####

**Development Management Consultation Thresholds and Standing Advice**

Version 4, August 2025

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## Context

We've updated our December 2022 consultation framework on how we engage with planning authorities, consistent with Scottish Government development management regulations. We continue to focus our effort where we can add most value, whilst aligning with National Planning Framework and wider Scottish Government planning policy and guidance.

Where we’re consulted, we’ll provide advice accordingly to the planning authority in our role as a statutory consultee. The planning authority should consider our advice, alongside all other relevant National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and local development plan policies and material considerations, before reaching a decision. Matters of judgement on whether and when consultation with us is required is a matter for the relevant planning authority.

We’ve made the following significant changes to the consultation framework:

* Now solely focuses on development management applications. Visit our [planning webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/land/planning/) for further advice on how we engage in development planning.
* National developments status is no longer an automatic consultation trigger, due to these now including networks of several smaller scale proposals, in addition to the single large-scale projects in NPF4. Please consult us on national developments only where they meet a threshold(s) set out in [Table 1](#_Table_1_SEPA’s) below.
* The flood risk section reflects the [Chief Planner’s letter of 11 June 2025](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4-policy-22-flood-risk-and-water-management-chief-planner-letter-june-2025/) (which clarifies matters relating to NPF4 Policy 22).
* The private waste water drainage section includes limited additional private drainage proposals.
* We have added advice to assist when consultation is required for development on land with potential radioactive contamination.
* Thresholds have been amended for EIA, energy generation and waste management facilities. For example, we no longer wish to be consulted on all hydro schemes, only those which are EIA, pumped hydro schemes, or where they meet one of the other thresholds set out in [Table 1](#_Table_1_SEPA’s) below.
* Standing advice in [Table 2](#_Table_2_SEPA’s) has been updated to reflect current requirements and best practice advice.
* Table 3: Permitted development rights has been removed. Advice on peatland restoration has been added to the Peat and other carbon rich soils section of Table 2.

We’ll review this document approximately six months from the date of publication. Any comments or suggestions on the content should be emailed to planning.national@sepa.org.uk and will be considered as part of the review.

The types and thresholds of applications we wish to be consulted on are listed below in [Table 1](#_Table_1_SEPA). For applications that fall below the consultation thresholds in Table 1, please refer to the standing advice set out in [Table 2](#_Table_2_SEPA). Table 1 and 2 fulfil the requirements of Regulation 25 and Schedule 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.

* Please note that, following engagement with the Scottish Government, planning authorities (via Heads of Planning Knowledge Hub) and the National Planning Improvement Champion, we aim to respond to consultations within 21 calendar days, except for EIA applications, where we usually have 28 days, and DPEA requests. We’re also committed to responding within the timescales set out by the Scottish Government in relation to the Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI) framework. These timescales are dependent on adequate information being provided to SEPA at the time of consultation.
* We continue to support regular liaison with planning authorities. We are happy to discuss at liaison meetings where a development does not clearly fall within a specific category, or there are site-specific issues which our standing advice does not address, to determine if we can add value.
* Where a development is within an allocated site in a local development plan, and so that we can respond promptly, please only consult us when all the information outlined in the developer requirements, relevant to our remit, has been provided.

* Where we have provided pre-application advice, please only reconsult us when any requested information/plans/surveys are available.
* Similarly, when we have requested further information, please only reconsult us when all the requested information is available.
* We encourage pre-application discussion and early engagement on all types and thresholds of development outlined in [Table 1](#_Table_1_SEPA’s). Early and collaborative engagement at the pre-application stage can help identify and resolve issues of concern before an application is formally submitted and improve case handling. We would ask that pre-app engagement requests come direct from and are coordinated by the planning authority, alongside any other meeting requests relating to planning applications.

## Table 1 SEPA’s development management consultation framework

* Table 1 should be read as a whole. Even if the proposal is exempt from one category, we may require consultation under another category.
* When you consult us, please clearly indicate all categories/subcategories in Table 1 that apply to the application. This will help us respond promptly.
* Note that we’ll only provide flood risk advice where specifically requested to do so.
* If we receive a consultation without a clearly identified reason for consultation, then we won’t be able to respond until this has been clarified.
* For developments which fall below Table 1 thresholds, please see our standing advice in [Table 2](#_Table_2_SEPA).

|  **Reason for consultation/type of development** |  |
| --- | --- |
| A. Flood risk  | * Development at potential flood risk based on [SEPA’s Future Flood Maps](https://scottishepa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3098bbef089c4dd79e5344a0e1e7c91c&showLayers=FloodMapsBasic_2743;FloodMapsBasic_2743_0;FloodMapsBasic_2743_1;FloodMapsBasic_2743_2;FloodMapsBasic_2743_3;FloodMapsBasic_2743_4;FloodMapsBasic_2743_5;FloodMapsBasic_2743_6;FloodMapsBasic_2743_7;FloodMapsBasic_2743_8;FloodMapsBasic_2743_9;FloodMapsBasic_2743_10;FloodMapsBasic_2743_11;FloodMapsBasic_2743_12;FloodMapsBasic_2743_13;FloodMapsBasic_2743_14;FloodMapsBasic_2743_15) (they help identify if the site is within or near an area at flood risk) **or** where any other local information is available to make this judgement **and,** in both instances, where the development **is not** covered by [SEPA’s Flood Risk Standing Advice for Planning Authorities](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/nckhycrj/flood-risk-standing-advice.docx).

For developments where the only potential source of flood risk is from a small watercourse (which may not be shown in our future river flood map but is shown on our surface water and small watercourse future flood map, and a watercourse channel is visible nearby on the background map) we request that in the first instance local authority flood risk management colleagues assess the proposal against any information they hold to determine whether it may be at fluvial flood risk from the small watercourse, and if so, only consult us if they subsequently recommend that our advice is required.For development **not** covered by our [standing advice](#_Flood_risk) and when consultation with SEPA on flood risk is required, planning authorities should:* Ensure the applicant has provided at least the information outlined in the “[What should I do with this information](https://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmaps/FloodRisk/Landuseplanning)” section of our website.
* If a flood risk assessment (FRA) has been produced, ensure the developer has completed our [Flood risk assessment checklist](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/5hjii234/flood-risk-assessment-checklist.xlsx) before consulting us.
* Where a site has extant planning permission, advise where you consider it to be a factor in your assessment of the current use of the site, particularly where permission has been initiated but not completed/fully implemented. Where this is the case, please provide details of the extent of the development undertaken to date, including the footprint. This will help us determine whether there is any change in floodplain capacity or development vulnerability.
* Confirm which exception in [National Planning Framework Policy 22 (a),](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/02/national-planning-framework-4/documents/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/govscot%3Adocument/national-planning-framework-4.pdf) if any at all, applies to the development proposal. Please note that we cannot provide flood risk advice until this has been confirmed. It would also be helpful to have a brief summary of your considerations as planning authority in arriving at a judgement on which exception applies, where possible. Please note:
* Small scale extensions and alterations to existing buildings are covered by part b of policy 22 – such cases are covered by our [Flood risk standing advice](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/nckhycrj/flood-risk-standing-advice.docx) and consultation with us is not required.
* For exceptions (i) and (ii) please clearly indicate where the proposal involves landraising or loss of floodplain capacity (including where mitigation measures are proposed to address this). If there is no landraising or floodplain capacity loss involved, then the development is covered by our [Flood risk standing advice](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/nckhycrj/flood-risk-standing-advice.docx) and consultation with us is not required.
* For exception (iii) please clearly indicate whether (a) you are unsure if the development is for [a more vulnerable use](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/ht3bsekc/land-use-vulnerability-guidance.docx) or (b) you consider that the development might be for a more vulnerable use and clearly indicate where the proposal involves landraising or loss of floodplain capacity (including where mitigation measures are proposed to address this). If the development is for an equal or less vulnerable use and there is no landraising or floodplain capacity loss involved, then the development is covered by our [Flood risk standing advice](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/nckhycrj/flood-risk-standing-advice.docx) and consultation with us is not required.
 |
| B. Private waste water drainage | * Developments with private waste water drainage in an area identified in a policy in a local development plan as phosphorous sensitive (i.e. Policy 45 and 46 of the Perth and Kinross LDP and Policy 3 of the Inner Moray Firth LDP).
* Developments of >50 population equivalent (PE) with private waste water drainage within a sewered catchment area as shown on Scottish Water map. Prior to consultation, please ensure the applicant has provided justification why they cannot connect.
* Developments of >100 population equivalent (PE) with private waste water drainage discharging to land or to a watercourse not showing on the 1:50,000 OS map.

When consulting us please specify which of the above categories applies and note that we do not require consultation on development that connects to the public sewer. To calculate population equivalent (PE):* Domestic property: SEPA considers each property to have a PE of 5. For example, for 10 properties, 10 x 5 PE = 50 PE and for 20 properties, 20 x 5 PE = 100 PE.
* Non-domestic property: To calculate PE for a non-domestic property, multiply the maximum number of people who could use the system in a day by the Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) load for the specific type of property and divide by 60 then round up to the nearest whole number. The BOD load for different types of non-domestic properties can be found in the [British Water Code of Practice – Flows and Loads](https://www.britishwater.co.uk/page/Publications#wastewater%20treatment%20plant%20publications) (Table of loadings for sewage treatment systems). For example, a snack bar with 100 customers per day has a BOD of 19 grams per person/day, 100 x 19 = 1900g/day, divide this by 60 gives 31.7 which can be rounded up to 32 PE.
 |
| C. COMAH (Control of Major Accidents Hazards) and Hazardous Substances | * All development sites which store or handle dangerous substances in excess of the qualifying thresholds in the COMAH (Control of Major Accidents Hazards) Regulations described in [Schedule 1 of the Regulations](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/483/schedule/1/made). Common examples include proposals for (or changes to) large scale whisky sites, large scale chemical or agrochemical storage, toxic gas storage, LPG / LNG storage >50T, hydrogen storage >5T, and sites handling explosives.

Please note that where no individual dangerous substance is present in a quantity above or equal to the relevant threshold then consideration must be given to the aggregation of substances with similar properties as described in part 3 of [Schedule 1 of the Regulations.](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/483/schedule/1/made) For example, all flammable substances at an anaerobic digestion site includes raw biogas, upgraded biogas, support fuels etc.* All development sites with an existing Hazardous Substances consent, or requiring a new Hazardous Substance consent, or a change to an existing consent, under Town and Country Planning (Hazardous Substances) (Scotland) Regulations 2015.

The application should include a table which clearly identifies the category and/or name of dangerous substances stored, as described in [Schedule 1 of The Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/483/schedule/1/made), the maximum capacity held on site (mass expressed in tonnes) and an outline of proposed environmental protection measures.* A proposed development site that could increase the risk, and/or consequence of a major accident to the environment at existing sites covered by Hazardous Substances consent/COMAH sites. Example of an increased risk - a new development that has potential to have an incident that could initiate an event on the existing COMAH site i.e. significant fire risk. Example of an increased consequence - the proposed development site is considered an ‘at risk’ receptor and could be impacted because of a major accident from the existing COMAH site; or it may exacerbate the impacts of a major accident from the existing COMAH site i.e. introduce new or additional quantities of dangerous substances. Your environmental health colleagues may be able to assist you in determining this and when our advice is required.
 |
| D. Designated contaminated land special sites and development on land with potential radioactive contamination | * Development on designated contaminated land special sites at (1) Whitelees Road, Lanark (2) The Former Oil Refinery, Old Kilpatrick and (3) Pelikan Hardcopy Scotland Ltd, Turriff.
* Development on land with potential radioactive contamination. We advise you to first consult with your environmental health colleagues to determine this, and then only consult us if they recommend that our advice is required. Sites that could be affected by potential radioactive contaminated land may include:
* Disused airfields.
* Former radar stations.
* Former Royal Observer Corps bunkers.
* Clock/watch luminising sites.
* Historic and closed landfill sites.
* Old medical and animal research institutes.
* Known offshore contaminated areas.

Further background advice on these types of sites can be found in [Appendix 1](#_Appendix_1:_Land_1) below. |
| E. Development on peat and other carbon rich soils | * [Major developments](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-planning-series-circular-5-2009-hierarchy-developments/pages/1/) that are located on peatland and other carbon rich soils, e.g. as identified as Class 1, 2, 3 or 5 on the NatureScot [Carbon and Peatland 2016 map.](https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/planning-and-development-advice/soils/carbon-and-peatland-2016-map)

Please ensure when you consult us that you **confirm:**- Which exception in [NPF4 Policy 5 (c)](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/02/national-planning-framework-4/documents/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/govscot%3Adocument/national-planning-framework-4.pdf) you consider applies to the development.- Please discuss with us at a liaison or pre app meeting any developments that you consider are not an exception, but that you may still wish our technical advice on the mitigation hierarchy and whether it has been followed, so consultation arrangements can be agreed.  |
| F. Developments supported by Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) | * All developments in this category except:
* Wind farm developments of three or fewer turbines.
* Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).
* Solar arrays

Note the above exceptions may require consultation under another issue, for example if they include loss of floodplain capacity through landraising.* Offshore wind farms.
 |
| G. Energy generation (not supported by EIA) | * Pumped hydro schemes.
* Anaerobic digestion plants.
* Energy from waste.
 |
| H. Waste management facilities (not supported by EIA)  | * Landfills - new sites, extensions to existing landfills, extensions to operational lifetime and applications for reprofiling and changes in restoration
* Commercial composting operations.
* Bottom ash and fly ash processing.
* Hazardous waste processing.
 |
| I. Intensive farming (not supported by EIA) | * Rearing poultry or pigs intensively in an installation, (including extensions to existing facilities) with more than a total of -

(a) 40,000 places for poultry.(b) 2,000 places for production pigs (over 30 kilograms). Or(c) 750 places for sows.Before consulting us please ensure the applicant has clearly specified the maximum number of places the unit is capable of providing, as opposed to the proposed number which may be less than the maximum capacity, **and** that theyhave demonstrated the restrictions that would prevent an operator from stocking a higher number of places. For example, they could use a lower welfare system, such as caged birds, to stock a higher density of places, but could demonstrate the number would be restricted by indicating the number of drinkers and capacity of feed storage. |
| J. Flood protection works under S.56 of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 | * All development in this category.
 |
| K. Aquaculture | * All development in this category except shellfish and new or repositioning of feed barges.
 |
| L. Cemetery developments | * Only higher risk to the water environment sites in this category, including at pre-app, provided a site-specific hydrogeological risk assessment has been undertaken and the determining authority is then seeking our advice on interpretation or mitigation, as detailed in our advice on [Assessing Risks to Water Environment Associated with Burial Grounds](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/sfgjvgjk/burial-grounds-1.docx) and only after that assessment has been completed (and is provided).
 |

## Table 2 SEPA’s development management standing advice

Our standing advice offers best practice for those developments, or aspects of developments, which we consider can be addressed by following the advice below. The planning authority should judge how to apply this advice in each case. The advice of any of your in-house specialists will also help to inform your determination of the application. We won't seek to intervene or advise retrospectively on cases.

For applications that fall below the consultation thresholds in [Table 1](#_Table_1_SEPA’s), please refer to the standing advice set out below in [Table 2](#_Table_2_SEPA’s). Whilst we have no site-specific comments in relation to such applications, the following advice is provided to give our position and help you, as planning authority, meet legislative and policy requirements in your decision-making. Please note that our standing advice applies to development of all types and scales, and we may refer you to this even where applications meet our [Table 1](#_Table_1_SEPA’s) consultation thresholds.

For the avoidance of doubt, we don’t wish to be consulted on cases listed in [Table 2](#_Table_2_SEPA’s), even if the application in its current form does not conform with the advice below. This advice doesn’t constitute a formal objection or non-objection from us, as we haven’t assessed the application. Where there’s coverage of a particular issue within NPF4 or local development plan policies, we’d expect the application to be determined in line with these policies, and using balanced judgement. However, planning authorities can use our standing advice as a material consideration to inform their decision-making.

**Please note the updates under the** [**SEPA authorised activities**](#_SEPA_authorised_activities) **section below, in regard to the regulatory advice in this table, and visit our** [**Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations (EASR) webpage**](https://beta.sepa.scot/regulation/authorisations-and-compliance/easr-authorisations/) **for further advice and guidance on the regulation of water, waste management and industrial activities which will transition under EASR from 1 November 2025.**

| **Issue** | **Standing Advice for applications which fall below the consultation thresholds in Table 1 above** |
| --- | --- |
| Air quality | * In the first instance, ask your environmental health colleagues for advice on air quality and when to request an Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA), because they are the lead authority on these matters. If your environmental health colleagues require advice on issues relating to local air quality, particularly when development requires an AQIA (as per requirement thresholds in chapter 6 of the Environmental Protection Scotland (EPS) and the Royal Town Planning Institute Scotland (RTPI Scotland) [Delivering Cleaner Air For Scotland development planning and development manage guidance)](https://www.ep-scotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/DeliveringCleanerAirForScotland-18012017.pdf#page=21&zoom=100,91,95), and it is not a type of development we provide site specific advice on, then they should contact our air quality specialists directly at airquality@sepa.org.uk.
* Medium Combustion Plants (devices, such as boilers, in which fuels are burned to make use of the heat generated and with a net rated thermal input of 1MW - 50MW) must be registered with or have an authorisation from SEPA before they can operate. Visit our [medium combustion plant webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/pollution-prevention-and-control/medium-combustion-plant/) for more information. We recommend consultation with your environmental health colleagues to determine whether an AQIA is required. If your environmental health colleagues require advice on air quality matters relating to Medium Combustion Plant, then they should contact our air quality specialists directly at airquality@sepa.org.uk.
* Visit our [Air Emissions Risk Assessment for Environmental Permits webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/pollution-prevention-and-control/guidance/air-emissions-risk-assessment-for-environmental-permits/) for further guidance on the air emissions risk assessment required for a Pollution Prevention Control (PPC) Part A or Part B permit application or to vary an existing permit if air emissions are affected by the change.
* You can also find further advice and guidance by visiting our [air quality webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/air/air-quality/), the [Scottish Air Quality website](http://www.scottishairquality.scot/laqm/technical-guidance) and in the Scottish Government’s [Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 - Towards a Better Place for Everyone](https://www.gov.scot/publications/cleaner-air-scotland-2-towards-better-place-everyone/).
 |
| Aquaculture | **New or repositioning of feed barges*** Applicants need to ensure that the feed barge position will not impede seabed monitoring as a condition of their Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended) (CAR) licence.

**Shellfish applications*** Applicants should identify if a proposed shellfish farm is located within a designated shellfish water protected area, and it would be in their interest to liaise with the Food Standards Agency (Scotland) to determine if the area has complied with the guideline standards for faecal coliforms in biota.
* Outwith such areas, we recommend identification of Scottish Water assets, trade discharges or other private treatment works in the area as the potential input of coliforms to the water body from treatment works could affect the classification of shellfish grown. Regardless of location, land run-off, including that from grazing livestock, can affect water quality and shellfish classification. We consider marketability due to water quality issues to be a commercial risk to the applicant. The above issues should be considered when assessing the commercial viability of the shellfish farm. The Planning Authority may also wish to consider if there are other active shellfish or fin fish farms in the vicinity.
* Visit our [aquaculture webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/aquaculture/) for further advice and guidance, including details of those activities which may require authorisation by SEPA, how to apply for any necessary authorisations or contact us if you require further help or advice.
 |
| Cemetery developments | * Applicants should follow our [Assessing Risks to Water Environment Associated with Burial Grounds](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/sfgjvgjk/burial-grounds-1.docx) guidance to ensure the water environment is protected during the development and operation of the burial ground.
 |
| Construction activities – pollution prevention | * Applicants should identify any sensitive receptors, such as private water supplies or nearby watercourses and, if such sensitive receptors are present (in relation to groundwater and surface waters), provide a schedule of mitigation. This should be supported by annotated site-specific drawings which include reference to best practice pollution prevention and construction techniques and regulatory requirements. If appropriate, request applicants set out the daily responsibilities of an Environmental Clerk of Works and how site inspections will be recorded and acted upon.
* Visit our [construction webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/construction/) and [water run off from construction sites webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/pollution-control/water-run-off-from-construction-sites/) for advice to assist those involved in carrying out construction activities which may impact the water environment, along with details of those activities which may require authorisation by SEPA, how to apply for any necessary authorisations or contact us if you require further help or advice.
* Visit the [NetRegs website](https://www.netregs.org.uk/environmental-topics/guidance-for-pollution-prevention-gpp-documents/) for general environmental and regulatory guidance and best practice advice in relation to pollution prevention.
 |
| Construction activities – site waste management | * Applicants should demonstrate their proposals accord with legislation and best practice, applying the [waste hierarchy](https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-applying-waste-hierarchy/documents/) to waste produced during construction and operation of the development, and that there will be no discarding of materials that are likely to be classified as waste. Any such proposals would be unacceptable under waste management licensing. Such waste may include soils, welfare facility waste, surplus construction materials.
* Developers have responsibilities under the [Duty of Care](https://www.gov.scot/publications/duty-care-code-practice/) for waste. Waste removed from a site must be deposited at a suitably licensed site under the Waste Management Licensing (Scotland) Regulations 2011.
* Visit our [waste regulations webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/waste/) and [waste guidance webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/waste/guidance/) for further advice and guidance on sustainable waste management, including details of those activities which may require authorisation by SEPA, how to apply for any necessary authorisations or contact us if you require further help or advice.
 |
| Contaminated land | * Seek advice on land contamination issues from your contaminated land colleagues because they are the lead authority on these matters. If your contaminated land colleagues require advice on issues relating to the water environment, then they should contact our contaminated land specialists directly at contaminated.land@sepa.org.uk.
* Visit our [contaminated land webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/land/contaminated-land/) for further advice on our role and contact details.
 |
| Energy | **Energy Efficiency*** Ensure developments maximise energy efficiency opportunities and encourage the reuse of electrical and heat energy on site where possible. This can be achieved through site layout and design, building fabric and orientation, and access and connectivity.
* Where relevant, surplus heat, biogas or electricity should be recovered on site or made available to a third party where this is achievable.
* Information should be included to identify the source of energy (electricity and heat) for the proposal. Ensure developments utilise environmentally sensitive renewable energy and other low carbon technologies, where appropriately scaled, located, and mitigated.

**Additional information*** Proposals should be consistent with the principles of the energy cycle as identified within [SEPA’s Energy Framework](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/383806/sepa_energy_framework.pdf), in line with attaining the emission reductions targets set out in the Climate Change Plan update (CCPu) as informed by the Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Target) (Scotland) Act 2019.
* Energy statements should be prepared in line with the Scottish Government’s [Heat Demands: Planning Advice](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2013/06/heat-demands-planning-advice/documents/heat-pdf/heat-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/heat.pdf) and assess the technical feasibility and financial viability of heat network/district heating for the site, identifying any available existing or proposed sources of heat (within or outwith the site) and other factors such as where land will be safeguarded for future district heating infrastructure.
* Visit our [energy webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/energy/) for further advice.

**Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)*** Visit our [BESS webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/energy/battery-energy-storage-systems/) for advice on BESS applications, including details of any activities which may require authorisation by SEPA.
 |
| Engineering works in the water environment (including the carrying out of works or operations in the bed or on the banks of a river or stream) | * Applicants should investigate opportunities to improve the water environment, such as by deculverting and channel renaturalisation, for example by using two stage channels (refer our Engineering Activity Guide Channel Modification guidance for further information and advice, which will be available on our website) and maximise opportunities for blue/green infrastructure.
* An appropriate buffer zone, as detailed in Table 1 of our [Recommended Riparian Corridor Layer for use in Land Use Planning](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/puqhuwhn/recommended-riparian-corridor-note.docx) guidance, from the top of the bank, should be included around any water features from all built development including the construction activities. The guidance also contains details of how to access the Recommended Riparian Buffer width layer on [Scotland’s Environment Web map.](https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/)
* Applicants should ensure their potential development layout reduces or eliminates the need for engineering activities in the water environment such as channel straightening, resectioning and diversions, sediment removal, flood embankments or flood walls, culverts, bridges, bank modifications, diversions, and removal of riparian zone trees.
* Water engineering works, such as culverting, which are solely for land gain should always be avoided. See our [Position statement on culverts](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/150919/wat_ps_06_02.pdf).
* Where channel straightening, resectioning, diversion or realignment for restoration purposes is being considered, please refer to our Engineering Activity Guide Channel Modification guidance for more information and advice, which will be available on our website.
* When bank reinforcement is required, consideration should first be given to using [sustainable bank protection techniques](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/engineering/sustainable-riverbank-protection/) coupled with riparian tree planting, or a hybrid of sustainable and more traditional hard engineering approaches, before considering hard engineering approaches in isolation. If hard bank protection is required, consideration should first be given to burying it within the bank, rather than installing it on the bank face. Visit our [Sustainable riverbank protection webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/engineering/sustainable-riverbank-protection/) for more information and refer to our Engineering Activity Guide Bank Works guidance*,* which will be available on our website.
* Where culverts need to be replaced, they should be replaced by single span bridges whenever possible. If this is not possible, then bottomless culverts should be used that do not affect the bed or banks of the water course, which allow the free passage of migratory fish and other fauna at all times and which are designed to accommodate the 0.5% annual exceedance probability flows with an appropriate allowance for climate change. If appropriately sized bottomless culverts are not possible, information must be provided to justify why smaller structures are required. Please refer to our Engineering Activity Guide Crossings guidancefor more information and advice, which will be available on our website. Our [Climate change allowances for flood risk assessment in land use planning](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/jjwpxuso/climate-change-allowances-guidance_v6.pdf) guidance sets out required allowances for climate change. Whole-life (construction and maintenance) cost-benefit analyses should be used to help determine the relative costs of culverts vs. bridges and not just an assessment of the capital costs of construction.
* When bridges need to be replaced, they should be replaced by single span bridges whenever possible. If this is not possible, then bridges with as few piers as possible should be used. In all cases bridge decks should be raised as far above the design flood water surface elevation as possible to reduce the risk of debris or (parts of) trees becoming trapped and abutments set back from the bank top as far as possible. Please refer to our Engineering Activity Guide Crossings guidance for more information and advice, which will be available on our website.
* Visit our [reservoir webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/reservoirs/) for all reservoir queries.
* If the proposal is likely to impact on **flood risk**, consider whether to consult us as set out in [Table 1](#_Table_1_SEPA’s) Section A.
* Visit our [engineering webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/engineering/) for further good practice advice and guidance, including details of those activities which may require authorisation by SEPA, how to apply for any necessary authorisations or contact us if you require further help or advice.
 |
| Flood risk | * Refer to our [Flood Risk Standing Advice for Planning Authorities](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/nckhycrj/flood-risk-standing-advice.docx) guidance.
 |
| Forest removal and forest waste | * Development should minimise the extent of tree felling and proposals for reuse of forest material should be in line with our [Management of Forestry Waste](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/28957/forestry_waste_guidance_note.pdf) guidance.
* Visit our [forestry webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/land/forestry/) for further good practice advice and guidance, including details of those activities which may require authorisation by SEPA, how to apply for any necessary authorisations or contact us if you require further help or advice.
 |
| Groundwater and Groundwater dependant terrestrial ecosystems (GWDTE) | **Groundwater*** Groundwater can be adversely affected by a range of activities, including abstractions, ground engineering works, agriculture, land contamination, waste, and cemeteries, and there is specific legislation and guidance covering each activity. The applicant should demonstrate how the development has been designed to avoid adverse impact on both the quality and quantity of groundwater (and dependent wetlands and surface water features) where development includes for example engineering activities which take place on or below the ground, such as mining, quarrying, building activities and road construction.
* Visit our [groundwater webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/groundwater/) to find out more about how the proposed activity may have an effect on groundwater, how to comply with regulations aimed at managing and protecting it and activities which may require authorisation by SEPA.

**Groundwater Dependant Terrestrial Ecosystems*** Wetlands can moderate floods and droughts, improve drinking water quality, store carbon, provide habitats for wildlife and be a life-enhancing, tranquil place where the local community can find respite through connecting with nature. For small scale local developments, boggy and wetland areas should be protected and their biodiversity enhanced where possible.
* For larger developments where wetlands are a possibility, a Phase 1 habitat survey should be carried out for the entire site and the SNIFFER (2009) WFD95 – A Functional Wetland Typology for Scotland guidance may be used to help identify all wetland areas. National Vegetation Classification (NVC) surveys should be completed for any wetlands identified. Results of these findings should be submitted, including a map with all the proposed temporary and permanent infrastructure (including all the ancillary construction work areas, for example excavations, landraising and other groundworks, storage, laydown and working areas) overlain on the vegetation maps to clearly show which areas will be impacted and which avoided.
* The applicant should seek to ensure that all GWDTE are outwith a 10m radius of all activities, 100m radius of all excavations shallower than 1m and outwith 250m of all excavations deeper than 1m.
* If there are wetland ecosystems present, the planning submission should demonstrate how the layout and design of the proposal, including temporary construction works, avoids impact on such areas.
* Where the applicant demonstrates that avoidance is impossible, it should be ensured that the water supply to the surrounding wetland habitats is protected. Structures such as roads and tracks should ensure water can drain underneath them and clay plugs should be used to avoid linear features, such as cable routes, becoming preferential flow channels which could divert water supply away from existing wetlands so that the habitats do not dry out.
* Please refer to [Guidance on Assessing the Impacts of Developments on Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/a1yh0blq/guidance-on-assessing-the-impacts-of-developments-on-groundwater-dependent-terrestrial-ecosystems.docx) for further advice.
 |
| (Development in proximity of existing) groundwater and surface water abstractions which can include private water supplies | * Private water supplies (PWS) are the responsibility of owners and users and are regulated by local authorities. All private water supplies must be registered with the local authority environmental health department. As we do not hold these records, the local authority environmental health department should ensure that any PWS are properly identified as part of an application and should make any appropriate comments based on the information which they hold in relation to that supply.
* Roads, excavations, and other works associated with developments can disrupt groundwater flow and impact on groundwater abstractions such as private water supplies. If groundwater abstractions are identified, then the applicant should seek to ensure these are outwith a 10m radius of all activities, 100m radius of all excavations shallower than 1m and outwith 250m of all excavations deeper than 1m.
* If these buffers are not achieved, then applicants should demonstrate there will be no impact to the groundwater through a risk assessment. Please refer to [Guidance on Assessing the Impacts of Developments on Groundwater Abstractions](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/mfzpnjwb/guidance-on-assessing-the-impacts-of-developments-on-groundwater-abstractions.docx) for further advice.
* Please note that we do not comment on the alteration or the provision of alternative supplies, the acceptance of which can only be agreed between the developer and the supply owner.
 |
| Hydropower | * Visit our [hydropower webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/hydropower/) for further advice and guidance, including details of those activities which may require authorisation by SEPA, how to apply for any necessary authorisations or contact us if you require further help or advice. Further advice for applicants can also be found in the [Guide to hydropower construction good practice](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/34332/guide-to-hydropower-construction-phase-good-practice-guidance.pdf) and [Guidance for developers of run-of-river hydropower schemes.](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/383805/guidance-_for_developers_of_run_of_river_hydropower_schemes.pdf)
 |
| Intensive farming | * Please note that we have no remit in relation to odour, dust or noise where the proposal is below the [Pollution Prevention and Control (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (PPC 2012)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2012/360/contents/made) Schedule 1 threshold (refer section [I. Intensive farming (not supported by EIA)](#_I._Intensive_farming) above for thresholds). The Enforcing authority is the Local Authority Environmental Health Department.
* Under the Habitats Regulations (Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994) and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, the local planning authority are the competent authority who must satisfy themselves that there will be no adverse impact on any relevant designations from ammonia concentration, acid deposition and nutrient nitrogen deposition.
* Surface water proposals must adhere to [The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2011/209/contents) General Binding Rules 10, 11 and 21. Visit our [water regulations webpages](https://www.sepa.gov.uk/regulations/water/) for further advice and guidance to assist applicants, including details of those activities which may require authorisation by SEPA, how to apply for any necessary authorisations or contact us if you require further help or advice.
 |
| Minerals (other than oil, gas, coal, gold or silver) | * Applicants should demonstrate that development proposals for the sustainable extraction of minerals complying with NPF4 Policy 33 d) i – vii, to ensure they do not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. Proposals should be supported by an Operational Site Management Plan and an Aftercare and Restoration Plan. Further advice, including the specific environmental effects that should be addressed, can be found in the Scottish Government’s [Planning Advice Note 50: controlling the environmental effects of surface mineral workings](https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-advice-note-pan-50-controlling-environmental-effects-surface-mineral/), [Planning Advice Note 64: reclamation of surface mineral workings](https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-advice-note-pan-64-reclamation-surface-mineral-workings/documents/) and the Netregs [Extractive waste from mines and quarries](https://www.netregs.org.uk/environmental-topics/waste/managing-waste-materials/extractive-waste-from-mines-and-quarries/) guidance.
* While we do not directly regulate extraction of minerals, associated activities, such as groundwater abstractions, discharges, crushing and grinding, or importing waste material on site to process or use in restoration, may require SEPA authorisation. Visit our [regulation webpage](https://beta.sepa.scot/regulation/) and refer to our [Recovery and Disposal of Waste in Quarries](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/499002/guidance_recovery_-disposal_waste_quarries.pdf) for further advice and guidance.
* Note that consultation on non EIA mineral extractions may be required under another issue, for example if they are a major development on peatland.
 |
| Mining operations | * We recommend that applications for mining operations are supported by a site management plan which provides information on how the water environment will be protected.

**Stabilisation of mine workings with Pulverised Fuel Ash (PFA) grouts*** An appropriate risk assessment for the proposed stabilisation of mine workings with PFA grout should be undertaken. If the preliminary and simple risk assessments identify that the site is higher risk and conceptually complex, then a complex risk assessment is required. At this stage, the applicant should highlight this to us via the [Contact us web form](https://www2.sepa.scot/contactus). Consultation with The Coal Authority is also recommended.
* The pouring of grout below the water table is a controlled activity under General Binding Rule (GBR) 16 of the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (CAR)). GBR 16 includes a requirement that no material coming into contact with groundwater shall cause pollution of the water environment. The assessment should be undertaken in line with the guidance document: Stabilising mine workings with PFA grouts. Environmental code of practice. 2nd Edition, BRE Report 509 to assess whether the use of PFA grout will meet the requirements of GBR 16 and should primarily serve the developer to ensure no pollution occurs as a result of the activity. Visit our [water regulations webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/) for further details relating to CAR requirements.
 |
| Oil storage (including the carrying out of building or other operations or use of land for the purposes of providing or storing mineral oils and their derivatives) | * Visit our [oil storage webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/pollution-control/oil-storage-in-scotland/) for good practice advice and guidance, including details of those activities which may require authorisation by SEPA, how to apply for any necessary authorisations or contact us if you require further help or advice.
 |
| Peat and other carbon rich soils | * Applicants should demonstrate developments have been designed to ensure adverse impacts to peatland and other carbon rich soils are first avoided then minimised through best practice (NPF4 Policy 5d). The planning submission should demonstrate how the layout and design of the proposal, including for temporary construction works, avoids near natural peatland and areas of peat deeper than 1m in the first instance and then other carbon rich soils to avoid impact on such areas. Please refer to [Peat survey guidance 2017](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/Energy/Energy-sources/19185/17852-1/CSavings/PSG2011) for further advice.
* Where avoidance is impossible, ask the applicant to identify measures to minimise peat disturbance. These can include measures such as floating tracks (refer to [Floating roads on peat](http://www.roadex.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/FCE-SNH-Floating-Roads-on-Peat-report.pdf) for advice), floating temporary infrastructure, using bog mats, or piling foundations.
* Ensure that any peat disturbed by the development is protected from drying out and, if any is extracted, ensure that it is used in a manner that enables re-vegetation, protects it from drying out and is environmentally sustainable - for instance, ensure it is not spread on undisturbed peat.
* Seek to compensate for carbon loss from disturbed peat by measures such as peatland restoration (on or off-site).
* It may not always be possible to use all excavated peat on site for genuine uses and in such cases the material may be considered as waste and waste legislation requirements might apply. Please see [SEPA’s waste position statement for developments on peat](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/143822/peat_position_statement.pdf) and [SEPA’s development on peatland guidance – waste](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/144152/development_on_peatland_guidance_final_august_2010.pdf) for further advice. We cannot guarantee that SEPA consent will be granted until the submission and determination of the relevant authorisation and therefore it is important that the applicant considers this issue early in the planning of the development. Applicants are advised to contact wastepermitting@sepa.org.uk at the earliest opportunity for further advice on whether SEPA authorisation is required and to ensure their proposals will meet all the regulatory requirements.
* Any proposal, which the determining authority is content complies with one of the criteria outlined in Policy 5(c) of NPF4, is required to submit a Peat Management Plan to demonstrate that the mitigation hierarchy has been followed. Proportionate requirements are set out in the NatureScot/SEPA Standing Advice for Local Developments on Peat and other Carbon Rich Soils, which will be made available on our website.
* [Guidance on the assessment of peat volumes, reuse of excavated peat and minimisation of waste.](https://www.gov.scot/publications/assessment-of-peat-volumes-reuse-of-excavated-peat-and-minimisation-of-waste-guidance/) Note that the guidance dates from 2012 and has not been reviewed or updated since. As such, it does not reflect current legislation, good practice, or controls, however continues to be used to provide some useful advice, especially in relation to the surveying/data acquisition for the site, guiding principles, and the annex also gives a high level outline of what should be included in a Peat Management Plan. Other sections, for example the treatment and reuse section, are out of date and for reuse we would instead refer to [NatureScot’s technical compendium for peatland restoration techniques](https://www.nature.scot/doc/peatland-action-technical-compendium) for more up to date advice (chapter 4 peat dams, chapter 7.5 borrow pits). If you are unsure if a section is still applicable, please contact us for further advice.

**Restoration*** We do not comment on peatland restoration proposals, please refer to the [Non-domestic permitted development rights - consolidated circular](https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-circular-2-2015-consolidated-circular-non-domestic-permitted-development-rights-updated-2021/pages/14/).
* The IUCN UK Peatland Programme [Peatland Code](https://www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org/peatland-code-0#:~:text=The%20Peatland%20Code%20is%20an%20example%20of%20natural,peatland%20restoration%20projects%20through%20independent%20validation%20and%20verification.) can be used to understand the natural capital financing that may apply during restoration or compensation.
 |
| Radioactive contamination issues | * For development proposals at locations and on land that the planning authority know to have potential radioactive contamination issues, and they fall below the threshold criteria for consultation outlined in [Table 1 Section D](#_D._Designated_contaminated), seek advice from your contaminated land support colleagues. They can contact our radioactive substances team directly at radioactivesubstance@sepa.org.uk.
* The SEPA [Guidance on monitoring for heterogeneous radium-226 sources resulting from historic luminising or waste disposal sites](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/594570/rs-jg-024_v12.pdf) contains advice for local authority planning departments on the wording to be used in planning conditions concerning land affected by radium-226 radioactive contamination. However, other radionuclides may require a different survey design. If the planning authority were minded to apply a planning condition, our radioactive substances team can provide guidance on what it would expect a reasonable investigation to include and to appraise the outcome of such an investigation. After consultation with our radioactive substances team, where a radiological walkover survey is advised to be carried out to demonstrate that the site is suitable for the proposed new development, monitoring shall involve walkover surveys prior to undertaking the works and also screening during any excavation works undertaken. The results and evaluation of the monitoring should be forwarded to our radioactive substances team for review. Any radioactive material or radioactive waste arising from the works shall then be regulated in accordance with the Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations 2018 (as amended). Our radioactive substances team can be contacted directly at radioactivesubstance@sepa.org.uk.
* Please see our [Radioactivity and wind farm developments on peatlands](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/rwnfvp5s/radioactivity-wind-farm-developments-peatlands.pdf) guidance for our advice on the potential impact in relation to disturbance of peatland areas by wind farm (or any other form of) construction and the potential for re-mobilisation of historic contamination from Chernobyl and other gaseous emissions.
 |
| SEPA authorised activities | * We authorise several matters covered by this standing advice including (but not limited to) proposals which: impact on the water environment, such as industrial processes or intensive agriculture, involve the treatment, storage or disposal of waste, and agricultural developments involving structures used for the production and storage of slurry and silage.
* In 2018, the Scottish Government brought in the [Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations 2018](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2018/219/contents/made) (EASR 2018). The aim of the regulations is to provide a standardised, simplified, common framework for environmental authorisations in Scotland, known as the Integrated Authorisation Framework. At the moment, the regulations only apply to [radioactive substances activities,](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/radioactive-substances/) which moved under EASR in 2018. On 30 April 2025, [The Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2025/9780111061473/contents) were passed and extend the integrated authorisation framework to the regulation of waste management, water and industrial activities. The authorisation and regulation of these activities will transition under EASR from 1 November 2025.
* We will address all matters relating to regulation when the appropriate regulatory application is made.
* It is an applicant’s responsibility to ensure their proposals will meet all relevant regulatory requirements and they are working within regulatory guidelines. We prefer all the technical information required for any SEPA consents to be submitted at the same time as the planning or similar application. We consider it to be at the applicant’s commercial risk if planning permission is granted for a development/process which cannot gain authorisation from us, or if any significant changes required during the regulatory stage necessitate a further planning application or similar application and/or neighbour notification or advertising.
* If you need to apply for a new authorisation or vary, transfer or surrender an existing authorisation before 1 November 2025, visit our [Authorisations and Permits webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/authorisations-and-permits/). Visit our [EASR authorisations webpage](https://beta.sepa.scot/regulation/authorisations-and-compliance/easr-authorisations/) for advice and guidance on applying for authorisations for activities regulated under EASR from 1 November 2025.
 |
| (Proximity to) SEPA authorised activities (noise, odour, air quality) | * The Planning Authority should consider:

- The potential for negative impacts resulting from the interaction of the proposal and the authorised activities.- Whether any amendments to the proposal to minimise or avoid any potential negative impacts are necessary.- If the location of a development proposal is incompatible with the existing authorised activities due to inadequate buffer distances between the two.* Further advice and guidance on this can be found in our [Co-location Standing Advice for Planning Authorities](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sepa.org.uk%2Fmedia%2Ff1wpod53%2Fco-location-standing-advice.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK), which was published in February 2025.
 |
| Surface water drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) | * Applicants should demonstrate that they have adequate space to accommodate SUDS within the site layout, especially when considering applications for planning permission in principle, ensuring the SUDS accord with the [SUDS Manual (C753)](https://www.ciria.org/CIRIA/CIRIA/Item_Detail.aspx?iProductcode=C753) and that all the key points behind any design are considered: water quality, water quantity, amenity, and biodiversity.
* Consult Scottish Water and/or the local authority’s roads department where the SUDS proposals would be adopted by them and, where appropriate, consult the local authority roads department/flood risk management team on the SUDS strategy in terms of water quantity and flooding issues.
* Visit our [diffuse pollution webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/diffuse-pollution/diffuse-pollution-in-the-urban-environment/) for good practice advice and guidance, including details of those activities which may require authorisation by SEPA, how to apply for any necessary authorisations or contact us if you require further help or advice.
 |
| The use of land for the deposit of any kind of refuse or waste, including slurry or sludge (including structures for silage and slurry) and digestate arising from anaerobic digester | * Proposals which involve the treatment, storage or disposal of waste may require a waste management licence under The Waste Management Licensing (Scotland) Regulations 2011 or The Pollution Prevention and Control (Scotland) Regulations 2012.
* Since January 2022, the Control of Pollution (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) (Scotland) Regulations 2003 (as amended) has been consolidated into The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (CAR) General Binding Rules. Visit the [Farming and Water Scotland website](https://www.farmingandwaterscotland.org/know-the-rules/new-general-binding-rules-on-silage-slurry-whats-changed/) for further details.
* Developments involving the storage and handling of slurry, silage and anaerobic digestate must be designed and operated in accordance with CAR. Refer to the [regulatory section](#_SEPA_authorised_activities) above.
 |
| Waste water drainage (including the carrying out of building or other operations or use of land for the retention, treatment or disposal of sewage, trade-waste, or effluent) | * Applicants should demonstrate appropriate waste water drainage proposals for the carrying out of building/other operations/use of land for the retention, treatment or disposal of sewage, trade waste or effluent, in line with best practice and SEPA’s regulatory requirements and guidance.
* Sites of all scales, and particularly trade sites, should connect to the public sewer, unless evidence is provided to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that this would not be viable. At the discretion of the Planning Authority, the applicant may also be required to actively engage with Scottish Water to seek growth provision/adoption of the scheme.
* Authorisation under The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended) (CAR) will be required for discharges from private foul drainage systems. Visit our [water regulations webpages](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/) for further advice. Applicants are advised to contact water.permitting@sepa.org.uk at the earliest opportunity, particularly for larger scale discharges or where discharge is into, or near to, sensitive locations such as designated bathing waters or shellfish waters, where enhanced treatment would be required. We cannot guarantee that consent for private foul drainage systems will be granted until the submission and determination of the relevant authorisation and therefore it is important that the applicant considers this issue early in the planning of the development. In most cases it must be demonstrated that connection to the public sewer is not achievable.
* We recommend that applicants consider the information on our [Septic tanks and private sewage treatment systems webpages](https://beta.sepa.scot/regulation/authorisations-and-compliance/easr-authorisations/make-an-application/septic-tanks-and-private-sewage-treatment-systems/). This includes information on private sewage treatment systems, discharging grey water or liquid from composting toilets and campervan/motorhome wastewater disposal. Applicants should also be aware that discharges from swimming/exercise pools/hot tubs to soakaway or surface waters will require CAR authorisation (unless this is a single domestic hot tub discharging to land or soakaway). Additional guidance in relation to private wastewater disposal can also be found on our [pollution control webpage](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/pollution-control/pollution-control-guidance/).
* Please note, for Scottish Water waste water treatment works – Scottish Water should have liaised with us as part of the application making process and therefore, we have no site-specific planning comments to make. Regulatory matters will be addressed when the appropriate regulatory application is made.
 |

#### Appendix 1: Land with potential for radioactive contamination

Below is a description of the common types of sites that have the potential for radioactive contamination and why.

**Former military airfields**

**WWII airfields**

There are numerous former WWII military airfields across Scotland.

Radioactive radium luminous paint was used during the war to luminise dials on aircraft control panels. During WWII some airfields had salvage units and maintenance units where aircraft were dismantled and put back together. Towards the end of WWII and in the decade following many airfields were used to store and then scrap aircraft no longer in use. Waste practices were not as they are today and consequently waste was dumped on site. Former military airfields, therefore, have the potential to have radioactive contamination in the form of radium-226.

**WWI airfields**

WWI airfields are not of concern as these are unlikely to have used radium paint. Whilst radium was discovered at the end of the 19th century, radium 226 was not widely used in luminescent paint until the 1920s-1930s. As such it is unlikely that radium 226 will be present at these sites. We will review our position if new information regarding the use of radium 226 during WWI comes to light.

**Former radar stations**

WWII and later radar stations used radium-226 within the transmit-receive tubes. Other radionuclides were also used. A number of radar stations were re-furbished with more modern equipment or decommissioned appropriately and as such the potential for radioactive contamination is low. However, unless a detailed desk study to accompany the planning application has specified the details of the refurbishment or decommissioning SEPA would have to assume that this has not occurred and would recommend that further information gathering on the nature of the equipment used at the site is undertaken to inform whether a radiological walkover survey is required.

If further information regarding the nature of the equipment used at the site cannot be sought, it would be prudent to carry out a radiological walkover survey prior to any demolition and construction works. This will inform whether further works regarding possible radioactive contamination is required.

**Former Royal Observer Corps bunkers**

Royal Observer Corps Bunkers were used during WWII and during the cold war. If the bunker was used post 1955 these bunkers were used to detect and report nuclear explosions and associated fall out. SEPA have no direct concerns with regard to radioactivity with the exception of calibration of the equipment used. Post 1955 bunkers held an isotope store where sealed radioactive sources were stored for the calibration of the equipment. These sources are likely to have been removed with any equipment when the bunker was decommissioned, however, SEPA do not know the exact date of decommissioning and as such cannot guarantee that equipment was disposed of correctly and not within the vicinity of the site. Further research into the use and decommissioning of the site will provide the applicant with more certainty that radioactivity is not an issue.

**Clock/Watch luminising sites**

There were a number of clock and luminising works throughout Scotland. Radioactive radium luminous paint was used during the war to luminise dials on watches and clocks. Waste practices were not as they are today and consequently waste was dumped on site. Former clock and watch luminising works, therefore, have the potential to have radioactive contamination in the form of radium-226.

**Landfills**

A number of historic and closed landfills were approved as special precautions burial sites that were authorised to receive solid wastes containing very low levels of radioactivity. There may be various radionuclides disposed of in such landfills. One of the more common radionuclides is tritium. There are several potential sources of tritium in waste that could have been disposed of in such sites such as:

• Gaseous tritium light devices (GTLDs) such as fire escape lights

• Watches and clocks containing GTLDs

• Watches and clocks including luminous paints

• Compasses

• Electron tubes

As part of SEPA’s duties we monitor leachate from these landfills and as such have monitoring data that can be used to assess the risk for any LDP sites in relation to these sites.

**Research institutes**

Medical and animal research institutes have also used radioactive sources in the past. Waste practices were not as they are today and consequently waste was dumped on site. Further research into the use and decommissioning of the site will provide the applicant with more certainty that radioactivity is not an issue. Former research institutes, therefore, have the potential to have radioactive contamination.

**Known offshore contaminated areas**

There are a number of offshore areas around Scotland that are known to have historic radioactive contamination. This is due to historic disposal practices or leaks in the past. These sites have the potential to contain a number of different radionuclides. Any development in these areas will require an EIA in order to provide adequate mitigation to protect the public and the environment.

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