

CHAPTER 6 APPROACH TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This chapter sets out the overall approach that has been taken to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and summarises the key stages that have been followed.

6.2 Structure of the ES

6.2.1 The detailed assessments for the various EIA subject areas are contained in Technical Appendices within Volume 2 of the ES. In addition to this, summaries and important extracted information from these Technical Appendices have been provided in this volume (Volume 1). Chapter 7 provides summaries of the impacts and effects and Chapter 8 provides a summary of the committed outline mitigation.

6.3 The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations

6.3.1 Environmental Impacts Assessments have been required for certain major developments since the implementation in the UK of the European Council Directive on Environmental Assessment (85/337/EEC). The Directive was implemented in the UK in 1988 and subsequently amended by Directive 97/11/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects in the environment. Directive 97/11/EC is implemented by the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999 (as amended) (The EIA Regulations), recently updated by the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2007. These regulations set out the information which must be included in the ES, which are covered in detail in Section 6.5.

6.3.2 The requirement for EIA for An Camas Mòr is explained in Chapter 1, Section 1.12. The relationship between EIA and an Outline Application for An Camas Mòr is explained in Chapter 1.13.

6.4 The Overall EIA Process

6.4.1 The EIA Regulations outline the information to be considered when assessing the environmental effects of development proposals. These, in combination with professional judgement and best practice methodological guidance from governmental agencies and professional bodies, provide a framework within which the likely nature and significance of effects are assessed.

6.4.2 The following have been taken into consideration in the Environmental Impact Assessment process:

- The Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999 (as amended);
- Planning Circular 8/07: The Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999;
- Planning Advice Note (PAN) 58: Environmental Impact Assessment (1999); and
- Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2004).

6.4.3 EIA is the process of compiling, assessing and presenting the nature and significance of the environmental effects of a proposed development. The process is required to identify likely significant adverse effects on the environment and to describe measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and where possible offset these effects on the environment.

6.4.4 Particular topics relating to likely effects follow particular methodologies for EIA. However, the overall approach to assessment of each topic considers the value of the interests affected, the magnitude and nature of the impacts and the significance of the resulting effect(s). Where particular changes in methodology are necessary for a topic then this is explained, however, the use of similar criteria between different subject areas allows comparisons and is important for consistency.

6.4.5 The main stages which have been followed in this assessment process can be summarised as follows:

- Stage 1: Determination of the Scope of the EIA;
- Stage 2: Establishing the environmental baseline through available information and surveys as necessary in order to provide a description of the environmental character of the area likely to be affected by the development;
- Stage 3: Identifying the relevant natural and manmade processes that may change the character of the area and development site;
- Stage 4: Considering possible interactions between the development and both the existing and future area and site conditions;
- Stage 5: Determining the value of the interests present within the study area;
- Stage 6: Identifying the possible impacts based on the nature of the construction and occupation of the proposed development;

- Stage 7: Determination of the magnitude of the impacts including consideration of their duration and any potential in-combination/cumulative effects;
- Stage 8: Determination of the significance of the resulting effects based on the interaction between the impact magnitude / duration and the value of the interests (receptors) affected;
- Stage 9: Identification and assessment of measures to prevent, reduce and where possible offset significant adverse effects; and
- Stage 10: Determination of the residual effect significance once the measures to prevent, reduce and where possible offset significant adverse effects have been taken into account.

6.5 The Approach to EIA

6.5.1 The approach to the EIA has followed the requirements of the EIA Regulations. Schedule 4 Part 1 of the Regulations sets out the information that must be included in the ES, which is summarised in Table 6.1. This also identifies where the corresponding information can be found in the ES.

Table 6.1: Information Required by The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations in relation to the Relevant Volume/Chapter of the Environmental Statement

Required information (the EIA Regulations Schedule 4 Part 1)	Relevant Volume/Chapter of Environmental Statement
1. A description of the development.	A description of the development proposals and characteristics is presented in Chapter 5, Volume 1.
2. An outline of the main alternatives considered and an indication of the main reasons for the chosen scheme.	A summary of development alternatives considered is included in Chapter 2, Section 2.11 of Volume 1.
3. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be affected by the development, including, in particular, population, flora, fauna, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, including the architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between the above factors.	The environmental context and unique location within which the proposal for An Camas Mòr has been progressed is set out in Chapter 4. The individual environmental effects of the proposals are reported in summary form in Chapter 7 and in detail in the Technical Appendices (Volume 2). Effects on population are discussed in relation to visual impacts, traffic, noise and air quality. Material assets are addressed through landscape, geology and soils, hydrology and cultural heritage effects.
4. A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment, which should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary,	The likely significant effects of the development are reported before and after (residual effects) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and where possible