



# **SCREENING REPORT**

**SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE (SG)**

**WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT**

## STEP 1 – DETAILS OF THE PLAN

**Responsible Authority:**

West Lothian Council

**Title of the plan:**

Supplementary Guidance – Wind Energy Development

**What prompted the plan:**

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

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

The guidance explicitly supports LDP policy NRG3 – Wind Energy Development and sets out detailed criteria to assist the development and assessment of proposals for development across the plan area and specifically supports policies NRG 1 (Climate Change and Sustainability) and NRG 3 (Wind Energy Development).

The strategic policy context for renewable energy development is provided for by Policy 10 (sustainable Energy Technologies) of the Strategic Development Plan for South East Scotland (2013).

**Plan subject:**

(e.g. transport)

Town and Country Planning

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

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

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

Section 5(3)

Section 5(4)

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

Section 5(3)

Section 5(4)

**Contact details:**

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Date:

5 May 2020

## STEP 2 – CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

### Context of the Plan:

The West Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 4 September 2018 and sets out the Council's approach to wind energy developments.

Background documents to the LDP have informed the Supplementary Guidance on wind energy development, including the [West Lothian Landscape Capacity Study](#), the [West Lothian Landscape Character Classification](#) and the [West Lothian Local Landscape Designation Review](#). Policy NRG 3 of the LDP provides further context for preparation of the guidance. The policy recognises that proposals for on-shore wind energy will be looked at favourably provided that a proposal does not give rise to unacceptable environmental effects including cumulative, landscape and visual impacts.

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

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

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

The supplementary guidance Wind Energy Development is intended to help implement the provisions of the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan and specifically aims to ensure that the impact of new wind energy development set out in the Plan is mitigated. The guidance is intended to update, strengthen and streamline existing arrangements.

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

<p><b>Description of the Plan:</b></p>	<p>This supplementary guidance has been prepared in connection with the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan Policy NRG3 wind Energy Development.</p> <p>The guidance is intended to help implement the provisions of the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan and specifically aims to ensure that the impact of new wind energy development set out in the Plan is mitigated. The guidance is intended to update, strengthen and streamline existing arrangements.</p> <p>The Supplementary Guidance is intended for use by anyone considering Wind Energy Development within West Lothian including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants who wish to develop a site;</li> <li>• Architects and agents working on proposals;</li> <li>• Officers assessing planning proposals;</li> <li>• Elected Members representing constituents and making decisions on planning applications;</li> <li>• Members of the public with an interest in development proposals within their local community and</li> <li>• Householders who wish to undertake any domestic scale wind energy development.</li> </ul> <p>The guidance will be reviewed at least every 5 years in line with the statutory review of the West Lothian Local Development Plan (or as required by emerging legislation).</p>
<p><b>What are the key components of the plan?</b></p>	<p>This Supplementary Guidance sets out the council’s spatial approach to wind energy development and details the criteria against which wind energy proposals will be assessed. The guidance is intended to assist developers in ensuring they submit all the required information to support their planning applications. An assessment checklist is provided in Section 7 of the guidance to assist interested parties when considering proposals for wind energy developments.</p> <p>This Supplementary Guidance will be an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications and will form the basis for discussions on individual planning applications and the drafting of planning conditions and / or planning obligations.</p> <p>The Supplementary Guidance seeks to ensure best practice and sets out those matters which interested parties will be required to have regard to when proposing wind energy developments.</p>
<p><b>Have any of the components of the plan been considered in previous SEA work?</b></p>	<p>Yes. Supplementary Guidance (SG) Wind Energy Development has been prepared within the context of the West Lothian Local Development Plan which was adopted on 4 September 2018. An Environmental Assessment has previously been undertaken in respect of policies and proposed land allocations in the West Lothian LDP. The Environmental Assessment undertaken in respect of these policies concluded that they would have no significant environmental implications. Any impacts of the policies were considered to be largely positive. In order to ensure compliance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland)</p>

Act 2005, a Screening Opinion for this Supplementary Guidance is required.

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

The guidance will expand on the principles set out in the aforementioned policies and provide detailed guidance to help achieve the outcomes expected from development proposals in locations across West Lothian. The guidance will support consistent interpretation and application of policies through the development management process in instances where proposals are subject to formal planning controls. The guidance will at the same time encourage good practice in-line with policies and other national guidance and is intended to be instructive to anyone contemplating wind energy development in locations. The potential environmental effects of any proposed development considered under the terms of the policies can however only be fully assessed at the planning application stage when the specific site and development details are known.

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

Plan Components	Environmental Topic Areas										Explanation of Potential Environmental Effects	Explanation of Significance
	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air	Climatic factors	Material assets	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Inter-relationship issues		
Supplementary Guidance – ‘Wind Energy Energy Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>The Supplementary Guidance sits within a wider development plan context which has undergone SEA.</p> <p>The Supplementary Guidance shares the strategic objectives of the LDP which include promoting development in the most sustainable locations where its impact can be minimised and having regard to climate change by supporting renewable energy development in relation to wind energy.</p> <p>The Supplementary Guidance brings together all of the elements that help contribute towards minimising environmental impact and achieving sustainable</p>	<p>The SEA for the LDP considered any potential effects. The Supplementary Guidance is not considered to have any additional significant environmental effects.</p>

											<p>development.</p> <p>It provides a clear set of guidance and standards to explain what the council will expect from new developments and identifies what information is required as part of a planning application. It also provides contact details for Council officers and other organisations.</p> <p>The Supplementary Guidance shares the strategic objectives of the LDP which include promoting development where its environmental impact can be ameliorated and having regard to climate change by minimising the carbon footprint of development and supporting mitigation and adaption measures.</p> <p>It is anticipated that new wind energy development which will come to be built over time will be more sensitively located and designed and in better harmony with their surroundings and the natural and built environment.</p>	
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## STEP 4 – STATEMENT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE SCREENING REPORT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The guidance sets out detailed criteria to assist the development and assessment of proposals for development across the plan area and specifically supports policies NRG 1 (Climate Change and Sustainability) and NRG 3 (Wind Energy Development). Collectively, these policies seek to encourage renewable energy development but always in circumstances where any potentially negative impacts can be satisfactorily addressed.

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