant environmental effects have been identified arising from the proposed changes to this category of the SG.</p>

**Category 5 – Conversion or replacement of redundant non-domestic buildings**

Minor positive effects have been identified relating to biodiversity, climatic factors, cultural heritage, landscape, and material assets.

In respect of population and human health, soils, water, and air quality and noise no new or additional effects (or neutral effects) have been identified.

**Overall Conclusions**

No significant environmental effects are identified arising from the proposed changes to this category of the SG.

**Statement of the findings of the Screening:**

Screening of the revised Housing in the Countryside SG identified no additional significant environmental effects arising from the proposed changes to the SG. It is not expected that the proposed changes to the SG will create any additional cumulative or trans-boundary effects, additional risks to human health, exceed any quality standards or limits, or result in any additional impacts on special or protected natural, historic or cultural environments.

Perth & Kinross Council is therefore of the opinion that SEA of the changes proposed to the Housing in the Countryside SG is not required because they will not result in any significant environmental effects.

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