

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE: 20 DECEMBER 2005

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE LOCAL PLAN - CONSULTATIVE DRAFT

Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To advise the Committee of the response of the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards on the contents of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan - Consultative Draft in terms of any cross-border policy issues it might raise for East Ayrshire and to seek homologation of the above response by the Committee.

2. APPLICATION DETAILS

2.1 The South Lanarkshire Local Plan - Consultative Draft was put out by South Lanarkshire Council for consultation from 13 October 2005 until 25 November 2005. In view of the early expiry date of the consultation period a response by the Head of Planning, Development and Building Standards has already been sent to South Lanarkshire Council and an indication of the main issues raised forms Section 3 of this report.

3. CONSULTATIONS AND ISSUES RAISED

3.1 The South Lanarkshire Local Plan - Consultative Draft raises certain cross-boundary issues with East Ayrshire. These principally relate to the following subjects:-

- ? Travel Demand - particularly in relation to walking cycling and riding;
- ? Environmental Priorities and Objectives - particularly in relation to green corridors;
- ? Wind Farming and Renewable Energy.

Travel Demand

3.2 There would seem to be no acknowledgement in para 9.7 of the importance of potential path routes between South Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire linking the River Avon and River Irvine Valleys and the River Ayr

and Douglas Water Valleys although the Local Plan acknowledges in Policy TRA 2 that 'linear routes, such as former railway lines are ... safeguarded to provide walking, cycling and riding opportunities'.

3.3 TRA 3 - Core Path Plan Proposal does not refer to any cross-boundary co-working with East Ayrshire or other councils in preparation of Core Path Plans. This is considered essential to facilitate the development of long distance path systems.

Environmental Priorities and Objectives

3.4 Policy STRAT 3 supports the establishment of a Strategic Green network promoted by the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan. However, the Local Plan does not contain any policies or proposals to extend green networks within rural areas or include any reference to possible links into the valleys of the River Ayr and Irvine which have potential as wildlife corridors for biodiversity dispersal (particularly with regard to adjacent statutory nature conservation sites) and public recreation.

Wind Farming and Renewable Energy

3.5 The Local Plan adopts the 'potential' areas for large scale wind farms identified in the Structure Plan stating that:

"these potential areas do not contain any known strategic environmental resources that require protection ...".

However, it is noted that the major boundaries of these potential areas are contiguous with the Muirkirk and Lowther Uplands SSSI (SPA) within both East Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire. They are also contiguous with Sensitive Landscape Character Areas as defined in both the Approved Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and East Ayrshire Local Plan.

3.6 It is considered that the above potential areas for large-scale wind farms are inappropriate, given firstly, the proximity of the above SSSI (SPA) containing protected species the breeding grounds and foraging areas of which could potentially be seriously affected by wind farm development and, secondly, the potential adverse effects wind farm development might have on views within and out of the Sensitive Landscape Character Areas. It would therefore seem that, in principle, major criteria on which such development would be judged, as set out in Policy ENV 28 of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan could not be met.

3.7 Cross-border issues are also relevant to the South Lanarkshire Council's Environmental Report. It is our view that the Environment Report should have made an assessment of such cross-border issues in terms of cumulative effects,

both permanent and temporary, on neighbouring authorities including East Ayrshire.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 It is concluded that the content of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan - Consultative Draft should be modified in respect of the sections on Travel Demand, Environmental Priorities and Objectives and Wind Farming and Renewable Energy in the following general ways: -

Travel Demand

Reference should be made to cross-boundary co-working with East Ayrshire Council in developing Core Paths Plans.

Environmental Priorities and Objectives

Reference should be made to extension of 'green corridors' within the rural areas in the Local Plan with the potential for links into the River Ayr and Irvine from the Avon Valley and Douglas Water Valley, respectively.

Wind Farming and Renewable Energy

The potential areas for large scale wind farms shown in the Local Plan should be reviewed, in tandem with the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Draft Finalised Alteration 2025 to the Joint Structure Plan 2000, to take account of the potentially serious nature conservation and landscape issues indicated in Section 3 above.

Environmental Report

It is considered that South Lanarkshire Council's Environmental Report should be revised to include an assessment of cross-border issues as referred to in Section 3 above.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None.

8. RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree:-

- (i) To approve the contents of this report; and**
- (ii) To homologate the response already forwarded to South Lanarkshire Council.**

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development and Property Services

28 November 2005
(JT/MMM)
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. South Lanarkshire Local Plan - Consultative Draft.

Anyone wishing to inspect the above papers please contact Julian Thorp on 01563 576789).

Implementation Officer: Alan Neish