

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT TO THE
LEADERSHIP PANEL OF 23rd NOVEMBER 2010

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND REVIEW OF EXISTING
SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE**

1. Purpose.

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the headline content of the Proposed Local Development Plan, noting the consultation responses submitted to the Main Issues Report [MIR] as a robust basis upon which to proceed to confirm the content of the Proposed Local Development Plan.
- 1.2 Approval is also sought to commence a review of existing supplementary guidance to ensure that standing planning policy guidance reflects national and local planning policies, as well as recent planning appeal decisions.

2. Recommendations.

2.1 It is recommended that the Leadership Panel:

- i. **Approves the headline content of the Proposed Local Development Plan, as set out in Section 4.**
- ii. **Agrees the priorities for the review of existing supplementary guidance, as set out in Appendix I.**

3. Background.

- 3.1 South Ayrshire Council undertook an extensive consultation exercise on its MIR for 8 weeks between 17th May and 12th July 2010. It is a requirement that the MIR stage should be the principal opportunity for community engagement in the Local Development Plan [LDP] process, focussed on generating ideas and comments to inform policy options for the LDP. The range of methods to be used for publicising and engaging on the MIR were set out in the Council's Participation Statement, published as part of the Development Plan Scheme, in March 2009. A Consultation Strategy was produced in April 2010, which identified key tasks and timescales for delivering the consultation activities. A summary of this process and feedback is set out in **Appendix III**, which is available at <http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/planning/MainIssuesReport.aspx>, and is also available for inspection in the Members' Library.

3.2 The range of opportunities for engagement were as follows:

- Planning Forum – 3 meetings prior to launch of MIR helped guide options in the MIR;
- 4 Community Discussion Sessions (in Ayr, Girvan, Maybole and Troon) chaired by an independent facilitator, Nick Wright. An additional Exhibition Session was held in Prestwick;
- Bespoke meetings for stakeholders involved in: housing delivery, business and regeneration, internal Council services, Energy Agency workshop programme, major local employers and key agencies;
- Anyone could submit comments and representations by post, email or via the online portal

3.3 A wide range of innovative communication techniques were used to draw attention to opportunities to comment on the MIR, and to the community discussion sessions. These included, but went beyond, the methods set out in the Participation Statement, including:

- placing half-page adverts in all local newspapers;
- a news item in the Council's Tenant's June Newsletter;
- running a 30-second advert on West Sound radio, and an interview with the Planning Manager that was used in West Sound news items;
- displaying posters in all public Council buildings, libraries, supermarkets, local shops and at NHS facilities;
- writing out to all key agencies, Community Councils, and businesses, individuals and community groups who had expressed an interest in the LDP process;
- placing high profile news items on the front page of the Council's website – the MIR webpage received 2617 'hits' between May and September 2010;
- placing news items in the weekly, Council-wide 'Communications' email;
- producing a user-friendly summary leaflet version of the MIR – which was posted to all contacts and placed at Council buildings and libraries;
- sending a full copy of the MIR to the key agencies and anyone who requested a copy, at no charge.

Comment and Feedback from Main Issues Report Consultation

- 3.4 The Planning Forum helped to inform the preparation of the MIR. Forum members' views on the constraints and attributes to be considered in guiding new developments aligned closely with the criteria used in the land assessment framework for the MIR. The majority of forum members also supported the Council's preferred strategic vision.
- 3.5 Attendance at the community discussion sessions was relatively low, despite the extensive publicity. However, the events attracted a high proportion (almost 80%) of people who had never previously attended a planning service event. Feedback on these events was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of respondents feeling that they had sufficient opportunity to voice their views, and 92% agreeing that the events helped them to understand the LDP process better. Encouragingly for the LDP process 83% of respondents felt the MIR identified the right main issues.

- 3.6 An independent report on the community discussions, including the feedback and output from the groups, has been produced by Nick Wright, who facilitated these events and is set out in **Appendix II**. This has been made available through the Council's website at <http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/planning/MainIssuesReport.aspx>, and is also available in the Member's Library. Comments emerging from the group discussions are also contained in the MIR Digest of Responses, contained in **Appendix IV**, which can also be viewed at <http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/planning/MainIssuesReport.aspx>, and the Members' Library. Key themes include general support for the preferred vision and spatial strategy and strong support for regenerating Town Centres, especially Ayr and Girvan, with broad support for the proposed changes to Ayr town centre boundaries and redevelopment sites. There was also support for housing in sustainable, accessible locations close to employment, and for greater flexibility towards rural development.
- 3.7 Output from the other meetings with stakeholders, businesses and key agencies is also contained within the Digest. Some key findings include: general support for the housing growth strategy and the proposed differences in approach to the northern and southern areas, concern over finances available to deliver affordable housing, and support for the proposed infrastructure/A77 upgrade framework, although again with concerns over funding the required upgrades. There was also agreement that a supportive strategy should be adopted for Glasgow Prestwick Airport, support for a bypass at Maybole, and suggestions that more flexible policies should be adopted for town centres to help fill vacant retail units.
- 3.8 Detailed written responses to the MIR consultation are contained in the Digest. Although the overall number of comments received was relatively low, the written responses and output from the various meetings will be important in helping to inform the content of the Proposed Plan. It was noted that the level of responses from Community Councils was disappointing, despite reminder letters being sent and an extension made to the deadline for receiving their comments.
- 3.9 It is considered that the consultation process fulfilled, and indeed surpassed, the commitments set out in the Council's Participation Statement and the requirements of Scottish Government legislation and guidance.

4. **Content.**

Content of Proposed Local Development Plan

- 4.1 The process of preparation of the MIR involved establishing strategic vision options for the LDP and identifying main planning issues (i.e. key policy topics where change is required). Following consultation on the MIR (which is reported in Section 3 of this report), it is considered that the correct strategic vision and main issues were identified. Detailed feedback received in response to the MIR (as contained within the Digest) will be considered in developing policies to be contained within the proposed plan; however the agreement of the Leadership Panel to the preferred LDP vision and main issues provides a basis for the development of a project plan to manage the preparation of a proposed plan.
- 4.2 The preferred vision, which would guide the preparation of the LDP, is: "Growing our economy in an outstanding natural environment". This is intended to maximise economic growth in a way that is underpinned by sound social and environmental objectives.

4.3 The main issues proposed are: -

- Glasgow Prestwick Airport;
- Housing;
- Ayr & Troon Ports;
- Craigie Estate;
- Creating an Effective Transport Network;
- Green & Rural Economies;
- Climate Change;
- Meeting Infrastructure Needs;
- Ayr Renaissance;
- Girvan Regeneration; and,
- Maybole.

4.4 In addition the Proposed Plan will cover other policy areas, which will be substantially unchanged from the policies of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and South Ayrshire Local Plan. Policy areas that are will remain substantially unchanged in the Proposed Plan include: -

- Built & Natural Environment;
- Wind Farms;
- General Retail Policies; and,
- Industrial and Office Development.

4.5 Given the strategic nature of LDP's, the Scottish Government's expectation is that strategic policy direction should be clear within the LDP, but that detailed guidance on interpretation and application of policies should be contained within supplementary guidance, directly attached to the LDP. As such, in conjunction with, and following the preparation of the Proposed Plan on the basis of the issues outlined above, a programme of review and preparation of supplementary guidance notes will be undertaken to support the provisions of the LDP. This is a separate process to that outlined in Section 5 of this report, which relates to existing supplementary guidance, not connected to the development plan.

4.6 The proposed plan and other supplementary planning guidance will come before the Council for approval in due course – it is expected that the proposed plan will come before the Council in spring 2011. The recommendation of this report is to seek approval of the vision of the Proposed Plan and headline content and terms as set out in para 4.1 – 4.5.

Review of Existing Supplementary Guidance

4.7 **Appendix I** contains a table of all existing supplementary planning guidance notes that are independent of the development plan. While these guidance notes are not proposed to be directly connected to the LDP, they will continue to be important policy documents, providing standing planning guidance on such issues as the design of development proposals. These guidance notes are material to the consideration of planning applications, and, as such, are frequently referenced in planning decisions. It is, therefore, important that they accurately reflect national and local planning policy, and planning appeal decisions.

4.8 Within Appendix I, each guidance note has been allocated a priority level to indicate the currency and relevance of that particular guidance note. This priority allocation reflects how well the guidance reflects national and development plan policy, and how appeals and other decisions on planning applications have affected the operation of that policy. Members' approval of the priority allocations for each supplementary guidance note is sought, prior to the commencement of a review of existing guidance, in order that the Planning Service can focus prioritise a work programme for reviewing the existing guidance notes.

5. Resource Implications.

5.1 None arising directly from this report.

6. Results of Consultation.

6.1 This report establishes a work programme for the preparation of the proposed plan and a review of existing Council planning supplementary guidance. Consultation measures undertaken in respect the MIR, as well as those proposed for the Proposed Local Development Plan are set out under section 3 of this report.

6.2 The portfolio holder for Economic Development, Tourism and Leisure, Councillor Margaret Toner, has been consulted on the programme for the review of supplementary guidance and the process of preparing a Proposed Local Development Plan. The report and appendices have also been distributed to the LDP Project Board, and Members of the Regulatory Panel have been consulted on the programme for review of existing supplementary guidance.

Background Papers.

- i) Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006; and,
- ii) Scottish Government Circular 1/09 – Development Planning;
- iii) South Ayrshire Main Issues Report;
- iv) South Ayrshire Council Development Plan Scheme (2010);
- v) South Ayrshire Council's Main Issues Report Consultation Strategy;

Appendices

- Appendix I: Supplementary Guidance Review Programme
- Appendix II: (Nick Wright) Report on Community Discussions
- Appendix III: MIR Consultation Process Summary
- Appendix IV: South Ayrshire Main Issues Report Digest of Comments.

Person(s) to Contact.

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Date:

10th November 2010

Appendix I: Existing Supplementary Guidance

SPG Subject	Existing Guidance: Delete/ Update/ Retain as Existing	Priority	Notes
Existing Supplementary Guidance	Open Space and Designing New Residential Developments	Low	Adoption of draft policy imminent. It is recommended to wait amended permitted development rights before commencing work on policy review.
	Dormer Windows	Medium	Policy on new built does not require to be updated; however, the advice on conversions should be updated to reflect current development plan interpretation. It is not recommended that this is commenced, however, until LDP is adopted, as design can be fundamentally linked to the principle.
	Design/Siting Housing In Countryside	Medium	No requirement to update policy.
	Design Guidelines for Advertisement and Commercial Signage	Low	Current guidance out-of-date. Update required; however, it is recommended that a review commences following publication of amended permitted development rights.
	Velux Roof lights	Medium	Guidance covered by Scottish Historic Environmental Policy & Window Alterations Policy Leaflet; amalgamate remaining relevant content into Leaflet.
	Listed Buildings/Conservation Areas	Medium	No requirement to update policy.
	Satellite Receiver Dishes	Low	No requirement to update policy.
	Houses in Multiple Occupation	Low	No requirement to update policy.
	Control of Sunshades and Canopies on Commercial Frontages	Low	Guidance up-to-date; however may be amalgamate with advertisement guidance.
	Shopfront Security	Low	Guidance up-to-date; however may be amalgamate with advertisement guidance.
	Air Quality	N/A	No existing policy guidance in place. Consultation with Sustainable Development Team & Env. Health.
	Window Alterations Policy Guidelines Leaflet	Update	Leaflet to incorporate remaining relevant content from replacement windows SPG.