Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA): Screening / Scoping Report
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1 Non-Technical Summary

An Introduction to the National Planning Framework

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) will be Scottish Ministers’ long term spatial plan for Scotland in 2050. By incorporating Scottish Planning Policy, it will also set out Scottish Government national planning policies. It will have the status of ‘development plan’ for decision making purposes, meaning it will be used for day to day decision making on planning applications.

Once adopted, NPF4 will replace National Planning Framework 3 and the Scottish Planning Policy.

NPF4 will be subject to extensive public and stakeholder engagement in its preparation. It will also be considered by the Scottish Parliament and is ultimately subject to parliamentary approval before it can be adopted.

What is Integrated Impact Assessment and how is this being undertaken?

A range of statutory and non-statutory assessments will inform the preparation of NPF4. We will integrate these assessment requirements wherever possible into the development of NPF4 policy. We will also co-ordinate the preparation of the evidence base across the individual assessments to minimise duplication, sharing information and links between the different assessment topics and making connections. In light of the statutory and non-statutory reporting requirements for individual assessments, we will ensure clear findings are reached for each of the assessments, with a summary narrative that draws together and considers in a holistic way the key findings under the impact assessment themes of Environment; Society and Equalities; and Economy. Outputs will include an Environmental Report which meets our statutory reporting obligations under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

This screening/scoping report has been prepared to inform the early engagement stages of the NPF4 preparation process.

What is the purpose of this report?

This report

- sets out the Scottish Government’s view on which impact assessments should be undertaken (known as ‘screening’) and,
- gives early information on the assessment method(s), and the baseline information on which the assessments will be based.
What Impact Assessments are being considered?

Environment Theme:

We are undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment (including consideration of the likely health effects of national developments), Habitats Regulations Appraisal, and will consider the Life-cycle Greenhouse Gas emissions of national developments.

Society and Equalities Theme:

We are undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA), Island Communities Impact Assessment, and will have due regard to issues arising pertaining to Human Rights matters and through the Fairer Scotland Duty within the NPF4 preparation process. We will also give consideration to any data protection issues arising.

Economy:

We will undertake a Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) to assess the likely costs, benefits and risks of any proposed policy changes that may have an impact on the public, private or third sector.

What is the available evidence base?

Impact assessments are informed by evidence, including a baseline description of existing features and future pressures that might be affected by policies. At this early stage, this report sets out the information to be used in the assessments. This information is summarised below and is set out more fully in the appendices which accompany this report. We will add to and update this information where relevant as the assessments progress.

Scotland’s characteristics

Scotland’s environment is rich in natural and cultural heritage. Our network of European protected sites supports many important and rare plants, birds and animals however further efforts are needed to halt and restore biodiversity loss. Scotland’s air, soil and water are generally in good condition, but there are concentrations of pollution in some parts of the country. Some of this is historic, but there are also on-going challenges, including diffuse pollution from urban and rural areas.

Scotland has high quality landscapes, with many iconic views and scenic areas supporting recreation and tourism. The historic environment includes World Heritage Sites, listed buildings, conservation areas, gardens and designed landscapes and archaeology including scheduled monuments. Many archaeological resources remain undiscovered. Scotland also has many natural resources and material assets, including high quality agricultural land, and extensive areas of forestry and woodland.
It is widely considered that climate change is one of the most serious threats facing the world today. Climate change is predicted to lead to more extreme weather events, increasing water temperature and acidity, a rise in sea levels and changes to coastlines; all of which have the potential to affect other aspects of the environment.

Scotland’s population is estimated to be just under five and a half million. The population density in the country is among the lowest in Europe although migration continues to be the main driver of population growth. Scotland’s population is projected to continue to age over the next 25 years, with the fastest growing age group those aged 75 and over. There is significant variation between the more densely populated areas in the Central Belt and areas such as the Highlands and the Western Isles, and a deficit of young people in the Highlands and Islands including from out-migration. In the absence of intervention, Scotland’s Sparsely Populated Areas are predicted to experience decades of population decline, including shrinkage of its working age population. There are 96 inhabited islands in Scotland, and many more that have previously been inhabited. The geographic, demographic, socio-economic, cultural and other particularities of the Scottish islands mean that many issues of significance to island communities are of such a fundamental nature that they are likely to interact with a range of human rights.

Approximately 20% of Scotland’s population live in relative poverty after housing costs and poverty and income inequality rates continue to rise and median household income is rising slowly. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is Scottish Government's official tool to identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland, with the most deprived areas located predominantly in urban areas.

Scotland’s obesity rates are amongst the highest in the developed world and are a significant public health issue. At the same time, approximately 30 per cent of adults report having a long-term physical or mental health condition and poverty rates remain higher for families in which somebody is disabled compared to those without.

Around four per cent of people in Scotland are from minority ethnic groups - council areas with large cities have the highest proportion of their population from a minority ethnic group. People from minority ethnic (non-white) groups are more likely to be in relative poverty after housing costs compared to those from the 'White - British' group.

Just over half of Scotland’s population identifies as following a Christian Religion. The next largest religion was 'Muslim' with other religions including ‘Hindu’, ‘Buddhist’, 'Sikh' and 'Jewish'. 37 per cent of the population identified as having no religion.

Scotland’s communities are recognised to exist beyond geographical areas and more needs to be done to tackle the inequalities faced by communities of identity.

Agriculture is the dominant land use in Scotland, covering 6.2 million hectares, 80% of the land area. Food & Drink (including agriculture & fisheries); Creative Industries (including digital); Sustainable Tourism; Energy (including renewables); Financial & Business Services; and, Life Sciences are all identified as key to the Scottish economy.
Next steps / how to comment on the Screening / Scoping Report

Comments on this Report are welcome by 31 March. Please send any written comments to us at scotplan@gov.scot along with a completed Respondent Information Form.
2 Introduction

2.1 The National Planning Framework 4

2.1.1 NPF4 will be a long term spatial plan to 2050 that sets out where development and infrastructure will be needed to support sustainable and inclusive growth. It will guide spatial development, set out Scotland’s national planning policies, and highlight regional spatial priorities.

2.1.2 NPF4 will incorporate Scottish Planning Policy, so that spatial and thematic planning policies will be addressed in one place. It will have the status of development plan for planning purposes. This is a change to the current position and will mean that its policies should inform day to day decision making as decisions in the planning system are made on the basis of the development plan for the area. Current thinking is that policy areas may be grouped around three broad themes of People, Work and Place (Figure 1 refers) within the overarching context of climate change. NPF4 will guide local development plans and will also be relevant to regional spatial strategies and important for communities as they develop their Local Place Plans.

2.1.3 NPF4 will also designate as ‘national developments’ certain developments or classes of development for which Ministers have established the need in principle.

2.1.4 We expect NPF4 to look very different from NPF3, with a longer time horizon to 2050, fuller regional coverage and improved alignment with wider programmes and strategies, including on infrastructure, climate change and economic investment. NPF4 will also take into account indicative regional spatial strategies which will be prepared by local authorities ahead of the new provisions of the Planning (Scotland) Act on regional spatial strategies coming into effect.
The purpose of planning, the provisions being commenced in November 2019, is to manage the development and use of land in the public interest. Anything which contributes to sustainable development or achieves the national outcomes within the National Performance Framework is to be considered as being in the long term public interest. In addition, the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires six high-level statutory outcomes to be addressed in preparing NPF4. These are shown in Figure 2.

NPF plays a significant cross-cutting role in shaping the delivery of the Government’s policies locally, through decisions made in the planning system, and influencing the spending priorities of Government, agencies and the private sector. Climate change, well-being, housing and infrastructure are some key factors that will be part of the policy review. The content is expected to extend beyond the statutory outcomes.

Figure 1. NPF4 policy themes

2.1.5 NPF4 High Level Outcomes

2.1.6

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1 https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/national-outcomes
Figure 2. NPF4 Outcomes

- **BIODIVERSITY**
  - Securing positive effects for biodiversity.

- **EQUALITY**
  - Improving equality and eliminating discrimination.

- **CLIMATE ACTION**
  - Meeting any targets relating to the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases.

- **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**
  - Improving the health and wellbeing of people living in Scotland.

- **RE-POPULATION**
  - Increasing the population of rural areas of Scotland.

- **HOUSING**
  - Meeting the housing needs of people living in Scotland including, in particular, the housing needs of older people and disabled people.
Policy context

2.1.7 In preparing the revised NPF, the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires the Scottish Ministers to have regard to relevant policies and strategies, including specifically those set out in Figure 3.
2.2 The Impact Assessment Process

2.2.1 A range of statutory and non-statutory assessments will inform the preparation of NPF4. We will integrate these assessment requirements wherever possible into the development of NPF4 policy. We will also co-ordinate the preparation of the evidence base across the individual assessments to minimise duplication, sharing information and links between the different assessment topics and making connections. In light of the statutory and non-statutory reporting requirements for individual assessments, we will ensure clear findings are reached for each of the assessments, with a summary narrative which draws together and considers in a holistic way the key findings under the impact assessment themes of Environment; Society and Equalities; and Economy. Outputs will include an Environmental Report which meets our statutory reporting obligations under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. In finalising the IIA report(s) we will use summary narrative to draw together in a holistic way relevant findings on cross-cutting issues under the impact assessment themes of Environment, Society & Equalities, and Economy.

2.2.2 The purpose of this IA Screening / Scoping Report is:

- to set out the Scottish Government’s view on which impact assessments should be undertaken (known as ‘screening’) and,
- to set out sufficient information on the NPF4, to enable consultees and the wider public to form a view on the proposed scope, method(s) and level of detail of the assessments to be undertaken, as well as on the proposed baseline information on which the assessments will be based.

Key steps in the development of the NPF4

2.2.3 We are committed to encouraging interest and wide public involvement in the preparation of NPF4 and want to engage with the public, community, voluntary and private sectors, as well as academics, experts and professional bodies.

2.2.4 We will make a particular effort to reach beyond the people and organisations normally involved in planning consultations. Our Programme of Engagement\(^2\) sets out further details.

2.2.5 A draft NPF4 will be laid in Parliament for consultation around September 2020 with public consultation running alongside Parliament’s consideration. Following this formal consultation, a revised final version of the NPF4 will be laid in Parliament in

2021. NPF4 will be approved by Parliament, before it is adopted by Scottish Ministers. NPF3 will remain in place until it is replaced by NPF4.

2.2.6 Figure 4 below sets out the key NPF4 and impact assessment stages and shows how these have been aligned.
### NPF 4 preparation process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integrated Impact Assessment stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline data-gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early engagement, including stakeholder engagement events / evidence gathering on shape and scope of policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPF 4 – Plan preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult on draft NPF4 and introduce to Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyse comments received and finalise NPF4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalise BRIA and publish Post-Adoption Statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Figure 4. Key NPF4 and Impact assessment stages

#### 2.3 Report structure

2.3.1 This Report sets out the early screening / scoping findings for each of the impact assessments considered under the 3 assessment themes of Environment, Society & Equalities, and Economy. Figure 5 below sets out which Impact Assessments have been considered under each of the above themes.

2.3.2 Detailed baseline information for the Environment and Society & Equalities themes is set out in two respective Appendices which are published separately alongside this report.
## ENVIRONMENT

| **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** | Identifies the likelihood of significant environmental effects (both positive and negative) as a result of the plan, alongside opportunities for mitigating any negative ones and enhancing any positives, and is in accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. ([http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/15/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/15/contents))  
The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires Scottish Ministers to bring forward new provisions on the assessment of the likely health effects for national or a major developments. To inform this work we will consider the likely health effects of proposed national developments as part of the SEA process. |
| **Life-cycle Green House Gas emissions of national developments.** | Fulfils our statutory obligations under the Town and Country (Scotland) Planning Act 2019 to undertake an assessment of the likely impact of each proposed national development’s lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. |

## SOCIETY & EQUALITIES

| **Human rights** | Ensures there is no disproportionate impact upon the most vulnerable and ensures human rights legislation is adhered to. ([https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx)) |
| **Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)** | Provides an assessment of the impact of applying a proposed new or revised policy or practice. Equality legislation covers the protected characteristics of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, sex, sexual orientation and religion and belief. |
| **Child’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)** | Provides evidence that proper consideration has been given to the impact that a policy/measure will have on children and young people up to the age of 18. |
| **Fairer Scotland Duty** | Helps deliver fairer outcomes for Scotland’s people through the active consideration of socio-economic inequality issues, such as low income and area deprivation, during the plan-making process. |
| **Island Communities Impact Assessment** | Ensures that the needs of island communities are considered in the development of any plans and ensures compliance with the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 ([http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2018/282/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2018/282/contents/made)) |
| **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)** | Helps to identify and mitigate any risks to privacy in compliance with data protection laws. |

## ECONOMY

| **Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA)** | BRIAs help to assess the likely costs, benefits and risks of any proposed plan and takes account of the five principles of better regulation – transparency, accountability, proportionality, consistency and that regulation is targeted where appropriate. |

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*Figure 5. Impact Assessments*
3 Environment

3.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.1.1 The purpose of this Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report is to set out sufficient information on Scotland’s fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4), to enable the Consultation Authorities to form a view on the proposed scope and level of detail for the assessment and on the intended consultation period.

3.1.2 This report has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 (“the 2005 Act”). The 2005 Act requires all qualifying policies, plans, programmes and strategies (referred to generally as plans) to undergo SEA. This provides a systematic process for identifying, reporting and mitigating the environmental impacts of the proposed NPF4. The SEA process comprises:

- **Screening** – determining whether a plan requires a SEA;
- **Scoping** – establishing significant environmental topics, setting the environmental baseline, developing the proposed method(s) and intended approach to the assessment and setting out the intended consultation period;
- **Environmental Assessment** – assessing the likely significant environmental effects of the proposed plan and any reasonable alternatives, and consulting on both the draft plan and Environmental Report;
- **Post Adoption Statement** – how the assessment and the consultation results have been considered within the finalised plan. Developing the monitoring strategy to assess progress once adopted;
- **Monitoring** – monitoring the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan and identifying any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage in order to undertake appropriate remedial action.

Outcome of screening process

3.1.3 The NPF4 is a qualifying plan in accordance with Section 5(3) of the 2005 Act, and therefore screening is not required.

Proposed method and scope of assessment

3.1.4 It is considered that all environmental topics should be scoped into this SEA due to the nature and scale of the NPF4 and the potential for likely significant effects to occur across all topics. The SEA will therefore consider: biodiversity, flora and fauna, population, human health, soil, water (including coastal and marine where relevant), air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and
archaeological heritage, landscape, and their inter-relationships. The potential for significant impacts will be considered throughout the development and assessment of the draft NPF4 and this will also be informed by feedback received on this Scoping Report.

3.1.5 SEA should be undertaken in a systematic and transparent way. Scottish Government guidance also emphasises the importance of proportionality. To help achieve this, the assessment will use a range of methods and stages to identify potential significant environmental effects. The assessment will be undertaken by the Scottish Government’s Environmental Assessment Team, working closely with officials within the NPF4 team, to fully integrate the assessment within the development of the NPF4, and therefore maximise its effectiveness in the decision making process.

Consideration of likely health effects of national developments

3.1.6 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires the Scottish Ministers to bring forward new provisions on the assessment of the likely health effects for national or major developments. To inform this work, we will consider and report on the likely health effects of proposed national developments as part of the SEA process. The intention is to integrate this into the SEA process by using tailored health related objectives to frame the assessment under the topic of population and human health. As part of the EQIA process, we will also give consideration to any health inequalities arising, and will use summary narrative to draw together in a holistic way relevant findings on cross-cutting issues under the impact assessment themes of Environment and Society & Equalities.

Relevant Environmental Objectives

3.1.7 Many well established environmental protection objectives inform the context to the assessment. International and national level policies and strategies aim to protect and enhance our environment. Biodiversity objectives focus on sites and species of particular value, and aim to protect and improve natural heritage networks. Objectives for water, soil and air focus on reducing pollution, and reversing the effects of past emissions. Landscape objectives protect our most scenic areas, reflect the importance of the interaction between people and the land, and aim to enhance areas where landscape qualities have been eroded over time. Cultural heritage objectives range from protection of World Heritage Sites to recognition and management of more locally important buildings and archaeology and their wider setting. Cutting across all of these objectives, international and national climate change objectives are expressed as targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and also support adaptation to changing weather patterns. In addition, decisions on property, land and other assets sit within a wider regulatory and policy framework which includes relevant aspects of property law, environmental legislation, as well
as marine and terrestrial planning and consenting systems. Appendix A, which has been published separately to accompany this report, sets out the key environmental objectives.

Methodology

3.1.8 The Environmental Report will be set out in a narrative style supported by assessment tables/matrices and constraints mapping. A series of example SEA objectives have been developed to assist in predicting and evaluating the potential effects of the NPF4 on the environment (see Table 2). These SEA objectives have been informed by the likely scope and content of the plan and its policy context; relevant environmental protection objectives; and, the environmental baseline. They focus on the key environmental issues relevant to the assessment and will be refined as the assessment progresses and as the plan evolves. A series of constraints maps have also been used in presenting the baseline information, and these will be used to explore the relationship and interactions between the NPF4 and the environment.

3.1.9 Explanatory text will be provided to support the assessment findings, record the evidence used in reaching its conclusions and set out recommendations for mitigation and monitoring.

3.1.10 In addition, there is scope within the narrative to take a broad ‘natural capital’ approach to help describe the multiple benefits that the environment provides and to identify relevant environmental factors that the NPF4 can protect or enhance. For example, the assessment can discuss broadly how the NPF4 has the potential to affect the natural capital assets such as forests, moorland, rivers, lochs, farmland, coastal areas as well as the seabed, and the range of benefits or ‘ecosystem services’ that can be derived from these assets.

3.1.11 Key information from related impact assessments including the Habitats Regulations Appraisal and Life-cycle GHG analysis of national developments will also be taken into account.

3.1.12 A scoring system (such as that shown below) will be used in the assessment tables to present information on the relative effects of the NPF4 and any reasonable alternatives. This scoring system will help to form an opinion on how significant the impacts would be, ranging from (as an example):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Positive</th>
<th>✕ ✗</th>
<th>There will be a significant positive impact or an ongoing / continually improving environmental impact.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>There will be a minor cumulative or isolated positive environmental impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant or no impacts</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>There will be neither a positive nor negative environmental impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>There will be a minor to moderate negative environmental impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Negative</td>
<td>✗ ✗</td>
<td>There will be a significant adverse impact.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.13 Commentary, supported by reference to baseline evidence where required, will be provided to justify the scoring and any uncertainties will be highlighted.

Assessment Stages

3.1.14 It is intended that a staged assessment process will be used (as shown in Table 1 below). In taking such an approach, the assessment will focus on the key issues and potential for significant environmental effects associated with the NPF4.

3.1.15 These findings will then be reviewed and conclusions drawn on the likely significant effects of the NPF4 in relation to each of the SEA topics.

3.1.16 The assessment will evaluate the reversibility of positive and negative environmental effects, the risks, probability, duration, frequency, magnitude and significance of the potential effects (positive, negative, short, medium and long term) and the potential secondary or indirect\(^3\), cumulative\(^4\) and synergistic\(^5\) effects associated with implementing the NPF.

3.1.17 The interrelationship between the environmental topics will also be taken into account to aid the assessment of cross-cutting issues such as climatic factors.

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\(^3\) Indirect effects are consequences resulting from a plan, which are secondary to the intended consequence.

\(^4\) A cumulative effect can occur when two or more environmental effects combine to have a greater effect.

\(^5\) Synergistic effects occur when two or more identified effects, are capable of working together to create a new effect, or a magnitude of effect which does not arise from the individual effects.
Table 1. Proposed Assessment Stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1 - Strategic Level Assessment/Planning Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPF4 will incorporate Scottish Planning Policy. It will set out national level strategy and policies to 2050 and it is likely that policy areas may be grouped around three broad themes of <strong>People, Work and Place</strong>. Currently, it is anticipated that key policy objectives will be a focus of the environmental assessment and where applicable strategic alternatives will also be assessed. Assessment tables/matrices will be established using the SEA objectives and a standard assessment summary marking system will cascade through all levels of the assessment. A commentary will be provided to explain each of the assessment conclusions. The strategic approach to this stage reflects the national scale of the NPF4 and the consequently high level nature of assessment required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 2 - Regional Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPF4 will also take into account emerging indicative regional spatial strategies which will be prepared by local authorities. As the assessment progresses, we will give consideration to what further baseline is needed to support additional assessment at this scale. This baseline will be used to define key issues and to further assess the impact of the proposals set out in the NPF4. The assessment findings will be set out in the Environmental Report and illustrated using regional constraints maps as appropriate with a focus on regionally and nationally significant environmental effects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 3 - National Developments Assessment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The assessment of the NPF4 will then be focused on each of the proposed national developments and wider spatial considerations, using constraints mapping to explore key effects arising. The findings will be reported on in the Environmental Report. To allow consideration of alternatives to the national developments an assessment summary will be provided for all of the proposals which meet the broad criteria for national development status.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 4 - Cumulative Effects Assessment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The assessment of NPF4 will consider whether significant cumulative effects are likely to arise. This will bring together the findings from the strategic level, regional level and national development assessments and will assess effects against the environmental baseline.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.18 In progressing the staged approach to the assessment and in the interest of proportionality, we will give consideration to whether questions/more detailed objectives can be developed in support of the objectives to help translate the assessment from the national level to the regional tier and to the national developments.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEA Topic</th>
<th>Example SEA Objectives</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Biodiversity, flora and fauna** | Avoid adverse impacts to designated habitats and species  
Avoid adverse impacts to undesignated habitats and species  
Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |                               |
| **Population and human health** | Reduce the health gap and inequalities and improve healthy life expectancy  
Promote and enhance/improve access to open space, greenspace and the wider countryside  
To protect and improve human health and wellbeing through improving the quality of the living environment of people and communities  
Increase sustainable access to essential services, employment and the natural and historic environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |                               |
| **Climatic Factors**      | Avoid new Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.  
Reduce CO\textsubscript{2} emissions in order to meet Scotland CO\textsubscript{2} emissions reduction target of net zero by 2045  
Promote and enable adaptation to climate change                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |         |                               |
| **Air**                   | Avoid adverse impacts to air quality  
Reduce emissions of key pollutants and improve air quality throughout Scotland  
Reduce levels of nuisance e.g. noise, vibration, dust, odour and light                                                                                                                                                                                                         |         |                               |
| **Water**                 | Avoid adverse impacts on the ecological status of water bodies  
Ensure the sustainable use of water resources  
Reduce the number of people and properties at risk of flooding  
Protect, maintain and improve the ecological status and physical state of the water environment                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |                               |
<p>| <strong>Soil and Geodiversity</strong> | Safeguard and improve soil quality, quantity and function in Scotland, particularly high value agricultural land and carbon-rich soils                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEA Topic</th>
<th>Example SEA Objectives</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce the extent of contaminated and vacant and derelict land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Heritage and Historic Environment</td>
<td>Avoid adverse impacts on the historic environment including its setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protect and enhance valued landscapes, historic and archaeological sites and other culturally and historically important features, landscapes and their settings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape and Geodiversity</td>
<td>Avoid adverse effects on landscapes and geodiversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safeguard and enhance the character and diversity of the Scottish landscape and areas of valuable landscape and geodiversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Assets</td>
<td>Avoid adversely impacting on material assets (e.g. water, heat, energy and flood protection infrastructure, etc)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote the principles of circular economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce use and promote sustainable management of natural resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote the sustainable design, use and management of new and existing assets/infrastructure to support the development of high-quality places</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identifying Mitigation and Monitoring Proposals and Opportunities for Enhancement

3.1.19 The SEA will identify mitigation measures and any potential enhancement measures, where appropriate. These measures will be aimed at improving the environmental outcomes of the NPF4. The development and integration of these measures will be recorded throughout the assessment process.

3.1.20 Monitoring is an integral part of SEA and a monitoring framework will be developed to track the significant environmental effects of implementing the plan and to address data gaps identified in the SEA. Monitoring will be linked to the implementation of mitigation or enhancement measures where appropriate. Responsibility for monitoring any significant environmental effects will be determined. Where possible, existing data sources, environmental indicators and monitoring programmes will be utilised.
Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives

3.1.21 The 2005 Act requires that the potential for significant environmental effects of any reasonable alternatives are assessed as part of the SEA process. Table 1 above sets out the intended approach to the assessment of reasonable alternatives within the different assessment stages.

3.2 Habitats Regulations Appraisal

Introduction to Habitats Regulations Appraisal

3.2.1 The Habitats Regulations require the Scottish Ministers to consider whether the draft NPF4 will have a ‘likely significant effect’ on any Natura site. If so, they must carry out an ‘appropriate assessment’. This is known as Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA).

HRA screening

3.2.2 The Scottish Government has commissioned independent consultants to undertake the HRA of NPF4 and it is anticipated that the proposed NPF4 national developments will be a key focus of this work. Wherever possible the HRA will be undertaken alongside the SEA, and we will look for opportunities to link the two processes, in the interests of proportionality and avoidance of duplication.

3.2.3 We will publish early outputs from the HRA screening process alongside the SEA Environmental Report.

3.3 Life-Cycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions of National Developments

3.3.1 The Life-cycle GHG Emissions of National Developments fulfils the Scottish Governments statutory obligations under the Town and Country (Scotland) Planning Act 2019 to undertake an assessment of the likely impact of each proposed national development’s lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. We have commissioned research, now underway, to inform the methodology for this aspect of the assessment. The work will take place alongside and will feed into the SEA assessment process.

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6 The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, as amended.
7 [https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/safeguarding-protected-areas-and-species/protected-areas/international-designations/natura-sites](https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/safeguarding-protected-areas-and-species/protected-areas/international-designations/natura-sites)
4 Society & Equalities

4.1 Data Protection Impact Assessment

Introduction to Data Protection Impact Assessment

4.1.1 Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) the Scottish Government is to complete a data protection impact assessment (DPIA) for all projects involving personal data and privacy. Projects may include; a new initiative, policy or process; or a programme. A single DPIA can address more than one project if this is appropriate.

Outcome of screening process

4.1.2 The Scottish Government has prepared internal guidance on the consideration of DPIA. Our initial view is that such an assessment will be necessary as we currently consider that we may need to collect and use personal data as part of both the Call for Ideas and community grant fund.

Next Steps

4.1.3 Similar matters may emerge from other engagement programmes. We therefore plan to work with colleagues (including our Information Asset Owner) on developing a DPIA for Planning and Architecture Division’s as a whole.
4.2 **Equalities Impact Assessment**

Introduction to Equalities Impact Assessment

4.2.1 The public sector equality duty requires the Scottish Government to assess the impact of applying a proposed new or revised policy or practice. Equality legislation covers the protected characteristics of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, sex, sexual orientation and religion and belief.

4.2.2 The Equality Act 2010 harmonised existing equality legislation and includes a public sector duty (‘the Duty’) which requires public authorities to pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or any other prohibited conduct;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations between different groups - by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Outcome of screening process

4.2.3 Our initial screening would suggest that the preparation of an EqIA should accompany the development of NPF4.

Proposed method and scope of assessment

4.2.4 The EqIA consists of a staged process including framing; evidence gathering; involvement and consultation; assessing the impact and identifying mitigating actions; decision making and monitoring; and sign off and publication.

4.2.5 Early framing considerations were based on information contained in the EqIA\(^8\) published to support Stage 3 considerations of the Planning Bill. We are currently entering an evidence gathering phase, seeking people’s views on their aspirations for Scotland2050, and how we can deliver that vision through the planning system. As well as setting out the baseline information contained at Appendix B, which has been published separately to accompany this report, we will invite representative groups based on the list of protected characteristics to a roundtable discussion with the NPF4 team in Spring 2020.

4.2.6 We have identified a number of potential gaps and will investigate these as part of the evidence gathering. These are set out in Table 3.

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\(^8\) [https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-bill---post-stage-2-equality-impact-assessment/]
Table 3. Key Evidence Gaps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Potential Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Issues for planning for an ageing population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Issues beyond housing - wider accessibility issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Update on key spatial gender issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Faith spaces in new development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>Spatial implication of the use of land for the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other protected characteristics</td>
<td>Pregnancy and maternity, Marriage and civil partnership, Gender re-assignment: confirmation of what, if any spatial / engagement issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty and Inequalities</td>
<td>Poverty/Inequality causes that can be alleviated through land use planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.7 We currently plan the following actions to provide additional evidence (Table 4).

Table 4. Actions to alleviate evidence gaps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Issue covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commission Think Pieces on the theme of Scotland2050</td>
<td>We have published Think Pieces on the following themes: Equalities – Age (both Older and Younger people), Disability, Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Research on how the existing arrangements are currently being applied in development planning and identify the issues that will need to be considered and addressed in framing future policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Engagement</td>
<td>We have been engaging with a range of representative groups on the framing of the engagement strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement on high level outcomes</td>
<td>Engage directly with a range of representative groups on the delivery of the high level outcomes and the contents of the IIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPF4 community Grant Fund</td>
<td>We have launched a community focussed grants scheme – aimed at encouraging local communities to gather and submit their views</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.8 Information from the roundtable plus other evidence will inform a partial EqIA which will be published alongside the draft NPF4 in September 2020.

Baseline information

4.2.9 Information set out in AppendixB, which has been published separately to accompany this report, is based on the data gathered to support Stage 3
considerations of the Planning Bill (June 2019). This has been updated with additional information where this has subsequently become available.

4.3 Child Rights and Wellbeing Assessment

Introduction to Child Rights and Wellbeing Assessment

4.3.1 The Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) is used to identify, research, analyse and record the impact of a proposed policy on children's human rights and wellbeing. It should be used on all new policy which impacts children, not just children's services. The impacts can be direct or indirect; short, medium or long-term; and positive, negative or neutral.

4.3.2 CRWIA helps the Scottish Government consider whether it is: advancing the rights of children in Scotland; and protecting and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people.

4.3.3 It is a ministerial duty required under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and in relation to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Outcome of screening process

4.3.4 The CRWIA process follows three stages: screening, assessment and finally publication stage. Initial considerations at the screening stage of:

- What aspects will affect children and young people up to 18?
- What the likely impact will be?; and
- Which groups of children and young people will be most affected?

4.3.5 Our work on this to date indicates that a CRWIA is required to support the development of NPF4. In considering this we note the following:

- The high profile and potential impact of NPF4 on children and young people
- It is a major new direction for policy, with NPF4 forming part of the development plan
- It will be subject to extensive consultation, including with the Scottish Parliament
- We would want to gather evidence on the potential impacts on how the policy affects or could affect children and young people, including evidence from children themselves.
Proposed method and scope of assessment

4.3.6 We will use the evidence gathering process for the EQIA to also gather evidence for the CRWIA. As well as publishing the baseline information contained at Appendix B, we will invite groups representative of a range of ages to a roundtable discussion with the NPF4 team in Spring 2020. Information from the roundtable plus other evidence will inform the drafting of the second stage of the CRWIA which will be published alongside the draft NPF4 in September 2020.

Baseline information

4.3.7 Information set out in Appendix B is based on the data gathered to support Stage 3 considerations of the Planning Bill (June 2019). This has been updated with additional information where it has become available.

4.3.8 Appendix B sets out baseline information relevant to the society and equalities themed impact assessments.

4.4 The Fairer Scotland Duty

Introduction to the Fairer Scotland Duty

4.4.1 The Fairer Scotland Duty, Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010 places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland to actively consider ('pay due regard' to) how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions.

4.4.2 Interim Guidance has been prepared by the Scottish Government and includes a definition in broad terms of 'socio-economic disadvantage' as meaning living on a low income compared to others in Scotland, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services. Socio-economic disadvantage can be experienced in both places and communities of interest, leading to further negative outcomes such as social exclusion.

Outcome of screening process

4.4.3 To fulfil their obligations under the Duty, Ministers must:

- actively consider how they could reduce inequalities of outcome in any major strategic decision they make; and

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- publish a written assessment, showing how they've done this

**Proposed method and scope of assessment**

**4.4.4** The Interim Guidance suggests a five stage process of: Planning, Evidence, Assessment and Improvement, Decision and Publication. Having considered that NPF4 is strategic, there is a requirement to undertake a Fairer Scotland assessment. At this early stage, the Government plans to:

- undertake a Fairer Scotland Assessment alongside the development of NPF4, including;
- set out that the main aim of NPF4 is to support the purpose of planning, and assist in the delivery of the six high level outcomes listed above;
- engage with stakeholders on expanding the evidence base during the early engagement phase;
- publish a draft written assessment to accompany draft NPF4; and
- publish a final written assessment to accompany the approved NPF4.

**Baseline information**

**4.4.5** Appendix B, which has been published separately to accompany this report, sets out the baseline information relevant to the society and equalities themed impact assessments.

**4.5** **Human Rights**

**Introduction to Human Rights**

**4.5.1** Whilst there isn't currently a specific Human Rights Impact Assessment to complete for NPF4, Human rights should be embedded throughout the policy making process. Scotland’s National Performance Framework¹⁰ now includes the human rights outcome – 'We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination'. In developing NPF4 the Government will be looking at how it can deliver on the six key themes, including that on improving equality and eliminating discrimination.

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¹⁰ [https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/](https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/)
Proposed method and scope of assessment

4.5.2 Scottish Government guidance indicates evidence should be recorded and presented evidence issues which are identified as the policy develops. We will record such evidence.

Baseline Information

4.5.3 As part of the process supporting preparation of the Planning Bill, the accompanying Policy Memorandum\(^\text{11}\) set out that the Government was satisfied that the provisions of the Bill were compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

4.5.4 The principles derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, were also considered and taken into account during the preparation of the Bill. This includes the recognition that everyone has the right to participate in and exert control over decisions affecting their lives, wellbeing and human rights, as well as access to information relating to decision-making processes.

4.5.5 We are current aware of the following issues which have a human rights dimension

- The Government is consulting on draft Housing to 2040 principles. Principle 15 is set out as ‘everyone has a right to an adequate home’. The UK has ratified seven core United Nations human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Article 11 of ICESCR states that everybody has the right to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing.

- In the response of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (the EHRC) to the UK Government’s eighth periodic report to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the EHRC noted the lack of residential and transit accommodation across Great Britain routinely affects Gypsy / Traveller women’s right to an adequate standard of living.

- The First Minister’s Advisory Group on Human Rights Leadership recommended that a new human rights framework for Scotland should include a "right to a healthy environment".

- Principle 1 of the Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement states ‘The overall framework of land rights, responsibilities and public policies should promote, fulfil and respect relevant human rights in relation to land,'

\(^\text{11}\) [https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Bills/Planning%20(Scotland)%20Bill/SPBill23PMS052017.pdf](https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Bills/Planning%20(Scotland)%20Bill/SPBill23PMS052017.pdf)
contribute to public interest and well-being, and balance public and private interests.’

4.6 Island Communities Impact Assessment

Introduction to Island Communities Impact Assessment

4.6.1 The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 introduced a new duty for relevant authorities to have regard to island communities in carrying out their duties, including through the preparation of an island communities impact assessment. The assessment should describe the likely significantly different effects of a policy, assess the extent to which it can be developed or delivered to improve or mitigate the outcomes for island communities and explain the financial impact of this mitigation.

Outcome of screening process

4.6.2 We are committed to undertaking an Island Communities Impact Assessment.

Proposed method and scope of assessment

4.6.3 We propose to undertake a programme of engagement in early 2020 which provides island communities and authorities an opportunity to influence the development of NPF4. We plan to organise stakeholder focussed events in Kirkwall (Shetland), Stornoway (Western Isles), Rothesay (Isle of Bute) and Kyle of Lochalsh (access to Skye). We will engage directly with Island authorities, and other bodies with a particular interest in island matters directly on the development of NPF4. Where opportunities arise, such as the Convention of the Highlands and Islands, we will support consideration of NPF4.

4.6.4 This will lead to a draft Islands Communities Impact Assessment accompanying the draft NPF4 when it is laid in Parliament in September 2020.

4.6.5 The Islands Communities Impact Assessment\textsuperscript{12} published (June 2019) after Stage 2 of the Planning Bill contained a number of issues relating to national planning policy. These are outlined in Table 5 below.

\textsuperscript{12} \url{https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-bill---post-stage-2-island-communities-impact-assessment/}
### Table 5. Issues relating to national planning policy as outlined in the Islands Communities Impact Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improving national spatial planning policy (NPF4)</strong></td>
<td>Consideration should be given to the scale of impacts of a project when identifying national developments, rather than just the scale of the development itself. NPF should go further to support regionally important priorities as well as national projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Making plans that deliver housing in an islands context</strong></td>
<td>The very different housing markets in island authority areas should be recognised and any requirements for additional information on viability at the plan allocation stage should not apply. After Stage 2 of the Planning Bill, the very different housing requirements and markets in island communities was again emphasised by the island authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing land</strong></td>
<td>There was some concern that if the NPF set housing numbers for some areas, but not others, then it might create a two tier planning system with infrastructure investment being directed to those areas with the highest numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closing the Gap</strong></td>
<td>Alternative housing delivery models, such as self-build, are already well established in the islands. The Argyll and Bute Standard House Project was noted as a good example of innovation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infrastructure, funding and innovation</strong></td>
<td>For infrastructure provision to align with planning there needs to be a statutory duty. It was emphasised that any infrastructure levy will need to be flexibly applied. In an island context, there would be benefit from a levy being chargeable only in the case of a small area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Baseline information

4.6.6 In developing NPF4 the Government will be looking at how it can deliver on the six statutory outcomes, including increasing the population of rural areas of Scotland. The Scottish Government has established a Ministerial Population Task Force to address population concerns by making communities across Scotland attractive places to live, work, bring up families and move to.

4.6.7 Relevant additional information relating to issues such as population distribution and out-migration of young people particularly relevant to island populations can be found in Appendix B.
5  Economy

5.1  Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment

Introduction to Business and Regulatory Impact assessment

5.1.1 The Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) will be used to analyse the cost and benefits to businesses and other organisations when preparing National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), with the purpose of using evidence to identify the proposals that best achieves policy objectives while minimising costs and burdens as much as possible. Preparation will take account of the five principles of better regulation – transparency, accountability, proportionality, consistency and that regulation is targeted where appropriate.

Outcome of screening process

5.1.2 The Scottish Government recommend and encourage the completion of a BRIA as best practice. In keeping with this, a BRIA will be undertaken to assess costs, benefits and risks that may arise as a result of policy changes included in NPF4.

Proposed method and scope of assessment

5.1.3 The Programme of Engagement sets out the process for involving a wide range of stakeholders in the preparation of NPF4. This includes stakeholders in the private (including business), public and third sectors who may be impacted by possible policy changes.

5.1.4 Background information notes on key policy topics most likely to be considered when preparing draft NPF4 have been prepared and published. These notes set out what our existing planning policies are; what has changed since they were introduced; and some of the key issues that we will want to discuss with individuals and stakeholders during the early engagement period.

5.1.5 This engagement will help inform the preparation of proposed revised policies for inclusion in the draft NPF4 that will be laid before the Scottish Parliament in September 2020. Draft NPF4 will be accompanied by a partial BRIA, to encourage comment from businesses and groups likely to be affected by the proposals.

5.1.6 Formal consultation on the contents of Draft NPF4 will be undertaken with stakeholders at the same time that the draft is being scrutinised by the Scottish Parliament. This will involve engagement with business representatives and other stakeholders to identify whether proposed policy changes are likely to have an impact on them and what these are likely to be. In addition to being invited to submit written comments, bespoke discussion will take place with individual representatives of those sectors most likely to be impacted by the proposals.
5.1.7 The Partial BRIA will, in particular, look at the impact of proposals on micro and small businesses, including consideration of the following issues:

- the variation in the regulatory burden between a self-employed, micro, small, medium and a large business;
- whether compliance flexibility options could assist a micro, small, medium business to meet the requirements of the proposal;
- the distribution of benefits of the proposal between a self-employed, micro, small, medium business;
- the extent of compliance by a self-employed, micro, small, or medium business versus large business; and
- the relative impact on a self-employed, micro, small, or medium business of penalties for non-compliance – for example, by expressing costs as a percentage of turnover.

5.1.8 A finalised BRIA, approved by the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning will be published alongside NPF4 in 2021. The expectation is that the BRIA will include:

- a description of who will be affected by the proposed plans and policy changes in NPF4;
- a full description of the costs and benefits to those parties arising from plan and policy changes;
- an estimate of the costs and benefits.

Baseline information

5.1.9 The aim of NPF4 is to set out where development and infrastructure is needed in Scotland to support sustainable and inclusive growth to 2050 and support this with planning policies on nationally important land use planning matters. It will have the status of ‘development plan’ for decision making purposes, meaning it will be used for day to day decision making on planning applications.

5.1.10 The following sectors are likely to be directly influenced by these policies:

- Developers (including business / Landowners / Communities / individuals);
- Public sector (including the Scottish Government and local authorities and key agencies);
- Organisations (including charity and voluntary) in third sector.

5.1.11 Where businesses may be affected, these could be across a range of sectors including (retail, digital, energy, food and drink, natural resources, tourism etc.)
5.1.12 When preparing the BRIA, options will be assessed against the status quo or ‘do minimum’ situation. This helps draw out the implications of no or minimal action and will also act as the baseline against which to assess any other policy options being considered. If proposals go further than minimal action, we will engage with relevant stakeholders to try and quantify the impacts of proposals against existing baselines and set these out in the final BRIA. Consideration of the rationale for the policy intervention will take account of the National Performance Framework and the Government’s Economic Strategy.
## Next Steps

### 7.1.1 To start the early engagement stage, we have opened our Call for Ideas which runs until the 31 March. During this period we have invited all individuals and stakeholders to participate in our ScotPlan 2050 roadshow, as well as inviting any written comments at this early stage. Should you wish to provide written comments, please send these to us at [scotplan@gov.scot](mailto:scotplan@gov.scot) along with a completed [Respondent Information Form](mailto:scotplan@gov.scot).

### 7.1.2 A draft NPF4 will be laid in Parliament for consultation around September 2020 for a period of 120 days. Public consultation for both the draft NPF4 and the supporting SEA Environmental Report will run alongside Parliament’s consideration. Following this formal consultation, the Scottish Government aims to lay a revised draft version in Parliament for approval in 2021.