

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE: 4 MAY 2004

ALTERATION TO THE EAST AYRSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To seek Committee authorisation for formal notice of the Council's intention to start preparation of alterations to the Local Plan to be placed in the local and national press and to inform the Committee of the preliminary work carried out, to date, to inform the review process.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1** On 11 April 2003, the Council formally adopted the East Ayrshire Local Plan which, together with the approved Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and the adopted East Ayrshire Opencast Coal Subject Plan, forms the Development Plan for the area. The strategies and policies on which the local plan is based are constantly being reviewed through such publications as the East Ayrshire Community Plan, the Ayrshire Economic Forum's Strategy for Economic Development, the Scottish Executive's National Planning Framework for Scotland and its new series of Scottish Planning Policies etc. Although only recently adopted, it is considered that the plan is already in need of revision and alteration in order to reflect changing national and strategic planning advice and guidance.
- 2.2** It is considered imperative that the Development Plan is kept fully up to date. In this regard, the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and Transportation Committee on 26 March 2004 agreed, subject to ratification by the constituent authorities, to approve the draft version of its replacement Structure Plan for Ayrshire to 2025 for consultation purposes. Bearing in mind that the East Ayrshire Local Plan is required by statute to comply fully with the provisions of the Structure Plan, it is now considered appropriate for the Council to start preparation of an alteration to the local plan for the period up to 2017. By reviewing both the local plan and the Structure Plan at the same time, the Council will ensure continuing full integration of the two documents in strategic and policy terms.

3. WORK CURRENTLY BEING UNDERTAKEN IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE LOCAL PLAN

- 3.1** Since the approval of the Finalised Version of the Local Plan with Modifications in February 2001, a wide range of background work to facilitate subsequent alteration of the local plan has been initiated by the Planning and Building Control Division. This work includes:

- (i) comprehensive monitoring of the local plan, in particular monitoring the effectiveness of adopted strategies as a basis for making planning application decisions, monitoring the take up of sites identified for particular development purposes in the plan and monitoring the effectiveness of the various development policies contained in the document. It is intended that the monitoring report that has been prepared will be presented to the next meeting of the Development Services Committee for consideration.
- (ii) preparation of an urban capacity study to determine the capacity of existing settlements to accommodate new development.
- (iii) preliminary work on the preparation of a Long Term Development Strategy to identify the level of demand for future development and to identify the broad locations within which this development should take place.
- (iv) an assessment by Entec of the landscape capability of both Kilmarnock and its surrounding settlements and Stewarton to accommodate new development. It is intended that this exercise should be extended to other settlements within East Ayrshire that are likely to come under pressure for future development.
- (v) a study into the potential impact of the ongoing M77 improvements on the East Ayrshire economy and future growth patterns.
- (vi) ongoing discussions with Scottish Water to identify the extent, nature and levels of sewerage constraints throughout the East Ayrshire communities. The results of these discussions will be of prime importance in the identification of effective sites capable of development in the local plan period and beyond, both at the strategic and local levels.
- (vii) ongoing discussions with the Department of Neighbourhood Services to ensure compatibility of any local plan review with the provisions of the emerging East Ayrshire Housing Strategy.
- (viii) preliminary work to ensure that the reviewed plan is placed firmly in the context of the consultative draft version of the replacement Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan.
- (ix) preliminary work to devise an appropriate methodology for the Strategic Environmental Assessment of both the various strategic approaches considered in the preparation of the plan and the various policies proposed for inclusion in the reviewed local plan.
- (x) a study by consultants Envoros Aspinwall to identify the optimum way forward in the management and disposal of waste on an Ayrshire wide basis.

3.2 In addition to the above measures which have been or are being implemented, it is recognised that the changes to the planning system proposed in the forthcoming Planning Bill will have far reaching effects on the content and structure of the review of the local plan. Although no details of

the changes to existing legislation and procedures are yet available, a broad indication of the likely way forward is already in the public domain. The structure and format of the review of the local plan will require to reflect and be flexible enough to accommodate the possible future changes proposed in the Bill. In this regard, it is envisaged that the new local plan will focus on key areas of change, including housing, industry, retailing and town centre uses and waste management. It is also intended that the plan will comprise a series of separate but interrelated documents comprising:

- a strategic section setting out the Council's spatial development strategy and its strategic approach to development on a topic by topic basis;
- a section detailing the Council's development promotion policies; and
- a section identifying particular development opportunity sites within individual settlements and the rural area.

3.3 It is intended that the new plan will also be accompanied by an action plan, to be reviewed on a two yearly basis, which will provide a programme for the delivery of proposals detailed in the document.

4. THE WAY FORWARD

4.1 It is intended that, should the Committee so agree, the Council's formal intention to start preparation of the alteration of the East Ayrshire Local Plan will be advertised in the local and national press, as required by statute, during the week commencing 10 May 2004. It is also proposed that, as an integral part of the advertisement, an invitation should be extended to all interested parties for the submission of any issues that they may wish to see considered as part of the replacement procedures within a suggested eight week submission period.

4.2 Following the due consideration of any representations received, it is intended that a final version of the alteration to the Local Plan should be prepared under expedited procedures and submitted to Committee for consideration at the first available opportunity. The date for such a submission is, however, heavily dependent on the timetable for the production of the replacement Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan. Because of the requirement for the local plan to generally conform with the provisions of the structure plan, it is not possible to finalise the local plan until such a time as the provisions of the Structure Plan have been agreed. However, it is hoped that a finalised version of the plan will be placed before the Committee for consideration by the end of the year.

4.3 It is considered an essential prerequisite of producing an alteration to the local plan that the views of key stakeholders in the local plan preparation process are obtained regarding the various options available for directing future strategic development throughout East Ayrshire. In this regard, it is proposed that the Planning, Development and Buildings Standards Division will produce a strategic development options paper for Committee consideration and approval at its August meeting. Thereafter, the paper will be circulated to key stakeholders and be made available for public scrutiny and comment for a

specified period. Any representations received will be taken on board in the preparation of the local plan itself.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications for the Council as a result of this report.

6. LEGAL/AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications for the Council as a result of this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications for the Council as a result of this report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that the Council agrees:

- (i) to authorise the Head of Planning and Building Control to place formal advertisement of the Council's Intention to Start Preparation of the Alteration of the East Ayrshire Local Plan in the local and national press, as required by statute; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the contents of this report.

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development and Property Services

26 April 2004 (JL/SA)
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Alteration to East Ayrshire Plan

For further information on the contents of this report contact Alan Neish, Head of Planning and Building Control. Telephone 01563 576782.

Implementation Officer: Alan Neish