

OUR APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Scottish Water plays a crucial role in the sustainability of Scotland's natural environment, and we recognise the challenge and wider responsibility the global climate crisis brings to how we deliver our services. We have already made great progress in reducing our operational carbon footprint by 41% since 2006. We are committed to achieving net zero emissions across both our operational and capital work by 2040 and going beyond that thereafter. This is an immense challenge due to the amount of electricity and chemicals we use to deliver our services. The greenhouse gasses emitted through our waste water treatment processes and in delivering our capital investment programme represent a significant operational and embodied carbon footprint.

We have consulted with the Scottish Government's Strategic Environmental Assessment Gateway and the associated Consultation Authorities to understand the appropriate stage for environmentally assessing our plans. Based on this feedback, we recognise that undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment on our Strategic Plan would limit the opportunities to identify, and improve, the environmental outcomes of our plan. We have agreed that there would be greater value in carrying out Strategic Environmental Assessments on implementation plans, where specific environmental effects can be identified.

In accordance with the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements for future plans will be considered on a case by case basis, taking into account the characteristics of the plans and of likely environmental effects. As a guide, in considering potential Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements for implementation plans Scottish Water intends to consider the following general criteria:

- Whether the plan sets a framework for the consent of future development projects
- Whether the nature, scope and content of the plan indicates that environmental effects may occur from its implementation
- Whether any likely environmental effects from the plan are clearly understood, can be quantified, identified spatially or otherwise examined in detail in order to determine the presence or absence of likely significant effects

These criteria will be considered throughout the development of implementation plans and projects to support the delivery of our Strategic Plan and deliver the best possible environmental outcomes.