

**THE THREE AYRSHIRE COUNCILS AND
THE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN TEAM**

**AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN 2025
SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL GROUP**

INITIAL MEETINGS – REPORT

10.00 – 2.00, Wednesday 17th December 2003, & 11.00 – 4.00, Monday 12th January 2004
Council Chamber, 15 Links Road, Prestwick

INTRODUCTION

1. This report aims to set out the outcome of the two stage initial meetings of the Sustainability Appraisal Group held on 17th December and 12th January 2004. It also aimed to lay some of the groundwork for the meetings to be held in March and May 2004.
2. Part 1 summarises (A) the Group's views on the new Structure Plan, and (B) the outcome of the discussion of initial proposals for appraisal criteria. Part 2 starts to chart the way ahead by underpinning those criteria by (C) cross-reference to similar criteria in other plans and programmes; and by (D) a comparative update on indicators for Scotland and Ayrshire.

PART 1

A. VIEWS ON THE STRUCTURE PLAN

3. The December meeting explored, and the January session confirmed, the Group's clear views on the new structure plan and its relationship to sustainable development. The Group's views cover:
 - The overall approach to the structure plan;
 - The Key Issues for the plan; and
 - Aspects of the planning process.

The overall approach to the Plan

4. The Group recognised that the plan will need to meet the needs and demands for development: for homes, jobs, transport and other infrastructure. This has to be achieved whilst securing a balance between economic, environmental and social matters. In particular the plan must ensure that it balances the imperative for economic regeneration with the impact on the environment.
5. Some of the difficulties inherent in this process have been flagged up. Balancing the weight to give to social, economic and environmental issues – and to their associated indicators and criteria – will not be easy. The plan also deals with the very long term, exacerbating uncertainties and gaps in information.
6. However, two key priorities were consistently expressed. The first was that development should be on the basis of encouraging proximity and accessibility. Put simply, jobs, housing, shopping and services should either be near one another (the proximity principle) or readily accessible. This priority has direct implications for settlement strategy, and is likely to support consolidation of existing settlements, together with improved transport, including public transport services.

7. The second overall priority was safeguarding the environment, and securing the wise use of resources. This included reducing emissions to the environment, managing resource use, and safeguarding environmental resources. Specifically identified were the protection of designated sites and species; consideration of capacity and of cumulative effects; and design, greenspace and landscape – the principles of good design for communities. The group cited the precautionary principle, ensuring that the polluter pays, and mitigating environmental impact.

Structure Plan Key Issues

8. The Group raised a number of specific topics for the plan to address if it is to contribute towards sustainable development. On analysis, it was found that the agenda closely mirrors the key issues identified in the initial public consultation leaflet issued by the Joint Committee, and the headings used by the Joint Committee have been adopted below.

9. “A Future for Communities”. Community regeneration and the securing of social and environmental justice for communities are seen as important. The concern here is both social - supporting community welfare in the widest sense of health, education, and social cohesion (‘integrated communities’ was the term used) – and its land use implications – arresting the decline of town and village centres, and addressing the problems of dormitory suburbs.

10. “Economic Prosperity” was seen as strengthening economic resources as a basis for future economic investment. While the Group initially stressed the need for the careful control of large scale economic and industrial development in order to manage and mitigate their impacts, they also recognised their potential and importance. This included industrial development, the airport, and ports and harbours.

11. “Housing Land Investment”. Housing can also be a positive investment towards community renewal, but at the same time housing provision has implications for environmental impact and infrastructure provision. The choice of housing location (and to some extent the type of housing) was seen as a key issue.

12. “Transport and Public Sector Infrastructure Support”. The Group had a twin track approach to transport, concerned above all to promote public transport (including rail expansion), but also to address the growth of road traffic. The impact of road building and airport expansion would have to be carefully assessed. Addressing infrastructure constraints and securing funding and co-ordination with development are all seen as vital to the implementation of any planning strategy. The need for flood appraisal was also noted.

13. “A Green Future”. The Group identified four themes.

- Securing air and water quality, and land renewal, addressed all three environmental media.
- The plan should tackle waste, supporting the National Waste Strategy and Area Waste Plan with their emphasis on waste minimisation and recycling.
- It should also contribute to both renewable energy (assessing the cumulative impact of windfarms) and to energy efficiency of new housing.
- Finally, the plan should underpin the Local Biodiversity Action Plans, and avoid loss of habitats and species.

14. “Rural Ayrshire”. Though less frequently cited than the 5 other key issues, the Group included the need – and potential – for rural development and diversification. This means rural economic development and jobs, housing and transport, and tackling the degeneration of rural villages, but doing so in a way that builds on and develops environmental resources (air, water, and land) rather than harming them.

Structure Plan & Sustainability Appraisal Processes

15. The Group’s comments on the planning and appraisal process could be divided into three strands: the opportunity for co-ordination of policy; the need for the co-ordination of investment; and the involvement of the public and politicians in consultation and participation.

16. *Co-ordination of policy.* The Group want to see economic, social and environmental considerations brought together and reflected in joined-up thinking, with clear linkages between the structure plan (and its action plan) and the community plans and local plans. Achieving this depends on inter-agency co-operation, and also on the preparation of the plan and the sustainability appraisal being integrated and feeding off each other. Quality of life indicators also have a role to play, though ultimately the sustainability of the plan will depend on the degree of implementation and action (and establishing causal relationships between the plan and impacts).

17. *Co-ordination of investment.* Picking up the last point, planned provision of infrastructure and associated investment decisions by the agencies responsible will be central to securing implementation of the plan. Lack of co-ordination and resources not only threatens implementation, but may threaten sustainable development [for example, if new housing is not preceded by public transport provision, then it may be difficult (and uneconomic) to later change patterns of car use that become established].

18. *Consultation and participation.* The Group also stressed the importance, and also the difficulties, of public participation in the plan preparation process. There may be a lack of understanding of the role and significance of the structure plan, and it is easier for the public to engage over large developments, albeit with the risk that lack of information or communication may lead to ‘knee jerk’ reactions by local communities. There is also a need to recognise the role of politics, and that building sustainability is a long-term process, in contrast to short term funding from government. Overall, there has to be confidence building in the process.

19. At their meeting on March 19th 2004, the Group confirmed this summary of their views.

B. DISCUSSION OF INITIAL PROPOSAL FOR POLICY APPRAISAL CRITERIA

The Initial Proposal

20. In the December 2003 meeting, the Group clearly expressed the view that the sustainability appraisal should address economic, social and environmental matters. It was judged that the tools needed for the task would include indicators and criteria. The structure plan team's previous appraisal, and in particular their monitoring reports, have established a track record of indicators on which to build. However, these are directed at monitoring the overall sustainability of Ayrshire (and the contribution of the structure plan to this), rather than assessing each proposed policy against the three pillars of sustainability.

21. It therefore seemed sensible to supplement the indicators by a set of criteria, the purpose of which would be to provide a basis for assessing both the structure plan as a whole, and its constituent policies. On this basis, an initial set of criteria was devised, drawing on previous work by (and with) other Scottish structure plans, and also on mainstreaming sustainable development within European Structural Funds [more on this is Part 2, following]. This set comprised:

Economic Criteria:

- The creation or safeguarding of jobs and training opportunities
- Provision of new or improved infrastructure to support the Development Strategy
- Development in strategic clusters / locations

Social Justice Criteria:

- Assisting disadvantaged communities or renewal priorities
- Supporting accessible facilities and the sequential approach
- Supporting or enhancing community facilities
- Provision of affordable housing and/or mixed use

Environmental Impact Criteria:

- Promotion of resource use efficiency, including:
 - Energy efficiency; SUDS; waste minimisation
 - Re-use of existing infrastructure and services
 - Avoidance of greenfield development
- Enhancement, renewal and protection of environmental resources (including the precautionary principle; and the polluter pays principle)
- Restoration or improvement of air, water and land quality
- Capacity of the environment to absorb development (including cumulative capacity)

Reactions

22. This proposal was discussed at the meeting on January 12th 2004. The initial reaction was cautious, though by the end of the discussion sessions and the final reporting back, there was much more engagement. The Group expressed a number of concerns and reservations, and also made a number of explicit suggestions for change. With hindsight, even though it drew on the outcome of the December 2003 meeting of the Group, in the short working time between the two meetings the criteria had not been devised by the Group. It took some time in discussion for the Group to develop a sense of ownership and control over the process.

23. Overall, the Group accepted the proposed appraisal criteria subject to a number of important reservations and modifications.

24. Of the reservations, perhaps one of the most instructive is that it is difficult to finalise the criteria until more is known about the structure plan policies and proposals. This applies to the level at which to set criteria (some were seen as too specific, others as too broad). Some of the criteria were drafted on the presumption that the plan will include a spatial development strategy; that this strategy will identify strategic clusters and locations; and the plan will have a policy to protect specified environmental resources. Only if these are confirmed, will the suggested criteria make sense.

25. More generally, there were persistent views that the criteria need to be guided by some means of benchmarking. The need for baseline data, the issue of weighting, and the need to relate to wider targets and indicators are all part of this. Initial ideas on the way forward and how to join up with existing sets of indicators are set out in Part 2 of this report.

26. Finally, the Group gave a number of further pointers to the overall characteristics they seek from the plan and its appraisal criteria. Foremost amongst these is the issue of access and accessibility. One of the key roles seen for the structure plan – and a key test of its sustainability – is to ensure that people in Ayrshire have access to jobs, to housing, to community facilities, to public transport.

Revised Appraisal Criteria

27. In the light of the meeting, the list below tries to capture all the main suggestions for change. This revised set is clearly provisional, and is likely to be further revised in the light of reactions from the Group, and the Group's consideration of the draft structure plan. In particular, some of the criteria may well overlap or duplicate one another; if so, this will become apparent when they start to be used to appraise policies.

Economic Criteria:

- The creation of opportunities for access to jobs
- Development to encourage people to live and work in Ayrshire
- Provision of new or improved infrastructure to support the Development Strategy [*subject to the strategy reflecting sustainable development and being set out in the draft plan*]
- Development in strategic clusters / locations [*subject to these being set out in the draft plan*]

Social Justice Criteria:

- Assisting local communities, particularly disadvantaged communities and renewal priorities [*subject to the latter being set out in the draft plan*]
- Promoting greater accessibility to services and facilities, and the sequential approach to development decisions
- Supporting or enhancing community facilities
- Meeting all housing needs including affordable housing

Environmental Impact Criteria:

- Promotion of resource use efficiency, including:
 - Energy efficiency; SUDS; waste minimisation
 - Re-use of existing infrastructure, services and transport provision
 - Promoting brownfield site development [*Note: the rationale for this is to reinforce renewal priorities, accessibility, and wise use of existing transport and services*]
- Enhancement, renewal and protection of environmental resources (including the precautionary principle; and the polluter pays principle) [*subject to the structure plan specifying the range of environmental resources, which should include biodiversity, designated areas & sites, non renewable resources, and cultural heritage*]
- Restoration or improvement of air, water and land quality
- Capacity of the environment to absorb development (including cumulative capacity and townscape/landscape assessment)

PART 2

C. DEVELOPMENT OF THE APPRAISAL CRITERIA

28. The Group's caution in their initial reactions to the appraisal criteria suggested that this was an area where further work was needed. As a first step, I have reviewed the sustainable development criteria with which I have some familiarity on a comparative basis. This is set out on Table 1, overleaf.

29. Part of the reason for doing this is a comfort factor – though the fact that other public agencies have adopted similar approaches does not of itself confirm that the approach is right! This is especially the case, when one of the examples – the Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan – did not adopt the proposal (albeit the proposed approach was advocated when the plan was already at public consultation draft stage). However, in all the other cases, the plan or programme is approved and the approach is being implemented.

30. The table needs a little interpretation. In every case the criteria have not been developed or applied in isolation, but for a fuller understanding need to be considered in context. Some of the salient features are:

- The ESEP criteria are not for a structure plan, but form part of meeting the EU's requirements to mainstream sustainable development in European Structural Funds Programmes. They are used as core criteria in selecting projects for financial support, and are being introduced for project monitoring.
- The Glasgow and Clyde Valley criteria form a key part of one of two policies on Implementation. As such they provide a sample of the overall approach, and a more comprehensive picture is available from the two page spread in the plan (pages 86-87 of the January 2003 edition of the plan, incorporating modifications). This sets out the Assessment of Development Proposals (Strategic Policy 9) and Departures from the Structure Plan (Strategic Policy 10).
- The proposals for the Edinburgh and the Lothians structure plan were made by the Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership (ESDP), a multi-agency group similar to the Ayrshire Sustainability Group. They were influenced by the Glasgow approach, but incorporated the specific concerns of ESDP.
- The Highland Council structure plan sets out sustainability objectives at the outset. It also sees the plan as being a land use, corporate and partnership document. The sustainability objectives shown (which are also to be used as monitoring criteria) are supported by general strategic policies, in particular Policy G2 "Design for sustainability".

31. The revised provisional appraisal criteria under development for Ayrshire are shown on the table. For reasons of space, the explanatory notes (shown in italics in paragraph 27) have not been repeated on the table. This does not mean that explicit reference to topics such as biodiversity have been omitted by oversight.

32. The reason for presenting this assessment was to provide members of the Group with more background on the rationale for the criteria, and how they compare to some of the similar work on strategic planning elsewhere in Scotland.

Table 1. Comparative assessment of Sustainable Development Criteria

TYPE OF PLAN:	EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL FUNDS	STRUCTURE PLAN CRITERIA			
Document	ESEP Core Criteria for Project Selection	Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan 2003	Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan	Highland Council Structure Plan 2001	Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan (in preparation)
Status of sustainable development criteria	Implemented in 2000-2006 Programme	Criteria for departures from Approved Plan (Strategic Policy 10) <i>[NB full SP9 & SP 10 are more comprehensive]</i>	Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership (Community Plan partnership) proposals 2002, <i>not incorporated in plan</i>	Sustainability objectives / criteria set out in Approved Plan (1.4.4) <i>[see also Policy G2]</i>	Criteria proposed by Sustainability Appraisal Group
Economic and strategic criteria	1. Net Additional Jobs 2. Evidence of Demand 3. Partnership and Leverage 11. Strategic Integration 12. Durability & Feasibility	The need to accommodate inward investment for industrial or business development that would otherwise be lost to the Structure Plan area or to Scotland. The protection of existing jobs or the creation of a significant number of net additional permanent jobs to the Structure Plan area.	The creation/safeguarding of jobs/ training opportunities, preferring locations with easy access by foot, cycle & public transport. Support for the clusters / locations identified in policies ECON 3, 4 & 6. Reduction in need to travel by car & encouragement of use of public transport, incl. reduction of in-commuting by car from the landward areas. Provision of new & improved transport infrastructure & services to support the Development Strategy.	2. The diversification of the regional and local economies. 3. The quality and number of employment opportunities	The creation of opportunities for access to jobs Development to encourage people to live and work in Ayrshire Provision of new or improved infrastructure to support the Development Strategy Development in strategic clusters / locations

Table 1 (continued 1)

TYPE OF PLAN:	EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL FUNDS	STRUCTURE PLAN CRITERIA			
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Social criteria	7. Access & Equal Opportunity 8. Local Added Value 9. Capacity Building 10. Social Inclusion	Assisting the urban renewal or rural regeneration of the Priority Areas identified in Schedule 1(b)(d). Supporting or enhancing community facilities. The capacity of the settlement and surrounding area to absorb further development.	Support for the renewal of disadvantage communities, incl. the renewal priorities identified in the Development Strategy. Support for the sequential approach to retail location in RET1, & preference for shopping, leisure and community facilities to be easily accessible by foot, cycle and public transport. Development which supports a diversity of economic and community activities in or adjacent to the town centres listed in Schedule 6.1. Provision of development that diversifies densities and compatible land uses, and provides affordable housing.	1. Community empowerment and decision-making. 4. Accessibility to and quality of housing. 5. The safety, enjoyment and diversity of towns and villages. 6. Standards of health for all. 8. Accessibility to community facilities and services. 9. Accessibility to education and training. 10. The maintenance and enhancement of the cultural heritage, including landscape and Gaelic.	Assisting local communities, particularly disadvantaged communities and renewal priorities Promoting greater accessibility to services and facilities, and the sequential approach to development decisions Supporting or enhancing community facilities Provision all housing needs including affordable housing

Table 1 (continued 2)

TYPE OF PLAN:	EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL FUNDS	STRUCTURE PLAN CRITERIA			
Document	ESEP Core Criteria for Project Selection	Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan 2003	Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan	Highland Council Structure Plan 2001	Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan (in preparation)
Status of sustainable development criteria	Implemented in 2000-2006 Programme	Criteria for departures from Approved Plan (Strategic Policy 10) <i>[NB full SP9 & SP 10 are more comprehensive]</i>	Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership (Community Plan partnership) proposals 2002, <i>not incorporated in plan</i>	Sustainability objectives / criteria set out in Approved Plan (1.4.4) <i>[see also Policy G2]</i>	Criteria proposed by Sustainability Appraisal Group
Environmental criteria	4. Infrastructure Impact 5. Resource Efficiency 6. Environmental Impact	The protection and enhancement of environmental resources identified in Schedule 7 or Local Plans. The significant restoration of vacant or derelict land for environmental purposes. Improvement of air and water quality.	The re-use of existing infrastructure and services, including the development of brownfield land in preference to greenfield sites. The maintenance of a continuous Green Belt. Accessibility to existing public transport provision, or to the public transport components of investments listed in Table 5.1. Development which does not damage or threaten environmental resources of acknowledged importance, in accordance with policies ENV1, 2, 4, and 5. The capacity of the environment to absorb further development. The promotion of energy efficiency, sustainable urban drainage and waste minimisation. The enhancement or renewal of environmental resources, including land renewal, air and water quality, and biodiversity.	7. The effectiveness and efficiency of infrastructure provision. 11. The quality of the built environment. 12. Biodiversity. 13. The optimal use of renewable and non-renewable resources. 14. The efficiency of energy use. 15. The quality of air, water and land.	Promotion of resource use efficiency, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency; SUDS; waste minimisation • Re-use of existing infrastructure, services and transport provision • Promoting brownfield site development Enhancement, renewal and protection of environmental resources (including the precautionary principle; and the polluter pays principle) Restoration or improvement of air, water and land quality Capacity of the environment to absorb development (including cumulative capacity and townscape/landscape assessment)

D. INDICATORS FOR SCOTLAND AND AYRSHIRE

33. After considering the existing set of indicators for monitoring the current Ayrshire structure plan, a previous interim report recorded that:

“the set of tools needed [for the sustainability appraisal] is likely to include:

- Quality of Life indicators for the overall plan process (drawn from existing indicators, but potentially amended to reflect integration/equality of social/economic/environmental aspects, and relate better to community planning)
- Criteria to ensure that sustainable development is the basis for overall strategy of structure plan, and tracks through to every specific policy. Therefore, such criteria have to assess if all policies are consistent with sustainable development approach (i.e. that economic, social and environmental implications are thought through, throughout) ...
- Clear assessment, *inter alia*, of state of the environment - as part of sustainable development, but especially to fulfil SEA requirements (but not distorting the perspective to the neglect of social & economic dimensions).”

34. Since then it has been possible to take stock of a number of developments. These include:

- The recently published *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Scotland: Progress Report 2004* Scottish Executive, Paper 2004/3, February 2004
- Further work on the sustainable development requirements of the Best Value regime, now applying to all public bodies as well as local authorities. These include a requirement in the statutory guidance for councils:
“that ‘quality of life’ indicators are identified to measure performance in contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and report to the public.”
- Further consideration of the Executive’s consultation on the requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment.

35. It was already apparent that the current Ayrshire structure plan indicators should provide some of the reference points – weightings, and especially a degree of measurement – sought by the Group in debate on the criteria. The recent developments give added impetus to this, and suggest that the Ayrshire indicators may be modified to take into account comparability with (and sitting within the framework provided by) the Scottish and UK sets of indicators. Further, the need for councils to produce quality of life indicators as part of the sustainable development requirements of the Best Value regime, should also enable further work by the three Ayrshire Councils and their community planning partners to feed into (and be informed by) the structure plan indicators.

36. To start taking this forward, I have carried out a comparative assessment of the Ayrshire indicators with those for Scotland and the UK (in a few instances what is reported is a composite from more than one indicator). This is set out in Table 2, overleaf. This comparison may suggest where the current Ayrshire set might be strengthened. Also, because in each case progress is being reported against the indicators, it is also possible to draw some conclusions about policy priorities.

37. In terms of scope, arguably what seems most conspicuous is that the UK and Ayrshire indicators suggest more gaps in the Scottish set – social investment and land use being notable omissions. However, where the Ayrshire indicators may warrant strengthening appears to be parts of the social agenda. This is most obvious in the case of housing, but perhaps more generally in terms of social exclusion.

Table 2. Comparative Assessment of Ayrshire Monitor 2000 and Indicators for Scotland 2004

UK Government Headline Indicators	Scottish Executive Indicators for Scotland 2004		Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan Monitor 2002	
	Indicator	Measure		Measure
Economic growth H1. Economic Output GDP & GDP/head	1. Sustainable prosperity	CO ₂ emissions / GDP	Economy: Sustainable growth Economy: Sustainable growth Economy: Enterprise & Innovation Economy: Enterprise & Innovation Transport: Economic Development	GDP/head Employment Business Vitality – VAT registration rate Employment in High Technology/Tradeable Sectors Airport growth Trunk Road Investment
Economic growth H2. Investment Total & social investment as % of GDP			Economy: Competitive infrastructure Communities: Town Centres Communities: Access to facilities & services Environment: Cultural resources Transport: Accessibility	Capital investment programme Retail expenditure in Ayrshire town centres Perception of accessibility Traffic growth (%) Buildings at risk Major Public Transport Investment
Economic growth H3. Employment % working age in work	2. Work: people as a resource 3. Population structure	% unemployed working age people % population which is working age	Economy: Economic Opportunity Economy: Economic Opportunity Economy: Economic Opportunity	Working age population in employment Employment rate Net Migration

Key:
 Measure assessed as moving towards sustainability
 Measure assessed as moving away from sustainability
 Measure assessed as neither moving towards or away from sustainability

Table 2 (continued 1)

UK Government Headline Indicators	Scottish Executive Indicators for Scotland 2004		Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan Monitor 2002	
	Indicator	Measure		Measure
Social progress H4. Poverty & social exclusion Several indicators	18. Home Life 20. Fuel Poverty	% children living in workless households No. of households living in fuel poverty	Communities: Poverty & Social Exclusion	Benefit Dependency (households)
Social progress H5. Education Qualifications at 19	19. Preparing for Life	% 16-19 year olds not in education, training or employment	Economy: economic opportunity	Qualifications of workforce (NVQ level 4 & above)
Social progress H6. Health Expected years of healthy life	24. Health	Life expectancy at birth	Transport: Environmental Protection Transport: Environmental Protection	Road accident casualties Length of National Cycle Network
Social progress H7. Housing Housing condition	21. Social concern	No. of homeless households entitled to permanent accommodation		
Social progress H8. Crime Level of crime	22. Crime	Total number of crimes		

Table 2 (continued 2)

UK Government Headline Indicators	Scottish Executive Indicators for Scotland 2004		Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan Monitor 2002	
	Indicator	Measure		Measure
Environmental protection H9. Climate change Emissions of greenhouse gases	7. Climate change 12. Energy consumed 13: Energy: renewable	M tonnes greenhouse gases carbon equivalent Gas consumed (domestic) & electricity consumed % electricity from renewable sources	Environment: Climate change Environment: Energy Efficiency Environment: Renewable energy	CO ₂ emissions & Sea level change Thermal efficiency within housing stock (NHER) Energy generation from renewable sources
Environmental protection H.10 Air quality Days when air pollution is moderate or higher	8. Air quality	No. of Air Quality Management Areas	Environment: Air quality Transport: Environmental Protection	Concentrations & emissions of air pollutants Transport related CO ₂ emissions
Environmental protection H11. Road traffic Road traffic	14. Travel: distance 15. Travel: industry 16. Travel: mode 17. Travel: accessibility	Total vehicle kms Freight intensity (tonne km moved c.f. GDP) % of journeys to work not using car % households within 6 minutes walk of bus stop	Transport: environmental protection Transport: environmental protection Transport: accessibility Transport: accessibility Transport: accessibility Transport: accessibility Transport: accessibility Transport: accessibility	Road traffic growth Lorry miles removed from road Work/education trips by public transport Work/education trips by car Walking time to nearest bus stop Frequency of nearest bus service Rural accessibility: subsidised bus mileage Rail patronage

Table 2 (continued 3)

UK Government Headline Indicators	Scottish Executive Indicators for Scotland 2004		Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan Monitor 2002	
	Indicator	Measure		Measure
Environmental protection H12. River water quality Rivers of good or fair quality	9. Water quality	Km of river identified as poor or seriously polluted	Environment: Water quality	River water quality Bathing beaches quality
Environmental protection H13. Wildlife Populations of wild birds	10. Biodiversity 11. Sea fisheries	% Biodiversity Action Plan species & habitats stable or increasing % fish stocks within safe biological limits	Environment: Biodiversity Environment: Biodiversity	Extent of key habitats UK species of concern in Ayrshire
Environmental protection H14. Land Use New homes built on previously developed land			Environment: Land and Soil Environment: Landscape Communities: Re-using urban land	Land & soil quality Land cover change % houses built on greenfield land
Environmental protection H15. Waste Household waste: all arisings & management	4. Waste: production 5. Waste: recycling 6. Waste: landfilled	Municipal waste arisings (m. tonnes) % total household waste recycled Biodegradable municipal wastes landfilled (m. tonnes)	Environment: Waste Environment: Non-renewable resources - minerals	% collectable waste recycled Consented reserves – Coal & Aggregates
	23. Volunteering	% taking part in voluntary activities		

38. However, what may be more immediately relevant is what the indicators suggest about policy priorities for Ayrshire. Two main topics stand out. First, the indicators highlight that the state of the Ayrshire economy (and associated out-migration) is of major concern. Notwithstanding that the indicators used differ, the implication is that the UK and Scottish economies are doing well, and that Ayrshire is not. This will have to be a focus for the plan.

39. The second concern is that on the face of it CO₂ emissions, and traffic growth, and associated problems such as sea level changes, are more of concern in Ayrshire than they are at UK and Scottish levels. There are several possible explanations: the indicators may not be directly comparable; or perhaps Ayrshire is less complacent, or more aware at local level of the reality of flood risk or fuel poverty.

40. For two other topics the indicators send warnings: rural accessibility and the quality of bathing beaches. Both have wide implications, the former for the wellbeing of the third of Ayrshire's population living in rural areas; the latter for the health of one of Ayrshire's important economic and environmental assets.

41. The topics noted in paragraphs 38 to 40, all of which have been noted by the Group, are those assessed as 'moving away from sustainability' in Ayrshire's Monitor 2000. Even before any additions or adjustment to the set of indicators, these topics suggest themselves as amongst those it is important for the structure plan to address.

Tim Birley for Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan Sustainability Appraisal Group
9 March 2004 (edited for publication on the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan website)