

**Research Project:
Habitats Regulations
Appraisal of National
Planning Framework 4 – Initial
HRA Screening Record**

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Executive Summary

1 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) will be a long-term spatial plan to 2045 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. 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 previous 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.

2 In addition, NPF4 will designate as 'National Developments' certain developments or classes of development for which Scottish Ministers have established the need in principle. The National Developments as set out in the draft NPF4 are as follows:

1. Central Scotland Green Network
2. National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network
3. Urban Mass/Rapid Transit Network
4. Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions
5. Circular Economy Materials Management Facilities
6. Digital Fibre Network
7. Islands Hub for Net Zero
8. Industrial Green Transition Zones
9. Pumped Hydro Storage
10. Hunterston Strategic Asset
11. Chapelcross Power Station Redevelopment
12. Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure
13. High Speed Rail
14. Clyde Mission
15. Aberdeen Harbour
16. Dundee Waterfront
17. Edinburgh Waterfront
18. Stranraer Gateway

3 In compliance with the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), more commonly known as the 'Habitats Regulations', NPF4 is the subject of a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA). The aim of the HRA is to establish whether the adoption of NPF4, including its spatial and thematic policies and National Developments, could result in adverse effects on the integrity of any 'European sites', either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

4 To date, the following HRA work has been completed:

- the methodology to be adopted during the HRA of NPF4 was set out in the *Habitats Regulations Appraisal of National Planning Framework 4 – HRA Methodology*, and
- a baseline data gathering exercise was completed and is reported in the *Habitats Regulations Appraisal of National Planning Framework 4 – Baseline Information Report*.

5 The next stage in the HRA process is to determine whether there may be likely significant effects from NPF4 on any European sites. This is often referred to as 'HRA screening' or the 'test of likely significant effects'. The purpose of HRA screening is to determine, in view of best available scientific knowledge, whether a plan (or project), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, could have likely significant effects on the qualifying features of a European site. In relation to NPF4, the objective is therefore to 'screen out' those elements of the Plan – including policies and National Developments – for which it can be stated, without any detailed appraisal, that significant effects are unlikely on any European site. Where likely significant effects are identified, or if there is reasonable scientific doubt, then a policy or National Development is 'screened in' and the next stage in the process must be initiated and a detailed appropriate assessment undertaken.

6 This HRA Screening Record sets out the methods adopted to test the draft NPF4 for likely significant effects on the qualifying features of European sites. It considers all European sites in Scotland, as well as those in the north of England and Northern Ireland for which there may be impact pathways linking NPF4 to the qualifying features.

7 No likely significant effects were identified from the draft spatial strategy or planning policies. Although there are numerous policies which promote or support types of development that have the potential to result in likely significant effects, the policies themselves do not make specific allocations or commitments to a specific quantum or location of such development. As such, the policies are unable to result in any likely significant effects on European sites. The draft spatial strategy and National Planning Policy elements of NPF4 have therefore been screened out of further assessment.

8 Based on the list of 18 National Developments, likely significant effects have been excluded for 7, and these are therefore screened out of further assessment. These are:

- Central Scotland Green Network
- National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network
- Urban Mass/Rapid Transit Networks

- Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions
- Circular Economy Materials Management Facilities
- Digital Fibre Network.
- Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure.

9 No likely significant effects have been identified from these National Developments on any European sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. This is because they are: a) environmentally positive, b) because they lack clear spatial definition and cannot therefore be assessed, or c) because there are no realistic pathways for any identified impacts to significantly affect the qualifying features of any European site. These National Developments will not therefore be taken forward to the appropriate assessment.

10 Likely significant effects could not be dismissed for the remaining National Developments. These have therefore been screened in and must be subject to further appraisal as part of the appropriate assessment stage of the HRA. At this stage, consideration can be given to the requirement for mitigation to ensure that the projects brought forward under these National Developments do not adversely affect the integrity of any European sites.

1. Introduction

Overview of National Planning Framework 4

- 1.1 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) will be a long-term spatial plan to 2045 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. 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 previous 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.
- 1.2 NPF4 will be very different to the previous National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3), with a longer time horizon to 2045, 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.
- 1.3 NPF4 will address the following high-level outcomes:
 - meeting the housing needs of people living in Scotland including, in particular, the housing needs for older people and disabled people
 - improving the health and well-being of people living in Scotland
 - increasing the population of rural areas of Scotland
 - improving equality and eliminating discrimination
 - meeting any targets relating to the reduction of emission of greenhouse gases, and
 - securing positive effects for biodiversity.

1.4 In addition, NPF4 will designate as 'National Developments' certain developments or classes of development for which Scottish Ministers have established the need in principle. The National Developments are as follows:

1. Central Scotland Green Network
2. National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network
3. Urban Mass/Rapid Transit Network
4. Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions
5. Circular Economy Materials Management Facilities
6. Digital Fibre Network
7. Islands Hub for Net Zero
8. Industrial Green Transition Zones
9. Pumped Hydro Storage
10. Hunterston Strategic Asset
11. Chapelcross Power Station Redevelopment
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13. High Speed Rail
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15. Aberdeen Harbour
16. Dundee Waterfront
17. Edinburgh Waterfront
18. Stranraer Gateway

The Habitats Regulations

1.5 Under the Habitats Regulations¹, a network of sites has been designated across Scotland and its marine environment for the purposes of nature conservation. This network comprises sites known as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA). SACs are designated for the protection of habitats and non-avian animal species of conservation concern. SPAs are designated to protect rare or vulnerable species of bird, as well as all regularly occurring migratory bird species.

1.6 Prior to the UK's exit from the European Union (EU), Scotland's SACs and SPAs were part of a wider European network of such sites known as the 'Natura 2000 network'. They were consequently referred to as 'European sites'. Now that the UK has left the EU, Scotland's SACs and SPAs are no longer part of the Natura 2000 network but form a part of a UK-wide network of designated sites referred to as the 'UK site network'. However, it is current Scottish Government policy to

¹ The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), more commonly referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations'.

retain the term 'European site' to refer collectively to SACs and SPAs (including any which are designated following the UK's exit from the EU).

- 1.7 The Habitats Regulations or, for reserved matters, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), require that any development plan or proposal which is not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation of a European site, and which is likely to have a significant effect on such as site, must be subject to an 'appropriate assessment' of the implications for the conservation objectives of that site. Generally, such plans or proposals may only be approved if the 'competent authority' has ascertained, by means of an appropriate assessment, that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the European site(s).
- 1.8 The procedure to be applied is known as 'Habitats Regulations Appraisal' (HRA)².
- 1.9 In addition to fully designated European sites, the Habitats Regulations also apply to those sites in the earlier stages of the designation process and which are referred to as 'candidate' or 'proposed' European sites.
- 1.10 For the purposes of this HRA we have also given consideration to Wetlands of International Importance (more commonly known as 'Ramsar sites').
- 1.11 For the remainder of this document, the term 'European site' is therefore used to refer to fully designated SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites as well as candidate or proposed European sites.
- 1.12 Since NPF4 constitutes a 'plan' within the meaning of the Habitats Regulations, it is necessary for a HRA to be completed. This will seek to establish whether the adoption of NPF4, including its spatial and thematic policies, could result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of Scotland's European sites.

HRA Work Completed to Date

- 1.13 AECOM was appointed by Scottish Government to conduct the HRA of NPF4. Prior to the preparation of this document, the following work was carried out as part of the HRA process:
 - the methodology to be adopted during the HRA of NPF4 was set out in the *Habitats Regulations Appraisal of National Planning Framework 4 – HRA Methodology* (AECOM, 2020a). The methods were submitted to the NPF4 HRA Steering Group, comprising representatives from Scottish Government and NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)), and were agreed by all parties, and

² In the past, the term 'appropriate assessment' has been used to describe both the overall process and a particular stage of that process. The term 'Habitat Regulations Appraisal' has come into use in order to refer to the process that leads to an appropriate assessment, thus avoiding confusion. Throughout this document, HRA is used to refer to the overall procedure required by the Habitats Regulations.

- a baseline data gathering exercise was completed and is reported in the *Habitats Regulations Appraisal of National Planning Framework 4 – Baseline Information Report* (AECOM, 2020b). As part of this exercise, the following information was collected:
 - ❖ all European sites designated since the publication of NPF3
 - ❖ any changes to European sites included in the HRA of NPF3 which have been made since its publication (e.g. changes to their conservation objectives, changes to qualifying features etc.)
 - ❖ details of all plans and strategies which will be considered as part of the in-combination assessment of effects on European sites arising from NPF4
 - ❖ new and potentially relevant research conducted since the publication of NPF3 which may inform the HRA of NPF4, and
 - ❖ a review of the buffer areas which will be applied as part of the 'ecological screening' element of the HRA, based on available information from contemporary research.

1.14 The information collected during the baseline data gathering exercise has been and will be used to inform all of the subsequent stages of the HRA of NPF4.

Quality Assurance

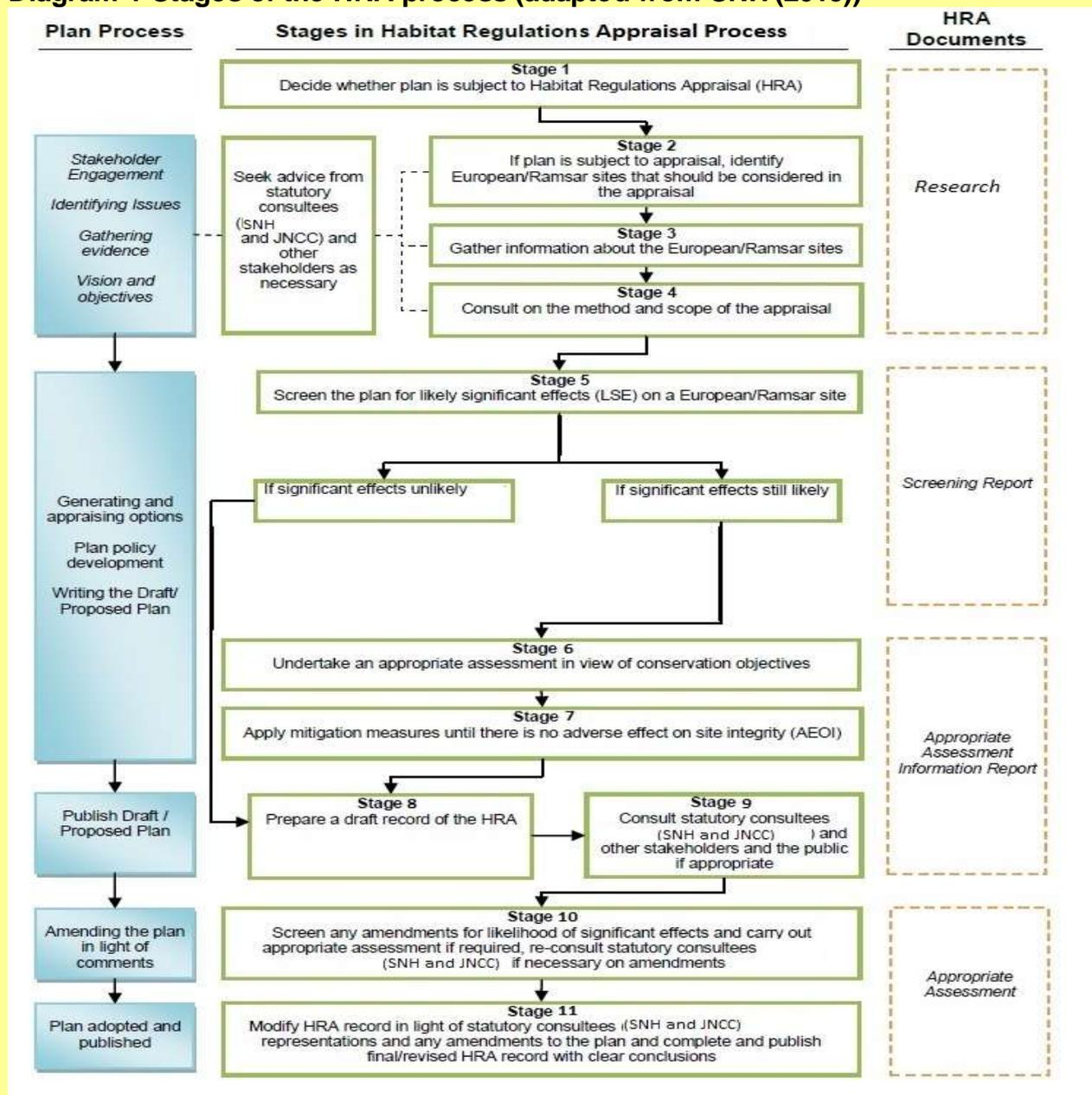
- 1.15 This document has been prepared in accordance with the AECOM Integrated Management System (IMS). Our IMS places emphasis on professionalism, technical excellence, quality, as well as covering health, safety, environment and sustainability management. All AECOM staff members are committed to maintaining our accreditation to those parts of BS EN ISO 9001:2015 and 14001:2015, as well as BS OHSAS 18001:2007 that are relevant to a consultancy service.
- 1.16 All ecologists involved in the HRA of NPF4 are members, at the appropriate level, of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and adhere to their strict Code of Professional Conduct.

2. The HRA Process

Overview

2.1 The Habitats Regulations do not prescribe a particular methodology for carrying out an appraisal of plans. NatureScot (formerly SNH) recommend an approach, as described in SNH (2015), which is outlined as a series of thirteen steps. However, with cognisance of recent case law (refer to Table 1, below) clarifying when mitigation can be taken into account in the HRA process, for the HRA of NP4 has been revised to constitute eleven stages (see Diagram 1). Further guidance published by NatureScot on HRA (SNH, 2014) also sets out the methods for assessing whether plans will affect a European site.

Diagram 1 Stages of the HRA process (adapted from SNH (2015))



Relevant Case Law

- 2.2 As a consequence of the UK’s exit from the EU, it was necessary for various amendments to be made to the Habitats Regulations. These changes were required to ensure that Scotland continues to maintain the same standard of protection afforded to European sites. The Habitats Regulations remain in force, including the general provisions for the protection of European sites and the procedural requirements to undertake HRA.
- 2.3 Scottish Government published guidance on the changes to the Habitats Regulations in December 2020 (Scottish Government, 2020). This guidance has been considered when preparing this document. However, as made clear by Scottish Government, the procedural requirements for HRA remain unchanged.
- 2.4 Although the UK is no longer part of the EU, a series of prior rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) are relevant and have been considered when preparing this document. These rulings are summarised in Table 1. The implications of this case law for HRA in Scotland is discussed in NatureScot guidance (SNH, 2014; SNH, 2015; SNH, 2019).

Table 1 Case law relevant to HRA of NPF4

Case	Ruling
People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta (C-323/17)	The ruling of the CJEU in this case requires that any conclusion of ‘no likely significant effect’ on a European site must be made prior to any consideration of measures to avoid or reduce harm to the European site. The determination of likely significant effects should not, in the opinion of the CJEU, constitute an attempt at detailed technical analyses. This should be conducted as part of the appropriate assessment.
Waddenzee (C-127/02)	The ruling in this case clarified that appropriate assessment must be conducted using best scientific knowledge, and that there must be no reasonable scientific doubt in the conclusions drawn.
Commission of the European Communities v UK (C-6/04)	The opinion of Advocate-General Kokott of 9th June 2005 in this case clarified that, while there must be no reasonable scientific doubt in the conclusions of appropriate assessment, <i>“it would... hardly be proper to require a greater level of detail in preceding plans [rather than planning applications] or the abolition of multi-stage planning and approval procedures so that the assessment of implications can be concentrated at one point in the procedure. Rather, adverse effects on areas of conservation must be assessed at every relevant stage of the procedure to the extent possible on the basis of the precision of the plan. This assessment is to be updated with increasing specificity in subsequent stages of the procedure”</i> .
Holohan and Others v An Bord Pleanála (C-461/17)	The conclusions of the Court in this case were that consideration must be given during appropriate assessment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ effects on qualifying habitats and/or species of a SAC or SPA, even when occurring outside of the boundary of a European site, if these are relevant to the site meeting its conservation objectives, and

-
- effects on non-qualifying habitats and/or species on which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend and which could result in adverse effects on the integrity of the European site.
-

T.C Briels and Others v Minister van Infrastructuur en Milieu (C-521/12)

The ruling of the CJEU in this case determined that compensatory measures cannot be used to support a conclusion of no adverse effect on site integrity.

HRA Screening

- 2.5 In accordance with the process recommended by NatureScot shown in Diagram 1, and the agreed HRA methodology for NPF4 set out in AECOM (2020a), following baseline data gathering the next stage is to determine whether there may be likely significant effects from the Plan on European sites. This is shown as Stage 5 on the NatureScot process illustrated on Diagram 1 and is often referred to as 'HRA screening' or the 'test of likely significant effects'.
- 2.6 The purpose of HRA screening is to determine, in view of best available scientific knowledge, whether a plan (or project), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, could have likely significant effects on the qualifying features of a European site. For this purpose 'likely' was taken to mean 'possible'. Moreover, a 'significant' effect is one which could undermine the conservation objectives of a European site (SNH, 2015).
- 2.7 In relation to NPF4, the objective is therefore to 'screen out' those elements of the Plan – including policies and National Developments – for which it can be stated, without any detailed appraisal, that significant effects are unlikely on any European site.
- 2.8 Where it is identified that there are likely significant effects, or if there is reasonable scientific doubt, then a policy or National Development is 'screened in' and the next stage in the process must be initiated and a detailed appropriate assessment undertaken.

3. Methodology

Geographic Scope

- 3.1 There is no pre-defined guidance that dictates the physical scope of an HRA of a plan document. Therefore, in considering the geographic scope of the HRA screening for NPF4, the source-pathway-receptor model was used, rather than simply relying on arbitrary 'zones'. The source-pathway-receptor approach is a standard tool in environmental assessment. In order for an effect to occur, all three elements of this mechanism must be in place. The absence or removal of one of the elements of the mechanism means there is no likelihood for an effect to occur. Where an impact is predicted to occur, this does not necessarily imply that the effect is significant.
- 3.2 To further clarify, a source would be an impact which arises due to a strategy, policy or National Development contained with NPF4. This could be, for example, waterborne pollution generated during construction activities. A pathway is a connection between the impact source and a European site. An example would be the aforementioned pollution travelling downstream via a watercourse. In the case of HRA, the receptor is a qualifying feature of a European site, or something upon which a qualifying feature relies (e.g. habitat). Accordingly, waterborne pollution (source) generated during construction may travel several hundred metres (or further) downstream via a watercourse (pathway) to a population of freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera* which is a qualifying feature of a European site (receptor). Should the impact be sufficiently large, this may cause reduced feeding success of the mussels, and have a significant effect, for example where this causes individuals to die.
- 3.3 Using the source-pathway-receptor approach, all European sites within Scotland were considered during the HRA screening of NPF4. In addition, European sites in the north of England and in Northern Ireland which could also be affected by policies or National Developments of NPF4 were also considered.
- 3.4 Information on Scotland's European sites was obtained from the NatureScot SiteLink website (<https://sitelink.nature.scot/home>). Information of European sites in England was obtained from Natural England Designated Site View (<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/>). For Northern Ireland, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) website was used (<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/protected-areas>).

Impact Sources

- 3.5 When applying the source-pathway-receptor approach, the potential impacts which could arise from policies or National Developments was considered. Although the specific impacts which could arise may differ, broadly speaking, development promoted by strategy or policy or brought forward by National Developments could give rise to various categories of impact. The broad categories of impact sources considered during the HRA screening stage of NPF4 are set out in Table 2.

Table 2 Categories of impact source considered during HRA screening of NPF4

Impact category	Brief description
Direct loss of habitat	The direct loss of habitat from within the boundary of a European site. This may include the loss of a habitat type which is itself a qualifying feature of a site, or the loss of habitat that is used by qualifying species for commuting, foraging and/or sheltering.
Loss of functionally-linked habitat	The loss of habitat which is outside of the boundary of a European site, but which is critical to its functioning. For example, the loss of grassland used by foraging geese belonging to a nearby SPA.
Waterborne pollution	Including, for example, suspended sediment or run-off of water containing other pollutants such as hydrocarbons or chemicals. Effluent discharges would also be included in this category.
Airborne pollution	This encompasses both dust (i.e. particles of sufficiently large size to coat vegetation and interfere with photosynthesis) and atmospheric pollutants that can be toxic to vegetation or contribute to nitrogen deposition (and thus eutrophication). The latter mainly constitutes oxides of nitrogen (NOx) associated with combustion such as exhaust stacks and vehicle exhausts, and ammonia associated particularly with industrial processes and agriculture.
Hydrological changes	Impacts which alter the hydrological conditions either within a European site or in an area used by the qualifying features of a European site. For example, reduced flows in a watercourse due to impoundment, or changes to groundwater flows or volumes due to abstraction. These changes can have multiple effects on habitats and species.
Changes to coastal processes	Activities which interfere with the natural, dynamic nature of coastal processes, including erosion and deposition.
Disturbance of qualifying species	This could be physical disturbance, for example due to the movement of vehicles or vessels in proximity to qualifying species, or due to noise and/or vibration. The latter may occur at greater distances. Disturbance could arise either during the construction or operational phase of a development. Recreational disturbance caused by increased human presence is also included in this category.
Barriers and/or displacement	Barriers to the movement of qualifying species, which can either be physical (for example a dam in a river) or physiological (for example, the attraction of migratory fish towards the outflow of a hydro-electric scheme. Displacement may also occur due to the presence of new infrastructure (for example a wind farm).

Injury or mortality	The direct injury or mortality of a qualifying species, either during the construction or operation of a new development. For example, injury or death of a bird due to collision with an operational wind turbine.
Changes to predator-prey dynamics	This could arise in multiple ways but such changes could have detrimental impacts on qualifying species. An example may be the installation of perching sites (e.g. new security fencing around infrastructure) in an otherwise open area of habitat used by nesting waders. The provision of features which can be used for perching by raptors can increase predation rates of nesting waders.
Spread of invasive non-native species	Invasive non-native species can have detrimental impacts on native species and habitats. Their spread can occur during construction and operation of a development, and via multiple pathways (for example via watercourses or on the treads of construction machinery).

Impact Pathways

- 3.6 Having identified relevant impact sources that may arise from policies and National Developments, it was necessary to consider the pathways by which these impacts could reach the qualifying features of European sites, in order for effects to occur.
- 3.7 To provide an initial focus to the assessment, a screening buffer of 20km was applied around spatially defined policies or National Developments. All European sites within this distance were examined. However, this buffer was refined for the different impact source categories set out in Table 2, above. These 'impact pathway buffers' were based on best available research, wherever possible. The adopted impact pathway buffers are set out in Table 3.
- 3.8 Related to the impact pathway buffers were 'species-specific buffers' which were adopted to determine the distance within which a particular species may occur outside of a given European site, but still be connected with that site (i.e. the distance which a species may travel from a European site to use 'functionally-linked habitat'). Rather than being applied around a spatially defined policy or National Development (as for the impact pathway buffers), these species-specific buffers were applied around relevant European sites. These species-specific buffers are presented in Table 4. Again, these were based on best available evidence.
- 3.9 Details of the rationale and research behind the adopted species-specific screening buffers is provided in the *Habitats Regulations Appraisal of National Planning Framework 4 – Baseline Information Report*.
- 3.10 Where there was no evidence on which to base species-specific buffers, the following general buffers were applied for groups of species:
- breeding seabirds – 100km
 - other general breeding birds – 10km, and
 - general non-breeding birds – 10km.

3.11 The buffers described above and set out in Tables 3 and 4 were used as a guide during the HRA screening stage only. They allowed for European sites which may be linked to policies or National Developments to be identified, and for these to then be investigated further. The source-pathway-receptor model was still adopted to test whether significant effects were likely to arise, rather than relying simply on a European site lying within set buffer distance.

Table 3 Adopted impact pathway buffers

Impact	Screening buffer distance
Direct loss of habitat	Within European site boundary.
Loss of functionally-linked habitat	Depends on the species in question. See Table 4 for distances at which species may be connected to European sites (species-specific buffers).
Waterborne pollution	No buffer used – relies on their being a hydrological connection to a European site according to the source-pathway-receptor model.
Airborne pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 – 500m for dust generation. • 200m for emissions from road traffic. • 10 -15km for emissions from stacks.
Hydrological changes	No buffer used – relies on their being a hydrological connection to a European site according to the source-pathway-receptor model.
Changes to coastal processes	Initial 20km screening buffer retained for changes to coastal processes.
Disturbance of qualifying species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500m for general noise and/or visual disturbance in terrestrial environment. Considerably larger in marine environment (species-specific buffers). • 1.5 – 15km for increased recreational disturbance.
Barriers and/or displacement	Depends on the species in question. See Table 4 for distances at which species may be connected to European sites.
Injury or mortality	Depends on the species in question. See Table 4 for distances at which species may be connected to European sites.
Changes to predator-prey dynamics	Depends on the species in question. See Table 4 for distances at which species may be connected to European sites.
Spread of invasive non-native species	Generally within 100m, except where hydrological connectivity could result in spread further afield.

Table 4 Species-specific buffers

Species	Screening buffer distance
Invertebrates	
Marsh fritillary <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>	1.5km
Freshwater pearl mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>	Use of a screening buffer not appropriate for this species. The possibility of an impact pathway for freshwater pearl mussel relies on there being hydrological connectivity to a policy or National Development, rather than being located within a certain distance.
Fish	
Sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i>	Use of a screening buffer not appropriate for fish species. Pathway for impacts depends largely on there being a hydrological connection between a policy or National Development and the qualifying fish species of a given SAC. The source-pathway-receptor approach must therefore be adopted, and distances over which effects could occur will vary accordingly.
Brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i>	
River lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>	
Atlantic salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>	
Amphibians	
Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	500m
Mammals	
Bottlenose dolphin <i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	Use of a screening buffer not appropriate for this species. The population belonging to the Moray Firth SAC is understood to travel as far south as the Firth of Forth. Therefore, policies or National Developments within the boundary of the SAC or anywhere along the coastline as far as East Lothian may have an impact pathway to this species.
Harbour porpoise <i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	50km
Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	40km
Grey seal <i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	135km
Harbour seal <i>Phoca vitulina</i>	50km
Breeding birds	
Red-throated diver <i>Gavia stellata</i>	8km
Black-throated diver <i>Gavia arctica</i>	10km
Hen harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>	2km
Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>	5km
Peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	2km
Short-eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	2km
Golden eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	6km
Golden plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	3km
Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	2km
Fulmar <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	1,200km
Manx shearwater <i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	2,365km
Gannet <i>Morus bassanus</i>	509km
Storm petrel <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	336km

Lesser black-backed gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	236km
Puffin <i>Fratercula arctica</i>	265km
Non-breeding Birds	
Whooper swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	5km
Greylag goose <i>Anser anser</i>	20km
Pink-footed goose <i>Anser brachyrhncus</i>	20km
Greenland white-fronted goose <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>	8km
Barnacle goose <i>Branta leucopsis</i>	15km

The Spatial Strategy

3.12 Part 1 of the draft NPF4 sets out Scottish Government's draft Spatial Strategy to 2045. It sets out a vision for how planning will deliver a net zero Scotland and how all parties will work together to build:

- Sustainable places;
- Liveable places;
- Productive places; and
- Distinctive places.

3.13 Recognising that each part of Scotland can make a unique contribution to achieving this vision, NPF4 identifies regional priorities to be taken forward.

3.14 Although the Spatial Strategy refers to projects, both those currently proposed and those which may be brought forward in future, the purpose of the Spatial Strategy is to set out the overall vision of NPF4, in order to guide local development plans and decisions on local planning applications across Scotland and which will themselves be subject to HRA where required. It is therefore for individual local planning authorities to determine how the Spatial Strategy of NPF4 should best be achieved.

Policy Screening

3.15 Based on guidance published by NatureScot (SNH, 2015), policies were screened out of having likely significant effects on a European site where any of the following reasons applied:

- they are environmentally positive
- they will not themselves lead to any development or other change
- they make provision for change but could have no conceivable effect on a European site. This can be because there is no pathway between the policy and the qualifying features or a European site, or because any effect would be positive
- they make provision for change but could have no significant effect on a European site (i.e. the effect would not undermine the conservation objectives of a European site), or
- the effects of a policy on any particular European site cannot be ascertained because the policy is too general. For example, a policy may be screened out if, based on absence of detail in the policy, it is not possible to identify where, when, or how the policy may be implemented, where effects may occur, or which sites, if any, may be affected.

- 3.16 Any 'criteria-based' policy (i.e. those that simply list criteria with which development needs to comply) or other general policy statements that have no spatial element were also screened out. Likewise, policies that simply 'safeguard' an existing resource (e.g. existing green infrastructure) by preventing other incompatible development, were also screened out.
- 3.17 The appraisal then moved on to consider any policies with a definable spatial component. Consideration could then be given as to whether likely significant effects could be dismissed due to a lack of connectivity to any European site for one of the following reasons:
- a potentially damaging activity may occur as a result of the policy but there is no pathway connecting it to a European site (due to distance, for example)
 - there are no European sites vulnerable to any of the activities that the policy will deliver in that part of Scotland, or
 - the policy will not result in any damaging activities.

National Development Screening

Initial Screening of National Developments

- 3.18 Suggestions for national developments were invited from any interested party during the call for ideas stage of preparing NPF4. Suggestions were also received in response to consultation on the NPF4 Position Statement, which was published in November 2020, and also arose during the preparation of Indicative Regional Spatial Strategies.
- 3.19 Suggested National Developments can be viewed on the Scottish Government's mapping platform³. These suggestions were screened at a relatively high level to inform the Scottish Government's early consideration of suggestions received. As set out above, this was done following the source-pathway-receptor approach. The level of detail provided for each proposal varied. For some, the proposal either had no spatial definition or was purely aspirational and did not involve any specific development.
- 3.20 Where possible, therefore, potential impacts from each proposed candidate National Development were identified, as well as pathways to European sites or the qualifying features of European sites, by which likely significant effects could arise.
- 3.21 In cases where a suggested National Development had no spatial definition but clearly promoted infrastructure or activities which could give rise to substantial impacts, it was concluded that there was the potential for likely significant effects on the qualifying features of European sites.
- 3.22 A conclusion of no likely significant effects was made only for those suggested National Developments which clearly involved no development or development in a location from which pathways for effects on European sites were highly unlikely to exist.

³ [ND Candidate Mapping Experience ver.1.0 \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.arcgis.com)

3.23 This initial HRA screening exercise was carried out in tabular form, with the following questions being asked:

- *Is the proposal either clearly or broadly spatially defined?*
- *Does the proposal actually involve development?*
- *Is there an obvious link, connection or pathway to the qualifying features of a European site?*
- *Is there potential for likely significant effects?*

Further Screening of National Developments for Consultation

3.24 Following the initial screening of suggested National Developments, a list of 18 National Developments was compiled for inclusion in the draft NPF4. Several of these National Developments include multiple proposals / suggestions received.

3.25 A more detailed HRA screening exercise was carried out for all of the proposed National Developments, revisiting the outcomes of the initial screening where necessary. Possible impacts which could arise from each proposal were identified, in addition to any possible pathways to European sites or the qualifying features of European sites. This was done using the source-pathway-receptor model, assisted by the impact pathway buffers and species-specific buffers described above.

3.26 Consideration was given to the qualifying features of identified European sites, including their ecology, vulnerabilities, the site conservation objectives, and the way in which a National Development or its associated proposals may prevent a site from meeting its conservation objectives. On this basis, European sites which could be subject to likely significant effects from each proposal were identified.

3.27 Where a clear or potential pathway was identified by which impacts could give rise to likely significant effects on the qualifying features of a European site, in the absence of any mitigation, a National Development was screened in. Furthermore, since the purpose of HRA screening is to constitute an initial sift without undertaking detailed technical analyses, the assessment erred on the side of caution and screened in likely significant effects on European sites unless there was a high degree of confidence that they could be dismissed. All screened-in National Developments will be subject to more detailed analysis as part of the appropriate assessment stage of the HRA before the NPF4 is finalised and adopted.

3.28 At this stage, unlike the initial high-level screening of the National Developments, if a National Development or associated proposal was general in nature and included no spatial definition, it was screened out of further assessment. This follows NatureScot (SNH, 2015) guidance, as set out in Paragraph 3.16, above.

In-combination Assessment

3.29 In-combination (i.e. cumulative) effects can result from individually insignificant but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time or concentrated in a location (CIEEM, 2018).

- 3.30 It is a requirement of the Habitats Regulations that the impacts of any plan are not considered in isolation but in combination with other plans and projects that may also be affecting the European site(s) in question.
- 3.31 Consideration was therefore given to the potential for the plans, programmes and strategies in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the north of England listed in the *Habitats Regulations Appraisal of NPF4 – Baseline Information Report* to act in combination with any policies or National Developments of NPF4 to result in likely significant effects.

4. HRA Screening Results

Policy Screening

- 4.1 No likely significant effects were identified from any draft policy. Although there are numerous policies which promote or support certain types of development that have the potential to result in likely significant effects, the policies themselves do not make specific allocations or commitments to a specific quantum or location of such development. All of the policies of NPF4 have therefore been screened out of further assessment.

National Development Screening

- 4.2 A summary of the HRA screening of the proposed National Developments for public consultation and associated proposals is provided in Table 5. A fuller description of the analysis for each is provided in Appendix A.
- 4.3 Of the 18 proposed National Developments for public consultation, 7 have been screened out of further assessment, as described in Table 5. These are:
- Central Scotland Green Network
 - National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network
 - Urban Mass/Rapid Transit Networks
 - Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions
 - Circular Economy Materials Management Facilities
 - Digital Fibre Network, and
 - Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure.
- 4.4 Likely significant effects from these proposed National Developments on European sites have been excluded, either because they are environmentally positive, because they lack clear spatial definition and cannot therefore be assessed, or because there are no realistic pathways for any identified impacts to significantly affect the qualifying features of any European site.
- 4.5 These 7 National Developments will not therefore be taken forward to the next stage and the appropriate assessment.
- 4.6 Likely significant effects were identified from the remaining proposed National Developments.

Table 5 HRA screening summary for NPF4 remaining proposed National Developments

National Development	Summary of test of likely significant effects	HRA screening outcome
Central Scotland Green Network	<p>The Central Scotland Green Network seeks an expansion of green infrastructure and supports a greener approach to development. At this stage, the proposals under this National Development are too broad and generally promote environmental benefits / enhancements. For these two reasons, this National Development can be screened out of further assessment.</p>	Screened out
National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network	<p>This National Development seeks to promote active travel across the country. It will focus on strategic gaps and links that are required, links to multi-modal hubs, and prioritising investment in areas to reduce inequalities. It has very little spatial definition, and the precise route of connections is unknown at this stage.</p> <p>Therefore, in accordance with NatureScot guidance, this National Development has been screened out of further assessment as, in the absence of information on active travel routes, effects on particular European sites cannot be identified.</p>	Screened out
Urban Mass/Rapid Transit Networks	<p>This National Development covers Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, and associated regions. It is therefore only broadly spatially defined. However, projects brought forward under this National Development will be urban in nature. The only European sites in the vicinity of these three cities are marine or estuarine and are unlikely to be significantly affected.</p>	Screened out
Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions	<p>Applies to the Glasgow and Edinburgh catchment areas and seeks to build on the benefits of the Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership. This proposal is only very broadly spatially defined but could potentially be connected to European sites within the Clyde and Forth estuaries.</p> <p>However, this National Development is essentially environmentally positive (seeking to manage and treat urban water run-off) and would not have likely significant effects of an adverse nature on this, or any other, European site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.</p>	Screened out

Circular Economy Materials Management Facilities	<p>This proposed National Development applies nationwide and establishes the need for sites and facilities to retain the resource value of waste materials in order to maximise the use of materials in the economy and minimise the use of virgin materials in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>This proposed National Development has insufficient spatial definition to identify possible links to European sites across Scotland.</p>	Screened out
Digital Fibre Network	<p>It is likely that projects brought forward under this National Development will be associated with existing infrastructure (e.g. roads and housing).</p> <p>This National Development also applies to the whole of Scotland and has no spatial definition and cannot be linked to any European sites.</p>	Screened out
Islands Hub for Net Zero	<p>There are several proposals associated with the National Islands Centre for Net Zero National Development on Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles. Those which involve the creation of new ports, or the extension of existing port facilities (including any land reclamation), have the potential to significantly affect foraging seabirds from several nearby SPAs during the breeding season. Impacts which could arise include pollution of the marine environment, changes to coastal processes, and disturbance and/or displacement of birds due to construction activities or increased ship movements. The Arnish Renewables Base and Deep Water Port near Stornoway is also in very close proximity to the Inner Hebrides and the Minches SAC, designated for harbour porpoise. This species could be impacted in the same way as seabirds above, but could also be subject to collision with moving vessels.</p> <p>The onshore proposals for Shetland has the potential to significantly affect several European sites depending on the precise route of, for example, new pipelines.</p>	Screened in

Industrial Green Transition Zones	<p>This National Development includes multiple proposals involving new projects. These include locations around St Fergus, Peterhead and the Firth of Forth, and have the potential to result in several impacts such as loss of functionally-linked habitat and disturbance of qualifying species. Offshore works in the Firth of Forth also have the potential to effectively act as a barrier (due to disturbance) to migratory Atlantic salmon and/or lamprey species of the upstream River Teith SAC.</p>	Screened in
Pumped Hydro Storage	<p>Generally applies to the whole of Scotland but includes a specific proposal for Cruachan 2, at Loch Awe. This project would either be within or directly adjacent to the Glen Etive and Glen Fyne SPA (designated for golden eagle) and the Loch Etive Woods SAC (designated for woodland habitats and otter). It could therefore result in the direct loss of qualifying habitat and/or loss of habitat supporting these qualifying species. There is also the potential for pollution impacts on qualifying and supporting habitats, and for disturbance to the qualifying species both within and outside of the boundaries of the European sites.</p> <p>Although locations are unknown, additional projects brought forward under this National Development could be linked to other European sites across Scotland, especially as impacts to the freshwater environment can occur over relatively large distances.</p>	Screened in
Hunterston Strategic Asset	<p>The location of this proposed National Development is well defined, allowing for straightforward screening. The nearest SPA for wide ranging seabird species is Ailsa Craig SPA, approximately 50km distant. This is within the foraging range adopted by this HRA screening when considering the distance at which seabirds may travel beyond SPA boundaries. Any increase in marine vessel movements to and from Hunterston could impact on foraging by the qualifying seabirds of Ailsa Craig SPA (and potentially on other SPAs further afield), depending on the routes taken and the numbers involved.</p> <p>The only terrestrial SPAs within 20 km are Renfrewshire Heights SPA and Arran Moors SPA. These are both designated for breeding hen harrier, and are both situated beyond the core foraging range of this species from the Hunterston Strategic Asset National Development.</p> <p>The nearest SACs are Bankhead Moss, Beith SAC, Cockinhead Moss SAC, and Dykeneuk Moss SAC. All are approximately 15 km distant and designated for raised bog habitat. This is well beyond the distance at</p>	Screened in

which any impacts (e.g. air quality changes) could reach these sites to have any effect.

Therefore, likely significant effects from this proposed National Development cannot be excluded for SPAs designated for breeding seabirds. However, it is very unlikely to have any significant effects on terrestrial SPAs or SACs.

Chapelcross
Power Station
Redevelopment

Chapelcross Power Station is within 5 km of the Solway Firth SPA and the Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar site, designated for a range of wintering waterbirds which could occur in grassland within and surrounding the site. It is also within core foraging range (20 km) of pink-footed geese belonging to the Castle Loch, Lochmaben SPA. There is the potential for loss of functionally-linked habitat (either directly or due to disturbance displacement).

Screened in

The site also appears to be hydrologically linked via the Gullielands Burn to the River Annan, and downstream to the Solway Firth SAC. Development activities could therefore impact upon qualifying lamprey species, for example through waterborne pollution or hydrological changes to the watercourse.

Although no detail of specific proposals is provided, any industrial development which involves emissions to air from stacks (e.g. for hydrogen generation) could have impacts on European sites up to 15 km distant. Raeburn Flow SAC and Solway Mosses North SAC are both approximately within this distance of Chapelcross. They are both designated for raised bog habitats which are sensitive to air quality impacts and may therefore be significantly affected.

Strategic
Renewable
Electricity
Generation and
Transmission
Infrastructure

This National Development includes the following nationwide, generic proposals: National Renewable Energy Generation Network; High Voltage Electricity Transmission Network; Onshore Development Ancillary to Offshore Wind Farms; and, Interconnectors from the Highlands and Islands to the Central Belt. All of these proposals have a substantial likelihood of causing likely significant effects on European sites, depending on where they take place. However, there is no spatial definition associated with these proposals and, following NatureScot (SNH 2014) guidance, this National Development screens out as effects on any particular European site cannot be identified.

Screened out

High Speed Rail

The proposed national development is to support the implementation of new infrastructure to improve rail capacity and connectivity on the main cross-border routes, the East and West Coast Mainlines. There is very little spatial information available. However,

Screened in

	development in proximity to the Firth of Forth could have likely significant effects, for example through disturbance of qualifying species using functionally-linked habitat, or through the direct loss of such habitat.	
Clyde Mission	The footprint includes the parts of the Clyde Gateway, River Clyde Waterfront, North Clyde River Bank and River Clyde Corridor frameworks and aims to repurpose vacant and derelict land. A range of development types are possible. Impact sources will depend on the nature of projects brought forward, but could include: the spread of invasive non-native species, waterborne and airborne pollution, the loss of functionally-linked habitat, disturbance of species using functionally-linked habitat, and increased recreational pressure. There are three European sites which could be linked to projects under this National Development: the Inner Clyde SPA, Black Cart SPA and Clyde Valley Woods SAC. Other European sites are too distant for there to be realistic pathways for effects (e.g. they are beyond the distance at which air quality changes could cause significant effects, or they are remote upland sites which are unlikely to experience a significant increase in recreational pressure).	Screened in
Aberdeen Harbour	<p>Projects brought forward under this National Development are likely to be immediately adjacent to (or even within) the River Dee SAC and in close proximity to the Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA. Further afield, Aberdeen Harbour is within the foraging range of qualifying seabirds of Fowlsheugh SPA and several of the SPAs covering the Firth of Forth, in addition to grey seal and bottlenose dolphins associated with the following: Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC, Isle of May SAC and Moray Firth SAC.</p> <p>Depending on the nature of projects brought forward, there is the potential for a range of impacts to result in likely significant effects on the qualifying features of these European sites.</p>	Screened in
Dundee Waterfront	The Dundee Waterfront National Development and associated proposals may include projects directly within the Firth of Tay and Eden Estuary SAC and Firth of Tay and Eden Estuary SPA. There is the possibility of direct habitat loss from within these site boundaries, and for other impacts including changes to coastal processes, loss of functionally-linked habitat, disturbance of qualifying species, mortality or injury of qualifying species, and the spread of invasive non-native species. In addition to the aforementioned sites, there are pathways for these impacts to affect the following European sites: River Tay SAC, Isle of May SAC, and Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC.	Screened in

Edinburgh
Waterfront

This National Development is at least broadly spatially defined, and covers sites between Leith and Granton. Projects progressed under this National Development could be immediately adjacent to, or otherwise in close proximity to the Firth of Forth SPA, Imperial Dock, Leith SPA, and the Outer Firth of Forth and St Andrews Bay Complex SPA. Birds associated with the Forth Islands SPA may also occur along the coast in the vicinity of this National Development. Projects involving works within the marine environment could impact upon grey seal, harbour seal and/or bottlenose dolphin from the Isle of May SAC, Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC, Firth of Tay and Eden Estuary SAC, and/or the Moray Firth SAC.

Screened in

Stranraer
Gateway

Onshore developments within the towns of Stranraer or Cairnryan are unlikely to affect any European site. Developments in the surrounding area could be connected to the Glen App and Galloway Moors SPA, or the Loch of Inch and Torrs Warren SPA (for example resulting in the loss of functionally-linked habitat used by qualifying Greenland white-fronted geese and/or hen harrier).

Screened in

Projects which involve works in the marine environment, particularly piling, or which increase the number of ship or other vessel movements, could impact on marine mammals through noise disturbance and/or injury or mortality. From Northern Ireland, grey seals from The Maidens SAC could be affected. Likewise, qualifying seabird species from the Ailsa Craig SPA (or more distant SPAs designated for seabirds) foraging outside of the boundary of the site could also be impacted by disturbance from the same sources.

The precise nature of transport infrastructure projects associated with the South West Scotland Strategic Transport Corridor is unknown. In the event of upgrades to the A75 or the A77 roads this could impact on the following sites due to direct habitat loss, waterborne pollution, airborne pollution and/or disturbance of qualifying species: Lendalfoot Hills Complex SAC, Flow of Dergoals SAC, River Bladnoch SAC, Solway Firth SPA, and Loch Ken and River Dee Marshes SPA. Other transport infrastructure projects are not defined at this stage but could affect additional sites.

In-combination Assessment

- 4.7 No likely significant effects were identified from any of the policies contained within NPF4. Although there are several which promote development which is of a type which has the potential to result in likely significant effects, none are sufficiently spatially defined to allow such a conclusion to be drawn. For this reason, at the level of detail provided, it is similarly impossible to identify where there could be in-combination effects from the policies or developments promoted by other national (or local) plans, programmes or strategies.
- 4.8 The possibility of in-combination effects arising from interactions between the 11 screened in National Developments and other plans or projects will be considered in more detail during the appropriate assessment stage of the HRA of NPF4.
- 4.9 For the 7 National Developments which have been screened out, no in-combination effects have been identified, as set out in Table 7. However, this assessment has been carried out on the basis of the limited detail available at the high-level of a national plan. Further consideration of in-combination effects must be given during appraisals at lower levels of planning, including for individual proposed projects.

Table 7 In-combination assessment for screened-out National Developments

National Development	Assessment of in-combination effects	In-combination effects identified?
Central Scotland Green Network	The proposals under this National Development lack spatial definition and do not permit for thorough consideration of in-combination effects. Moreover, projects brought forward under this National Development are expected to be generally environmentally positive, so adverse in-combination effects are unlikely.	No
National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network	The proposals under this National Development lack spatial definition and do not permit for thorough consideration of in-combination effects.	No
Urban Mass/Rapid Transit Networks	The urban location of projects brought forward under this National Development means it is unlikely that impacts will be sufficient to significantly affect European sites. This is true when considering such projects individually, or in-combination with other projects which may be undertaken in the same urban settings.	No
Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions	Projects brought forward under this National Development are expected to be environmentally positive, and it is unlikely that adverse impacts will arise which could act in-combination with other plans or projects to result in significant effects.	No
Circular Economy Materials Management Facilities	<p>For the reasons set out in the row above, in-combination effects with development at Hunterston have not been identified.</p> <p>Aside from Hunterston, this National Development lacks sufficient spatial detail to permit thorough consideration of in-combination effects. However, air quality impacts from projects brought forward under this National Development could result in significant effects, and this would include through the cumulative impacts arising from other airborne pollution sources (e.g. industry, transportation etc.).</p>	No
Digital Fibre Network	This National Development has no spatial definition and it is therefore impossible to consider in-combination effects. However, the nature of projects brought forward under Digital Fibre Network are unlikely to be of a scale or nature, or in a location, which gives rise to significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.	No

Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure	The proposals under this National Development lack spatial definition and do not permit for thorough consideration of in-combination effects. However, projects brought forward under this National Development have the potential to cause significant effects, both alone and in-combination with other projects or plans, depending on their location.	No
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5. Conclusions

- 5.1 No likely significant effects were identified from any of the policies contained with NPF4 and all have been screened out of further assessment in subsequent stages of the HRA.
- 5.2 Although there are numerous policies which promote or support types of development, the policies themselves do not make specific allocations or commitments to a specific quantum or location of such development. As such, the policies will not result in likely significant effects on European sites. Where specific plans or proposals are brought forward at lower levels of the planning system, and as further detail becomes available, these will be subject to all relevant assessment and appraisal requirements. This will include at the level of local development plan and for individual projects which are proposed and supported by relevant policies of NPF4.
- 4.10 Of the 18 National Developments for public consultation, 7 have been screened out of further assessment:
- Central Scotland Green Network
 - National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network
 - Urban Mass/Rapid Transit Networks
 - Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions
 - Circular Economy Materials Management Facilities
 - Digital Fibre Network, and
 - Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure.
- 4.11 Likely significant effects from these National Developments on European sites were excluded, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. This is because they are: a) environmentally positive, b) because they lack clear spatial definition and cannot therefore be assessed, or c) because there are no realistic pathways for any identified impacts to significantly affect the qualifying features of any European site. These five National Developments will not therefore be taken forward to the next stage of appropriate assessment.
- 4.12 Likely significant effects were identified from the remaining 11 National Developments. These will all require further appraisal as part of the appropriate assessment stage of the HRA of NPF4. It is at this stage this next stage consideration can and will be given to the requirement for mitigation measures to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites from projects brought forward under these National Developments.

6. References

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