

**AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN 2025:  
CONSULTATION DRAFT**

**REPORT OF SURVEY  
TECHNICAL REPORT TR02/2004  
(INTERIM)  
A STUDY OF URBAN  
CAPACITY WITHIN  
AYRSHIRE**

The Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan & Transportation Committee is a jointly funded partnership between East Ayrshire Council, North Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Council



**FOREWORD**

This technical report is part of the Report of Survey for the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan. The full list of technical reports is appended to the back of this document. They are available on request, and in some instances will be subject to a minimum charge.

The purpose of these documents is to provide the reader with the evidence used in determining the policies that go to make up the structure plan. It is intended they will be updated as necessary.

Further information about the contents of this document, together with information about the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan process and timescale can be obtained from the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan & Transportation Committee at the address noted below.

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## 1 BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Sustainable Settlement Strategies

Scottish Planning Policy 3: Planning for Housing introduces a new approach to the planning of housing within Scotland and necessitates the early review of housing policies within the development plan for Ayrshire. The guidance requires planning authorities to draw up long term settlement strategies to provide certainty and variety for housing providers and local communities. The guidance places a particular emphasis on the need to ensure previously developed or underused land is maximised and that land within communities such as surplus industrial land, vacant buildings, underused floorspace are assessed and their merits considered prior to bringing forward greenfield options. The guidance also requires planning authorities to co-ordinate housing land provision with improvements in infrastructure, such as water and sewerage, education and transport provision.

### 1.2 Urban Capacity Framework

A framework within which these options can be considered is through the preparation of an "Urban Capacity Study" which SPPG3 defines as "an assessment of the potential for further housing development within settlement boundaries, particularly on previously developed land and through conversions of existing buildings". The use of urban capacity is now widely used in England & Wales. Within Scotland a number of the authorities have recently undertaken Urban capacity studies, examples include Aberdeen Council and the authorities within the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Structure Plan area. The Urban capacity assessment undertaken for Ayrshire is in three parts. This technical note is structured accordingly.

Part 1: This section presents an assessment of the potential for housing development within the main urban areas within Ayrshire. It draws heavily from the best practice guide "Tapping the Potential- Assessing Urban Housing Capacity" issued in December 2000 by the then Department Of Environment, Transport and the Regions for England & Wales.

Part 2: Sets out the known constraints/issues relating to water and sewerage infrastructure within Ayrshire.

Part 3: This last section presents a statement on the capacity of schools within Ayrshire.

Parts 2 & 3: are currently the subject of on-going discussions during the Consultation phase of the Structure Plan. The conclusions will be reported in the Final version of this technical report prior to submission of the Structure Plan to Scottish Ministers. Part 1 was completed in 2003 and the results are presented below.

## 2 PART1 - URBAN HOUSING CAPACITY

### 2.1 Urban Capacity Study

An urban capacity study is an assessment of the potential for further housing within settlement boundaries, particularly on previously developed land and through conversion of existing buildings (Source SPP3). It therefore seeks to reflect an understanding of change being brought about by urban renewal and of the opportunities that this will present in the future.

### 2.2 Approach and Methodology

It was agreed that the proposed Urban Capacity Study for Ayrshire would utilise a set of guidelines that are consistent across the three Ayrshire Councils. The guidelines were based on the DETR publication “Tapping the Potential - Assessing Urban Housing Capacity Towards Better Practice” issued in December 2000. Much of the work was desk based supported by the use of aerial photographs when available. To make the work manageable the study focused on larger sites, those which would yield more than 10 housing units and which had an area greater than 0.5ha. A separate allowance for smaller sites was however made within criteria seven “*the Intensification of development*” category, see below.

### 2.3 Urban Areas To Be Assessed

The work was phased over a number of months and covered the following communities within each local authority:

#### *East Ayrshire*

- Kilmarnock & Surrounding Villages/Communities (Crosshouse, Kilmaurs, Fenwick, Crookedholm/Hurlford )
- Stewarton
- Cumnock
- Mauchline
- Auchinleck

#### *North Ayrshire*

- Irvine & Kilwinning
- Kilbirnie, Glengarnock, Beith, Dalry
- Largs, West Kilbride
- Ardrossan, Saltcoats, Stevenston
- Barrmill, Dreghorn, Fairlie, Millport
- Skelmorlie, Springside

#### *South Ayrshire*

- Ayr, Prestwick, Troon
- Maybole
- Girvan

### 3 SOURCES OF CAPACITY

The survey covered the following nine categories of potential housing land:

#### 1 Previously Developed Land, which is now vacant.

This included derelict land and buildings or property in an advanced state of disrepair. The primary source of this information came from the vacant land register that is maintained by each authority on an annual basis. All land on this register was assessed for its potential to contribute to future housing regardless of previous or current use.

#### 2 Vacant Land Not Previously Developed

This category included parks, playing fields, allotments, and surplus green space that were likely to become derelict in the future. In South Ayrshire these opportunities had previously been identified as part of an “Open Space Strategy”, undertaken by the Council. In North Ayrshire & East Ayrshire the assessment was undertaken with the use of aerial photographs and local knowledge (Refer also to PAN 65).

#### 3 Redevelopment of Existing Uses

This included building/sites in a poor state of repair where substantial demolition and replacement with an alternative use was likely. They may also have been vacant for a year or longer but do not fall within the vacant and derelict land register categories. Examples included public sector stock areas where difficult and hard to let property has been progressively boarded up and where the likely intention is to demolish. It also included the conversion of commercial buildings where housing could be envisaged as an appropriate long-term use. The aim of this category was to assess significant redevelopment opportunities that have not yet reached the planning stage. It was found that a practical and pragmatic approach to this category was necessary. Not all sites within this category were mapped.

#### 4 Development of Under-utilised Car Parks

Car parks were considered for housing if they were poorly located, under utilised, or are of a poor quality and create a blight on a local area and their retention would no longer feature in local transport strategies for the authority.

#### 5 Conversion of Commercial/Residential Buildings

This category covered industrial/commercial/residential property which were generally sound but which were unlikely to perform their current use in the future and which may be appropriate for residential conversion. Unlike category 3 this category covered property that had the potential for re-use without extensive demolition. Examples included property that was in office use etc.

## 6 Retail core

An assessment of the likely re-use of property above the retail-shopping core was undertaken. A crude yardstick approach was used based on the number of conversions of similar property in previous years.

## 7 Intensification of Development in existing residential areas

This category is primarily intended to cover small sites 0.1 to 0.5 ha which provide gap site/infill opportunities. It included the intensification of uses through, for example, the utilisation of big garden (selling off of a plot). This was found to be a difficult area to quantify and after consideration all three authorities used an authority wide figure, based on past and historical experience e.g. approved building warrants.

## 8 Empty Homes

The Structure Plan currently makes an allowance for vacant property, this is estimated from the 2001 Census. To avoid the prospect of double counting in the Strategic Housing Land Assessment a nil allocation was made to this category.

## 9 Existing Housing Allocations

A comprehensive review of all housing allocations within current local plans was undertaken. This included sites deemed to be effective as well as those considered non effective. This review covered issues such as current assumptions on density for these sites, and possible programming if known constraints could be overcome.

## 4 **DATA HANDLING**

All sources which identify individual sites were mapped (GIS) and cross-referenced with a database. The data base included a numeric reference for the site, the site size and an estimate of potential housing capacity (refer above). Additional information such as the source of the data e.g. housing Audit 2002, Vacant Land Register, comment on known interest e.g. sites brought forward during the consultation phase of the local plan, ownership details of known redevelopment proposals etc were added if appropriate.

## 5 ASSESSING YIELD

The following approaches were considered:

- Density Multipliers- The following minimum density multipliers were adopted. They are based on gross areas.

	<b>Minimum Multiplier</b>
<b>Inner Urban Area (flats)</b> e.g. Fish Market, Ayr (actual 104/ha)	<b>80+ per ha</b>
<b>Inner Suburban/Transport Node</b> (Includes flats/houses)	<b>40+per ha</b>
<b>Outer Suburban/Urban Edge</b>	<b>25+per ha</b>

- Design Led approach- this was only used if the details of scheme were known.
- Yardstick – This was applied where appropriate in certain categories.

The use of a Density Multiplier to the gross area of the site was however the primary mechanism in the assessment of future yield.

## 6 DISCOUNTING THE POTENTIAL

Having assessed the potential capacity from the sites identified it was necessary to discount this theoretical capacity based on, develop ability, marketability, local character etc. Paragraph 29 in PAN 38 sets out criteria for assessing the effectiveness of sites for housing. These were applied to the assessment undertaken. The potential contribution the sites could make assumed that the sites would be free of any known constraints during the period/timescale under consideration

## 7 TIMESCALE

The sites were grouped into specific time periods depending on the probability that associated constraints could be resolved.

*High Probability* 2003-2009 (seven year horizon and assumes 2002 audit used as a source of capacity information)

*Medium Probability* 2010- 2017 (twelve year horizon from expected date of approval of next Structure Plan, that is 2005- see paragraph 61 SPP3)

*Low Probability*, 2017-2025 any sites beyond the 12-year horizon but before year 20.

## AYRSHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN AREA: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Table 1 - Urban Housing Capacity By Type- Structure Plan Area

Source	2003-2009	2010-2017	2017-2025
1. Previously Developed Land , which is now vacant	212	826	2827
2. Vacant Land not previously developed	182	1115	914
3. Redevelopment of Existing Uses	195	1106	849
4. Development of under-utilised car parks	0	145	60
5. Conversion of Commercial/Residential Buildings	0	42	0
6. Retail Core	34	10	0
7. Intensification of Development in existing residential area	0	53	52
8. Empty Homes	0	3	0
9. Housing Audit Sites	1080	4145	1343
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1703</b>	<b>7445</b>	<b>6045</b>

Table 2 - Urban Housing Capacity By Local Authority Area

Area	Output 2003 to 2009	Output 2010 to 2017	Output 2017 to 2025
<b>South Ayrshire</b>	0	1180	1040
<b>East Ayrshire</b>	521	1716	1428
<b>North Ayrshire</b>	1182	4549	3577
<b>Structure Plan Area</b>	1703	7445	6045

Results show that within Ayrshire communities surveyed the urban capacity was equivalent to 15,193 housing units for the period 2003 to 2025.

Table 3 - East Ayrshire Urban Capacity

Town	2003 to 2009	2010 to 2017	2017 to 2025
Auchinleck	48	338	93
Crosshouse	20	78	24
Fenwick	0	10	0
Crookedholm	0	34	0
Hurlford	10	34	50
Kilmaurs	30	10	0
Mauchline	0	45	29
Stewarton	76	89	68
Kilmarnock	319	782	855
Cumnock	18	296	309
<b>Totals</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>1716</b>	<b>1428</b>

Source	2003-2009	2010-2017	2017-2025
1. Previously Developed Land	212	298	151
2. Vacant Land Not Previously Developed	89	307	247
3. Redevelopment of Existing Uses	183	422	551
2/3 Combined Vacant Land and Redevelopment	0	90	60
4. Development of Under-Utilised Car Parks	0	0	0
5. Conversion of Commercial/Residential Buildings	34	0	0
6. Retail Core	0	0	0
7. Intensification of Development In Existing Residential Areas	0	0	0
8. Empty Homes	0	0	0
9. Housing Land Audit Sites	3	599	419
<b>Totals East Ayrshire</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>1716</b>	<b>1428</b>

Table 4 - South Ayrshire Urban Capacity

Town	2003-2009	2010-2017	2017-2025
Ayr	0	751	592
Prestwick	0	39	46
Troon	0	234	178
Maybole	0	73	173
Girvan	0	83	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1180</b>	<b>1040</b>

Source	2003-09	2010-17	2017-25
1. Previously Developed Land	0	0	26
2. Vacant Land Not Previously Developed	0	2	265
3. Redevelopment of Existing Uses	0	177	70
4. Development of Under-Utilised Car Parks	0	38	0
5. Conversion of Commercial/Residential Buildings	0	0	0
6. Retail Core	0	0	0
7. Intensification of Development In Existing Residential Areas	0	17	0
8. Empty Homes	0	0	0
9. Housing Land Audit Sites	0	946	679
<b>Total For South Ayrshire</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1180</b>	<b>1040</b>

Table 5 - North Ayrshire Urban Capacity

Town	2003-2009	2010-2017	2017-2025
Ardrossan	307	408	535
Saltcoats	344	596	17
Stevenston	54	357	360
Irvine	296	651	151
Kilwinning	18	913	371
Dreghorn	23	83	0
Springside	4	5	0
Beith	9	403	0
Barrmill	0	77	0
Dalry	52	185	185
Kilbirnie	0	242	231
Glengarnock	0	242	1704
West Kilbride	75	105	0
Skelmorlie	0	7	0
Fairlie	0	4	0
Largs	0	97	23
Millport	0	174	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1182</b>	<b>4549</b>	<b>3577</b>

Source	2003-09	2010-17	2017-25
1. Previously Developed Land	0	528	2650
2. Vacant Land Not Previously Developed	93	806	402
3. Redevelopment of Existing Uses	12	507	228
4. Development of Under-Utilised Car Parks	0	17	0
5. Conversion of Commercial/Residential Buildings	0	42	0
6. Retail Core	0	10	0
7. Intensification of Development In Existing Residential Areas	0	36	52
8. Empty Homes	0	3	0
9. Housing Land Audit Sites	1077	2600	245
<b>Total For North Ayrshire</b>	<b>1182</b>	<b>4549</b>	<b>3577</b>

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**REPORT OF SURVEY - TECHNICAL WORKING NOTES**  
**LIST OF PAPERS AVAILABLE @ JUNE 2004**

- 1 Report of Survey Technical Report 1 (Interim)  
Strategic Assessment of Housing Land Requirements
- 2 Report of Survey Technical Report 2 (Interim)  
A Study of Urban Capacity within Ayrshire
- 3 Report of Survey Technical Report 3 (Interim)  
Renewables
- 4 Report of Survey Technical Report 4 (Interim)  
Investment Corridors and Core Town Profiles