

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE: 20 DECEMBER 2005

GLASGOW AND THE CLYDE VALLEY DRAFT FINALISED ALTERATION 2025 TO THE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN 2000

Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To advise and obtain the views of the Committee on the Draft Finalised Alteration of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan 2000 and to homologate an officer response to the Structure Plan previously sent to the Joint Structure Plan Committee for consideration.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The Consultative Draft version of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan was presented to the Development Services Committee for information and comment on 28 June 2005. The Committee expressed a number of concerns on the content of the draft Structure Plan and it was agreed that a copy of the Committee report should be forwarded to the Joint Structure Plan Committee as representing the Council's formal views on the document.

2.2 The Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan Committee has now published a draft finalised version of the Structure Plan alteration for consultation purposes before being submitted to the Scottish Ministers. Comments on this draft finalised version of the plan were requested by 5 December 2005 and, bearing in mind the date of this Committee, an officer response has already been sent to the Structure Plan Committee for consideration.

3. COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT FINALISED ALTERATION

3.1 As stated in the original report on the Consultative Draft version of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan Alteration, the plan sets out to stabilise population and to deliver significant economic growth in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley, as a means of contributing to the renaissance of Scotland. This approach closely reflects the approach taken by the three Ayrshire Councils in the preparation of the ongoing review of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and the two structure plans, together, provide a consistent and united approach to future development in a wider west of Scotland context, fully in line with Scottish Executive policy. The aims of stabilising population and delivering significant economic growth at a higher rate than the UK average, as proposed in the plan was considered particularly worthy of support.

3.2 The four key, interrelated aims of the Structure Plan Alteration of achieving economic growth, social cohesion, environmental sustainability and integrated land use and transportation are supported by the Council and the overall thrust of the plan is welcomed. Many of the broad aims, objectives and strategies promoted in the document are general in nature and do not impact directly on East Ayrshire. However, the Committee agreed that a number of issues addressed in the plan had some cross boundary implications and these are summarised below.

(i) Transport

3.3 No specific consideration was given in the draft plan to the improvement and upgrading of the Kilmarnock / Barrhead / Glasgow railway line. This omission was pointed out to the Structure Plan Committee with a request that improvements to this particular rail link between East Ayrshire and the conurbation should be recognised and addressed in the Structure Plan as a matter of priority. This point has not been taken on board by the Structure Plan Committee in the finalised version of the plan.

(ii) Retail

3.4 In its response to the consultative draft plan, the Council expressed its concerns regarding the number and extent of recent retail proposals in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley area, particularly at Pollok, which because of their proximity to East Ayrshire, could potentially be seriously detrimental to the vitality and viability of retailing within the East Ayrshire communities and could considerably exacerbate the current loss of retail expenditure from East Ayrshire to the conurbation. The Council was particularly concerned that significant expansion of other town centres on the south side of Glasgow, to the degree as at Pollok, would undoubtedly exacerbate the loss of retail expenditure to the detriment of East Ayrshire communities.

3.5 An amended schedule has been introduced into the plan giving details of additional retailing opportunities of various centres in the conurbation area including the provision of additional comparison floorspace in East Kilbride town centre to meet a defined local shortfall. It is not considered that this provision will have any significant adverse impact on retailing patterns within East Ayrshire.

3.6 The analysis briefly outlined in Paragraph 3.17 of the October 2005 consultation document is supported. However, it is considered that this has not been fully reflected in Schedule 6(c)(i). Further clarity is required in relation to retail policy in this regard.

(iii) Windfarms

3.6 Three potential areas of search for windfarms are identified directly adjacent to the East Ayrshire boundary. The boundaries of one of these areas tie in well with the boundaries of the preferred commercial windfarm area identified for Whitelees Forest within East Ayrshire and there are no objections to the identification of this particular search area in the Structure Plan. However, two other potential windfarm areas, located to the north and south east of Muirkirk, are contiguous with the recently designated Muirkirk and Lowther Uplands Special Protection Area and it is considered that significant conflict could occur between windfarm and nature

conservation objectives in these particular areas. The identification of such large potential windfarm areas could have significant adverse effects on the landscape quality of the areas concerned and also on aviation interests. The identification of these areas as potential windfarm areas should be revisited by the Structure Plan Committee as a matter of priority.

(iv) Forestry

3.7 The consultative draft of the Structure Plan indicated that there were possibly some anomalies between the proposed forestry provisions of the Structure Plan Alteration with the provisions of the approved Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy. It was therefore suggested that the introduction of Key Diagram Inset F into the Structure Plan should not take place unchanged, as was proposed, but that the provisions of the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland strategy be taken into account and the Key Diagram amended accordingly. The finalised version of the plan has not, however, taken on board the points raised and the sensitive and potential areas for forestry indicated on the Key Diagram Inset F remain unchanged.

(v) Minerals

3.8 The consultative draft of the Structure Plan did not address the issue of mineral extraction. This issue has significant cross boundary implications, especially as regards the extraction of sand and gravel and hard rock and the adequacy or otherwise of existing and anticipated demand and supply, and it was considered that this matter should be given specific mention in the plan. The points raised have not, however, been taken on board and the subject of mineral extraction is still not addressed in the finalised plan.

(vi) Motorway Service Area

3.9 Although not mentioned in the consultative draft structure plan, the finalised plan identifies a new motorway service area at the junction of the M77 and the GSO route as a Transport Investment Priority. It is considered that the identification of such a facility in the location proposed could severely prejudice the development of the motorway service area already authorised and granted planning permission by the Council in March 2005, at Kingswell within East Ayrshire. It is understood that the Kingswell service area has obtained signing approval from the Scottish Executive and it is considered that there is no requirement or need for a second MSA on the M77 in such close proximity to the MSA already authorised.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct personnel implications as a result of this report.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that the Committee agrees:

- (i) to approve the contents of this report;**
- (ii) to homologate the response already forwarded to the Joint Structure Plan Committee, attached as an Annex to this report; and**
- (iii) to authorise the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards to make formal objection to the Structure Plan, at the appropriate time, if it cannot be demonstrated by the Structure Plan Committee that the Council's observations on the draft versions of the Structure Plan have been taken on board or given due consideration.**

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development and Property Services

28 November 2005 (JL/JL)
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (1) Glasgow and the Clyde Valley 2005 Structure Plan Alteration: Consultative Draft
- (2) Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Draft Finalised Alteration 2005 to the Joint Structure Plan 2000

For further information on this report contact John Lilley, Principal Planning Officer (Policy). Telephone 01563 576754.

Implementation Officer: Alan Neish

ANNEX

RESPONSE GIVEN TO THE GLASGOW AND THE CLYDE VALLEY STRUCTURE PLAN COMMITTEE ON THE GLASGOW AND THE CLYDE VALLEY DRAFT FINALISED ALTERATION 2005 TO THE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN 2000

John Lilley (01563 576754)

Our Ref: SP3

Date: 28 October 2005

Mr Vincent Goodstadt,
Structure Plan Manager,
Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan Joint Committee,
10 Killermont Street,
Glasgow
G2 3NW

Dear Mr Goodstadt,

GLASGOW AND THE CLYDE VALLEY DRAFT FINALISED ALTERATION 2005 TO THE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN 2000

Thank you for your letter of 20 October 2005 regarding the above subject, addressed to the Chief Executive and forwarded to myself for attention. I appreciate the opportunity to comment once again on the finalised Structure Plan before it is passed to the Scottish Ministers for consideration.

Before I make any comment on the contents of the plan, could I possibly inform you that the Chief Executive of East Ayrshire Council is now Ms. Fiona Lees and you may wish to amend your records accordingly.

As you are aware, East Ayrshire Council made representation on the consultative draft version of the Structure Plan in June 2005 and expressed its concerns regarding a number of cross boundary issues. It would appear that the finalised version of the plan does not appear to have taken on board the issues raised and I would be grateful if you could, once again, give these matters further consideration. The points raised in my original representation were as follows:

- (i) The Structure Plan Alteration sets out to stabilise population and to deliver significant economic growth in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley as a means of contributing to the renaissance of Scotland. This approach closely reflects the approach taken by the three Ayrshire Councils in the preparation of the ongoing review of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and the two structure plans, together, provide a consistent and united approach to future development in a wider west of Scotland context, fully in line with Scottish Executive policy. The aims of stabilising population and delivering significant economic growth at a higher rate than the UK average, as proposed in the plan is considered particularly worthy of support.

- (ii) The four key, interrelated aims of the Structure Plan Alteration of achieving economic growth, social cohesion, environmental sustainability and integrated land use and transportation are supported by the Council and the overall thrust of the plan is welcomed. Many of the broad aims, objectives and strategies promoted in the document are general in nature and do not impact directly on East Ayrshire.
- (iii) With regard to the issue of transport, the consultative draft Structure Plan Alteration recognised that gaps in external transport infrastructure exist and, in so far as Ayrshire is concerned, specifically mentioned links to the port of Hunterston. However, no specific consideration was given in the draft plan to the improvement and upgrading of the Kilmarnock / Barrhead / Glasgow railway line and a request was made that improvements to this particular rail link between East Ayrshire and the conurbation should be recognised and addressed in the Structure Plan as a matter of priority. This point has not been taken on board by the Structure Plan Committee in the finalised version of the plan.
- (iv) With regard to retailing issues, the Council expressed its concerns regarding the number and extent of recent retail proposals in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley area, particularly at Pollok, which because of their proximity to East Ayrshire, could potentially be seriously detrimental to the vitality and viability of retailing within the East Ayrshire communities. Concern was also expressed that improvements to the M77 and improved access to Glasgow could considerably exacerbate the current loss of retail expenditure from East Ayrshire to the conurbation, especially if locations such as Pollok, identified as a 'Local Centre' were allowed to expand beyond the role at which a 'Local Centre' should function, i.e. a centre which meets the shopping requirements of the local population. Clarification of the future role of 'Local Centres' was requested and it was pointed out that the plan should clearly indicate the degree to which expansion of other centres in the conurbation would be likely to occur. The Council was particularly concerned that significant expansion of other town centres on the south side of Glasgow, to the degree as at Pollok, would undoubtedly exacerbate the loss of retail expenditure to the detriment of East Ayrshire communities.

It is noted that a new schedule has now been introduced into the plan giving details of additional retailing opportunities in various centres in the conurbation area. In this regard, the finalised plan now indicates that additional comparison floorspace is required in East Kilbride town centre to meet a defined local shortfall. It is not considered that this provision will have any significant adverse impact on retailing patterns within East Ayrshire.

- (v) With regard to windfarms, the consultative draft version of the Structure Plan Alteration showed three potential areas of search for windfarms directly adjacent to the East Ayrshire boundary. The boundaries of one of these areas tied in well with the boundaries of the preferred commercial windfarm area identified for Whitelees Forest within East Ayrshire and there were no objections to the identification of this particular search area in the Structure Plan.

Serious concerns were, however, expressed regarding the identification of two other potential windfarm areas located to the north and south east of Muirkirk. Both of these areas were contiguous with the recently designated Muirkirk and Lowther Uplands Special Protection Area and it was considered that significant conflict could occur between windfarm and nature conservation objectives in these particular areas. In addition, the identification of such large potential windfarm areas could have significant adverse effects on the landscape quality of the areas concerned and also on aviation interests. It was suggested that the identification of these areas as

potential windfarm areas should be revisited by the Structure Plan Committee as a matter of priority. Notwithstanding the comments and concerns of the Council, no changes to the boundaries or locations of these areas are proposed in the finalised version of the plan.

- (vi) With regard to forestry issues, it was pointed out that there were possibly some anomalies between the proposed forestry provisions of the Structure Plan Alteration with the provisions of the approved Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy. In particular, some preferred and potential areas for forestry planting abut directly onto the sensitive area for forestry planting identified in the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy in the Muirkirk Uplands and Lowther Hills SSSI / SPA. It was therefore suggested that the introduction of Key Diagram Inset F into the Structure Plan should not take place unchanged, as was proposed, but that the provisions of the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy be taken into account and the Key Diagram amended accordingly. The finalised version of the plan does not, however, appear to have taken on board the points raised and the sensitive and potential areas for forestry indicated on the Key Diagram Inset F remain unchanged.
- (vii) With regard to minerals, the consultative draft plan did not address the issue of mineral extraction. The Council considered that this issue had significant cross boundary implications, especially as regards the extraction of sand and gravel and hard rock and the adequacy or otherwise of existing and anticipated demand and supply, and it was considered that this matter should be given specific mention in the plan. The Structure Plan Committee has not, however, taken on board the points raised and the subject of mineral extraction is still not addressed in the finalised plan.
- (viii) Although not mentioned in the consultative draft local plan, the finalised plan identifies a new motorway service area at the junction of the M77 and the GSO route as a Transport Investment Priority. It is considered that the identification of such a facility in the location proposed could severely prejudice the development of the motorway service area already authorised and granted planning permission by the Council at Kingswell, within East Ayrshire. It is understood that the Kingswell service area has obtained signing approval from the Scottish Executive and it is considered that there is no requirement or need for a second MSA on the M77 in such close proximity to the MSA already authorised.

I would be most grateful if you could once again investigate these issues and give due consideration to amending the structure plan to reflect the concerns of the Council, prior to submitting the plan to the Scottish Ministers. In this regard, I would very much appreciate it if you could inform me of your views on the issues raised by the Council to date. I would point out that, if the Council's comments and views are not taken on board in the finalised version of the Structure Plan, the Council may wish to make formal objections to the plan at the appropriate time.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Neish
Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards

Cc Mr James Lavery, Executive Director of Development and Property Services