

TABLE 1 - LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

TITLE OF PLAN/PROGRAMME Banff and Macduff Landscape/Environment Improvement Strategy.		
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY Planning & Environmental Service, Aberdeenshire Council.		
Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (para numbers refer to Schedule 1 of the Regulations)	Likely to have significant environmental effects? YES/NO	Summary of significant environmental effects
1(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	Yes in the long term.	Restructuring and improvement of existing public spaces in Banff and Macduff. Identification of future public spaces, and input of fundamental landscape design guidance/briefing associated with future large scale development in the two towns.
1(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	Yes,	The Landscape/Environment improvement strategy is designed to act as supplementary planning guidance to the development plan. The Landscape/Environment improvement strategy has the potential to affect all public spaces throughout both towns.
1(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	Yes	A fundamental objective of the Landscape/Environment improvement strategy is designed to coordinate with all other environment improvement initiatives taking place in both towns, and promote sustainable design and development.

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		The Landscape/ environment improvement strategy will promote Aberdeenshire Council policies and initiatives such as promoting healthy lifestyle, promoting biodiversity, promoting additional native woodland planting, coordinating with the local footway and cycle network and work towards meeting the local populations needs from public spaces generally.
Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (para numbers refer to Schedule 1 of the Regulations)	Likely to have significant environmental effects? YES/NO	Summary of significant environmental effects
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	Yes, likely to have positive environmental effects in relation to current problems.	The main environmental problems are general poor amenity associated with many of the towns' public spaces, and related problems such as lack of shelter, poor biodiversity, lack of environmental design and networking.
1(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	Yes	The Landscape/Environment Improvement Strategy is designed to be compatible with, and is relevant to all such initiatives. The Landscape/Environment Improvement Strategy is designed to identify an environmentally appropriate spatial structure which is compatible with other known existing environmental initiatives, and provides a framework to guide and possibly locate future environmental initiatives.
2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the	Not sure	All effects are intended to be environmentally positive. The probability of effects relates to elements of the strategy

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effects		<p>being taken forward to implementation, and although this is an objective of the strategy it cannot be comprehensively predicted at this stage.</p> <p>The identification of potential, primarily landscaping, projects to be taken forward to implementation. Environmental effects are intended and designed to be positive.</p>
2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	Yes	The strategy by its nature is designed to have a positive cumulative environmental effect by identifying and coordinating multiple projects to ultimately create a network of predominately green space improvements.
2(c) the transboundary nature of the effects	No	Beyond the settlement boundaries of Banff and Macduff there are no identified significant effects.
2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	No	At this stage the objectives of the landscape/environment improvement strategy are beneficial to human health and to the environment, and the risk from accidents etc cannot be ascertained.
<p>Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (para numbers refer to Schedule 1 of the Regulations)</p>	<p>Likely to have significant environmental effects? YES/NO</p>	<p>Summary of significant environmental effects</p>
2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	Yes	The Landscape/Environmental Improvement Strategy has the potential to effect all the public spaces in Banff and Macduff. The size of population potentially effected is estimated to be around 7540 people in 2006.

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<p>2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ii exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or iii intensive land-use 	<p>No</p>	<p>Due to the nature of the strategy, any implementation schemes will result in an increase in ecological and potentially economic value for the areas concerned.</p>
<p>2(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Duff House estate is a designated Designed Landscape, is covered by a Conservation Area designation, and carries a Protected Area status as defined in the local plan. The Landscape/Environmental improvement strategy takes into account and respects the objectives of the designations covering this area and will also take into account proposals forwarded by Historic Scotland and other appropriate agencies in relation to the future management of this area.</p>

TABLE 2 – SUMMARY

SUMMARY

- The local authority is preparing the 'Landscape Strategy' partly as supplementary information for town and country planning.
- The Landscape Strategy has the potential to contribute to the landscape and visual impact section of an EIA for a future development in the Banff and Macduff area; and in particular, the Landscape Strategy may set the framework for lower level actions that require an EIA, depending on the scale of future development in and around Banff and Macduff.
- The Landscape Strategy may result in modification of existing small local areas, and the implementation of new public spaces with future development.
- The Landscape Strategy is designed to have long-term beneficial effects on the environment.
- The Habitats Directive does not affect the strategy. However, the strategy has some effects on areas of landscapes, which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.
- The strategy is not prepared for adoption through legislative procedure.
- Besides, the Landscape Strategy is not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provision. The document, which identified the Landscape Strategy specifically as a requirement, is the action plan for the Banffshire Partnership. This is a community group, which is endorsed by the Banff, and Macduff Steering Group affiliated to Aberdeenshire Town's Partnership (ATP). Effectively the request to carry forward the Landscape Strategy has come from community-based groups with ATP.
- For an SEA to be carried out for a qualifying plan or programme, the following conditions must be fulfilled: -
 - The qualifying plans or programmes must be subject to preparation or adoption (or both) by a responsible authority at national, regional or local level; OR
 - The qualifying plans or programmes must be prepared by a responsible authority for adoption through legislative procedure; AND
 - The qualifying plans or programmes must be required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provision.
- The subject strategy is subject to preparation by a local authority at a local level. Nevertheless, it is not required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provision.
- Thus although the strategy may set the framework for future development consents and is likely to have some significant beneficial environment impacts, it is our view that SEA is not required.

