

AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN

Sustainable Development

STRAT 1: Sustainable Development “meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”
The 3 Ayrshire Councils shall... apply the guiding principles of Sustainable Development to the consideration of... planning applications.

SCHEDULE 1: Guiding Principles:

The quality of the natural and built heritage will be conserved and enhanced.
Important cultural heritage resources will be safeguarded.
Development will require to respect the landscape character of the area and not result in visual damage or intrusion.
Development should not lead to unacceptable damage to priority species and habitats...
Development proposals should not have an adverse effect on land, air, water quality or nuisance by way of smell, noise and light.

Local Communities (p.10)

It is important that any future development activity based within these communities should be based on their ability to provide the level of services required to support development whilst at the same time recognising a range of possible development constraints related to their historic importance and landscape setting.

Rural Communities (p.11)

It is important that the Development Framework is supportive of proposals that consolidate services in existing communities, accommodate the needs of local business, promote new business and leisure opportunities and improve accessibility.

STRAT 2: The 3 Councils...will seek to increase the attraction of Ayrshire as a place to live, work, visit and invest...

ECON 3: Local and Other Business Opportunities
The 3 Councils shall make provision for...other business development opportunities providing the development is small in scale and in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

Promoting the Environmental Economy (p18)

The employment opportunities and business potential offered by renewable energy... and investment in the quality of the environment itself will create significant opportunities for the area. Key sectors that emerge are the development of a more broadly based renewable energy industry, the promotion of new and alternative technologies, *an improved tourism product and a revitalised rural economy.*

The plan...seeks to facilitate the development of renewable energy... within communities and act as an economic and sustainable *driver of local economies* for the future. [How do these wind proposals drive a

local economy? Through the payments made to communities by way of 'development trusts'? Barr? The payments are generally less than 1% of the income generated by the turbines]

ECON 6: Renewable Energy

Proposals for the generation and utilisation of renewable energy should be promoted and will conform to the plan... where it can be demonstrated that there will be **no significant adverse impact, including cumulative impact or infrastructure constraints, and where the design of the development is sensitive to landscape character, biodiversity and cultural heritage.**

Wind Energy

Given the Government's targets, there is an onus to find wind farm locations that would contribute to the overall national supply, and take environmental impacts into account... It is also recognised that local benefits arising from wind farms can be important to the future economic regeneration of rural communities. To guide wind farm development in a manner that maintains landscape and biodiversity value and safeguards the operational needs of [the airports], two areas of search for large-scale wind farm development have therefore been identified. Outside these areas, wind energy proposals will be judged against... ECON 7.

ECON 7: WIND FARMS

In the Areas of Search... proposals will be supported.... [this area is not an 'area of search']

Areas designated for their national or international natural heritage value... will be afforded significant protection from large scale wind farms. **(SSSIs)**

The integrity of national and international designations should not be compromised. [note, there is no leeway for developers here]

Cumulative impact will be assessed in relevant cases, taking into account existing wind farms, those which have permission and those that are the subject of valid, but undetermined applications. **[Note cumulative impact does not take into account those farms which are in scoping, i.e. most of the prospective farms around Straiton, Linfairn will soon be the only one in planning – thus there will be no consideration for cumulative effect, given their current status]** the weight given to undetermined applications will reflect their position in the application process. ***Where the limit of acceptable cumulative impact has been reached the area will be afforded significant protection.*** [This level is not expanded upon]

Outside areas of search: all wind farm proposals will be assessed against the following constraints, any positive or adverse effects on them and how the latter can be overcome or minimised:

Historic environment;

Areas designated for their regional and local natural heritage value;

Tourism and recreational interests;

Communities;

Buffer zones;

Aviation and defence interests;

Broadcasting installations;

Proposals affecting Sensitive Landscape Character Areas shall satisfactorily address any impacts on the particular interest that the designation is intended to protect, but the designation shall not unreasonably restrict the overall ability of the plan area to contribute to national targets. [This area is a Sensitive Landscape]

In all cases, applications...should be assessed in relation to criteria including, as appropriate, grid capacity, impacts on the landscape and historic environment, ecology (including birds), biodiversity and nature conservation, the water environment, communities, aviation, telecommunications, noise and, shadow flicker.

Rural Diversification (p.23): Environmental quality is itself a key economic driver that increasingly underpins the future of the countryside and must be protected and enhanced. While change must be anticipated and accommodated this must be in the form of a managed evolution and not at the expense of the environment.

ECON 14: Rural Diversification. The 3 Councils shall A) support the principle of rural diversification, particularly through proposals for *small* scale renewable energy....

ENVIRONMENT (p.33)

Although statutory designations are important, it is necessary to go further and develop policies to embrace the totality of environment and promote quality of life.

Landscape makes a significant contribution to the economic, environmental and cultural life of the area...Landscape is recognised as a key element in promoting development, providing an attractive setting for existing communities and new investment.

As climate change and renewable development will continue to impact on landscape... it is essential that positive landscape management is carried out throughout Ayrshire to achieve improved landscape quality as well as landscape protection.

ENV 1:

Landscape Quality

The quality of Ayrshire's landscape and its distinctive local characteristics shall be maintained and enhanced. In providing for new development, particular care shall be taken to *conserve* those features that contribute to local *distinctiveness* including:

Settings of communities and buildings within the landscape;

Patterns of woodland, fields, hedgerows and tree features;

Special qualities of rivers...

Historic landscapes; and

Skylines and hill features including prominent views.

[Monument, Bennan, Craig Hill, the Merrick]

Local plans shall seek to protect and enhance landscape character and establish criteria for future development proposals in the context of the particular local landscape type.

ENV 2: Landscape Protection
re National Scenic Area...(Not here, but nearby)
In Sensitive Landscape Character Areas [here] the protection and enhancement of the landscape shall be given *full consideration* in ... the determination of planning applications.

PROTECTION OF THE BUILT HERITAGE

A link between ourselves and the past helps define our sense of place and belonging.

ENV 6: Development considered to have an adverse effect on the following heritage resources shall not conform to the structure plan.
Listed buildings of architectural and historic interest;
Designated conservation areas;
Historic gardens and designed landscapes; and
Archaeological locations and landscapes.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION

Nature Conservation Act 2004 requires Councils to further the conservation of biodiversity.

The EU Habitats Directive requires the planning system to look beyond designations and encourage positive management of features of the wider countryside that form a network to support the survival of important species.

ENV 7: The 3 Councils shall...
recognise the international and national natural heritage designations and the statutory protection afforded by them (SSSI)
support the identification of additional Local Nature Reserves and continue to work with other stakeholders to implement the Ayrshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

[FLOODING (Scienteuch, this may be a potential objection, but requires further investigation) it is recognised that development can influence the rate of run-off to water courses and that increased flood risk can be bought about by development and catchment management practices.

ENV 8: in accordance with the policy in SSP7, development proposals which would... increase the probability of flooding elsewhere will not be permitted.]