

SEA Gateway  
2H South  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

**Date** 18 February 2025

**Your ref**

**Our ref** SAG/Screening

Dear Sir/Madam

## **Screening Determination – Non-Statutory Planning Guidance - Student Accommodation**

This statement sets out the Council's determination under Section 8(1) of the Environmental Assessment Scotland Act 2005 on whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required for the above.

### **SEA Screening Process**

The screening process involved consulting the Consultation Authorities on whether the above Supplementary Guidance is likely to have significant environmental effects. The responses are summarised as follows:

<b>CONSULTATION AUTHORITY</b>	<b>LIKELIHOOD OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS</b>
Historic Environment Scotland	No
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	No
NatureScot	No

In addition to consulting the above bodies, the Council has also taken into account the criteria set out in Schedule 2 of the Act in determining whether or not the non-statutory guidance is likely to have significant environmental effects. The Council has determined that SEA is not required.

Yours faithfully,

Lindsay Robertson  
**Senior Planning Officer**

**Planning and Building Standards Service/ City Plan Team**

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# Screening report

<b>Responsible Authority:</b>	City of Edinburgh Council
<b>Title of the plan:</b>	City Plan 2030 Non-Statutory Guidance on Student Accommodation
<b>What prompted the plan:</b> (e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)	Regulatory Provision. The Edinburgh City Plan 2030 Policy Hou 5 Student Accommodation sets out the circumstances in which student accommodation would be supported. The guidance when approved will be used in the determination of planning applications.
<b>Plan subject:</b> (e.g. transport)	Town and Country Planning and Land Use
<p><b>Screening</b> is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.</p> <p>Based on Boxes 3 and 4, our view is that:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>An SEA is required, as the environmental effects are likely to be significant:</b> Please indicate below what Section of the 2005 Act this plan falls within</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Section 5(3)      <input type="checkbox"/> Section 5(4)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>An SEA is <u>not</u> required, as the environmental effects are unlikely to be significant:</b> Please indicate below what Section of the 2005 Act this plan falls within</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Section 5(3)      <input type="checkbox"/> Section 5(4)</p>
<b>Contact details:</b>	Lindsay Robertson City of Edinburgh Council, 2:4 Business Centre Waverley Court 4 East Market Street Edinburgh EH8 8BG
<b>Date:</b>	25/11/24

<b>Context of the Plan:</b>	City Plan 2030 sets out policies and proposals relating the development and use of land in Edinburgh. It sets out the Council’s approach to student accommodation development. The plan directs student accommodation to accessible areas, requires suitable amenity, limits the proportion of studio accommodation and protects the character of the area.
<b>Description of the Plan:</b>	This guidance has been prepared in connection with the adopted City Plan Policy Hou 5 in relation to student accommodation. The guidance aims to implement the provisions of City Plan 2030. It provides further detail of how the policy criteria will be applied and will form a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
<b>What are the key components of the plan?</b>	<p>The Guidance consists of the following key components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction</li> <li>Policy Context</li> <li>Accessibility of development</li> <li>Amenity</li> <li>Requirement for housing</li> <li>Character of the area</li> </ul>
<b>Have any of the components of the plan been considered in previous SEA work?</b>	<p>The student accommodation guidance has been prepared in the context of the City Plan 2030 which has been subject to full SEA.</p> <p>The Plan’s policies, including the student accommodation policy, have therefore been previously assessed and this guidance implements these policies. Policy Hou 5 scored neutral/no significant effects under the various SEA objectives.</p>
<b>In terms of your response to Boxes 7 and 8 above, set out those components of the plan that are likely to require screening:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessibility of development</li> <li>Amenity</li> <li>Requirement for housing</li> <li>Character of the area</li> </ul>

**Identifying interactions of the plan with the environment and  
Considering the likely significance of any interactions (Error! Reference source not found.)**

Plan Components	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air	Climatic factors	Material assets	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Inter-relationship issues	Explanation of Potential Environmental Effects	Explanation of Significance
Accessibility	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	This component sets out considerations in accessing universities colleges and local facilities. It does not have any environmental effects. The guidance sits within a wider development plan context which has had SEA.	No significance
Requirement for housing	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	This component sets out details regarding the definitions to be applied in determining any requirement. It does not have any environmental effects. The guidance sits within a wider development plan context which has had SEA.	No significance
Amenity	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	This component sets out further detail on amenity requirements, as set out in City Plan policy Env 33 Amenity, to achieve a good living environment. The assessment of the policy identified minor indirect benefits in term of quality of life and human health.	No significance
Character of the area	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	This component sets out considerations when assessing the	No significance

											character of the area and any impacts. The guidance sits within a wider development plan context which has had SEA. It does not have any environmental effects.	
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<p><b>Summary of how environmental principles have been considered:</b> (including an outline of how the guiding principles, as set out in section 13 of the Continuity Act, are relevant to the plan)</p>	<p>The guiding principles set out in section 13 of the Continuity Act are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting the environment should be integrated into the making of policies;</li> <li>• The precautionary principle;</li> <li>• The principle that preventive action should be taken;</li> <li>• The principle that environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source; and</li> <li>• The principle that the polluter should pay.</li> </ul> <p>As part of the process of preparing the City Plan 2030 the Council has carried out the SEA process in accord with the 2005 Act and prepared an Environmental Report. Although that assessment did not expressly refer to the guiding principles, due to it being prepared prior to the Continuity Act, the intent of the principles has been embodied within the SEA process itself, for example, through the identification of environmental mitigation requirements which have been set out as either policy requirements or in associated masterplans/site briefs.</p>
<p><b>Summary of interactions with the environment and statement of the findings of the Screening:</b> (Including an outline of the likely significance of any interactions, positive or negative, and explanation of conclusion of the screening exercise.)</p>	<p>The Student Accommodation Guidance sets out, in further detail than the City Plan 2030, the requirements for student housing development in accordance with the policies of the Plan. It is not considered to have any direct significant environmental effects. Any environmental interactions are indirect and associated with policy requirements in City Plan 2030, which has already been subject to the SEA process. Therefore the conclusions of the screening are that a SEA is not required.</p>

When completed send to: [SEA.gateway@gov.scot](mailto:SEA.gateway@gov.scot) or to the SEA Gateway, Scottish Government, Area 2F (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ.