

**AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN 2025:
“Growing a Sustainable Ayrshire”**

**REPORT OF SURVEY
TECHNICAL REPORT TR08/2006**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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 INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of The Designation of Structure Plan Areas (Scotland) Order 1995 East Ayrshire Council, North Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Council are required to prepare a joint structure plan by agreement. A formal Minute of Agreement was signed by the three Councils in 1996 and the first Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan approved by Scottish Ministers in January 2000.

When a replacement Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan was initiated in early 2003 there was no formal guidance from the Scottish Executive regarding Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) and neither an Act nor Regulation was in place. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) rather than a SEA had previously been prepared for the approved plan. In order to comply with what appeared to be best practice at the time, and to ensure that the social and economic as well as environmental interests were fully appraised, the Joint Committee agreed to carry out a new and more comprehensive SA of the new joint structure plan. In order to ensure increased objectivity for the new SA the process this time was given over to an independent facilitator and a group made up of representatives of various organisations with expertise in different aspects of sustainable development.

During the final stages of the plan formal Regulations were issued by Scottish Executive regarding a SEA process, and whilst the Councils could not conform to this process, in the later stages of the plan a form of appraisal of the plan, similar to that which might be needed for an SEA, has been produced to test the plan's environmental context.

1.1 The Emerging Plan and SEA Legislation

As noted above, during the formal Consultation Draft stage of the Joint Structure Plan in June 2004 the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Scotland) Regulations 2004 was published which sought to introduce EU Directive 2001/42/EC in Scotland prior to the introduction of an Act. The Regulations required all plans and programmes started after 21 July 2004 to be subject to SEA, and that any plan started on or before 21 July 2004, but not adopted or submitted to the legislative procedure for adoption before 22nd July 2006, must also be subject to assessment. The requirements of the EU Directive were finally transposed into Scottish law by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 in February 2006. The intention of both the Act and the previous legislation is to provide a systematic process that ensures environmental impacts of plans and policies are examined and measures taken to provide the best possible environmental outcome.

The timing of the introduction of the Regulations regarding SEA meant that most substantive stages of the plan including the definition of objectives, establishing environmental data, the examination of alternatives and the formal consultation stage were already completed or were underway prior to their introduction in late July 2004. The general principles of the plan and five key objectives had already been assessed as part of the SA and provided a broader overview assessment of the plan. Whilst the SA has directly influenced the development of the plan, therefore, the stage at which the EA could be carried out has been such that it can only make an assessment of the environmental consequences of the plan.

In addition to the SA, therefore, this more limited Environmental Appraisal (EA) of the plan based around the key requirements of an SEA has been undertaken to test the policies against specific environmental objectives. In order to ensure further compatibility, the EA can be linked to the findings and conclusions of the SA and examines the potential environmental impacts of the plan in greater detail.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Purpose Of Structure Plans

The purpose of Structure Plans is set out in SPP1 *The Planning System*, which provides an overview of the land use planning system in Scotland and guidance for policy formulation and decision-making. SPP1 says that:

“Under current arrangements structure plans should provide a long term vision, looking forward at least 10 years, as part of an overview of the area’s development requirements, considering the functions and inter-relationship of places, expressing the settlement structure of the area and identifying priorities for urban and rural regeneration.”

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 sections 6 – 10 and the Town and Country Planning (Structure and Local Plans) Regulations 1983 set out the statutory requirements relating to Structure Plans.

2.2 Purpose of the Environmental Assessment

This assessment of the Structure Plan provides a systematic process with which to examine the environmental impacts of the Plan’s policies, and with the intention of assisting in the monitoring the Structure Plan in the future. The assessment also provides guidance to local plans as to which policies have the potential to have significant environmental effects. Carrying out an environmental assessment makes it possible to assess the cumulative impacts of a number of small-scale developments on the environment, which may otherwise individually be too small to warrant an environmental assessment. This assessment aims to comply as closely as possible with the legislative requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Scotland) Regulations.

2.3 Objectives of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan

The five key objectives of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan are:

- to stabilise the population in 2025 at current levels;
- to support measures that encourage economic development underpinned by a sustainable population;
- to seek improved accessibility both within, and to opportunities outside Ayrshire;
- to develop strong and vibrant communities by realising their potential for regeneration and growth and through the promotion of appropriate development for rural areas; and
- to safeguard and enhance the quality of the environment.

2.4 Relationship of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan to Other Plans and Programmes

One of the main functions of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan is to interpret international and national land use policy at a regional level, as well as setting the context for local land use decisions and Local Plans. The plan also influences and has to take into account plans and programmes developed by other organisations such as the Forestry Commission, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire and Scottish Natural Heritage, as well as partnerships such as the Local Biodiversity Action Plan group. This means that the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan is set within a hierarchy and background of plans and programmes that must be taken into consideration in its development. The relationship of the Structure Plan to specific international, national and regional documents is set out in Appendix 2. The environmental framework of the Structure Plan is described in Appendix 3.

2.5 Relationship of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan to international, European and national environmental objectives.

The Structure Plan has to take into account a wide range of environmental guidance and legislation emanating from a number of different sources, including European legislation that has been transcribed at a national level. The main environmental protection objectives that are relevant to the Structure Plan are described in Appendix 4.

3 CONTEXT

3.1 Assessing the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan

Because of the strategic nature of the policies contained within the plan it is difficult 'to identify specific, quantified environmental impacts resulting from them. However, broad predictions of the impacts can be made, particularly where there is the possibility of these affecting sites of national or international environmental importance. Local plans are guided by the structure plan and provide more detail in terms of development sites and how the policies will be implemented. This, in turn will affect the degree to which the environmental impacts of the policies can be assessed. In addition, because of the assessment being undertaken relatively late on in the process of preparing the plan, it was not possible to identify mitigating measures as part of the EA, however, within the plan there are already a number of policies that aim to avoid or mitigate the environmentally damaging aspects of the Plan.

The policies of the plan have been assessed against the 18 environmental objectives (presented below) detailed in the Scottish Executive's Interim Planning Advice document on the Environmental Assessment of Development Plans. These objectives fulfil the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Scotland) Regulations and, as the Interim Planning Advice suggests, if widely adopted would provide a consistency with plans throughout Scotland. They were felt to encompass a comprehensive range of environmental issues. The intention is for there to be a degree of consistency between the environmental objectives in the EA of the plan and those SEAs to be undertaken by the three Ayrshire local authorities; for example East Ayrshire Council is also using the same 18 environmental objectives in the review of the current Local Plan.

Some of the policies in the plan come directly from national planning policies. Under the SEA Regulations these policies do not need to be assessed because they are not altered by the plan. Policies that enlarge on, or further interpret policies in higher tier frameworks have to be assessed, even if broadly in accordance with SPP and NPPG. This is particularly pertinent in the case of the proposals to develop a deep water port at Hunterston and expand Prestwick Airport, which are both specifically mentioned in the National Planning Framework and the Aviation White Paper. It could be argued that the plan does not have an influence over these developments and so there is no need for an assessment at this level. However, because the policy is supportive of the development of Hunterston and the expansion of Prestwick Airport and because it further interprets the national policy, they have been included as part of this assessment.

3.2 Establishing an Environmental Baseline

The three Ayrshire Councils established an environmental baseline using information sourced from existing, internal databases and those of external organisations, including SNH, SEPA and Historic Scotland. The data is largely kept in the form of digitised map themes for use on the PC based Geographical Information System held in the office. This information is regularly updated and published and consulted in summary format on a biennial basis as part of the Monitor series of documents prepared jointly by the three Ayrshire Councils.

3.3 Consultation

In November 2003 an Issues Pamphlet was published to seek early views from all sections of the community about the main issues that should be addressed by the replacement Structure Plan. The pamphlet identified six key issues the Councils felt were the most important to be addressed, one was directly related to the future of the environment. The pamphlet was circulated widely to all known consultees, including the consultation bodies, placed in libraries and public buildings and was also placed on the Committee's website with an online discussion forum. Publicity was given through a publicity notice in the press. The consultation on the Issues Pamphlet lasted until January 2004 and the results of this exercise allowed the comments to be taken into account in the next stage of the plan.

The publication of the consultation draft plan instigated a major consultation exercise across all potentially interested parties. A series of consultation meetings was held with a number of key environmental groups to engage them in the process. This included such groups as Ayrshire Strategic Flood Appraisal Group, Ayrshire Biodiversity Action Group, Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway Area Waste Planning Group and Firth of Clyde Forum. As with the Issues Pamphlet, there was extensive publicity of the launch including targeted consultation requests, press release, posters and direct mailing. The statutory consultation period on the draft plan ran from 18th June until 27th August 2004, a period of 10 weeks, although submissions were still being accepted in October 2004. This was a significant extension on the minimum consultation period of four weeks.

This EA report will be submitted to the Scottish Executive as a Technical Note accompanying the Finalised Plan, with an opportunity for the consultation bodies and the public to comment and alterations and amendments made in light of these comments. In this respect the assessment closely follows the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005* to consult on the draft plan or programme along with the Environmental Report.

3.4 Evolution of Ayrshire's Environment in the Absence of the Joint Structure Plan

One of the key tests from SEA legislation is what would happen to the area if the plan was not produced. This presents something of a difficulty. As the Structure Plan is developed jointly by the three Ayrshire Councils it is often difficult to identify the impacts of the plan's policies and proposals on the environment not only as they are often not site specific but also because it could be argued that in the absence of the structure plan policies may well have been taken forward as part of the local plan process. For the purposes of this assessment, however, it has been supposed that there was no structure or local planning system. In general terms, in the absence of a structure plan, development in Ayrshire would be more likely to have a negative impact on environmental quality, because many of the environmental safeguards put in place by the planning system would be removed. Note that some designated sites,

such as Sites of Special Scientific are protected by legislation outside the planning system and so would be unlikely to experience greater loss or damage to them in the absence of a structure plan. There are, however, four areas where without a structure plan in place environmental impact is likely to be significant.

Sustainable Growth and Diversification of the Economy

In common with much of the United Kingdom, changes in technology and increasing global competition have impacted adversely on many local economies and communities. In Ayrshire, despite strenuous efforts and some notable success there remain persistent and unacceptable problems of a falling population, unemployment and social disadvantage. In the absence of the plan the population is likely to continue to fall, leading to a major loss of infrastructure for those remaining, and an increasing financial burden with less opportunity for environmental support mechanisms. In addition, if population is not retained it will be because it has moved elsewhere. This will either be to other parts of Scotland (likely to be to those areas already experiencing population and growth pressures – the belt from Stirling to East Lothian), or outwith Scotland (contrary to national policy objectives). Therefore in assessing the impact in terms of sustainable development, the implications for development elsewhere have also to be considered.

Community Regeneration

In the absence of a Structure Plan community regeneration would be hampered, as unchecked new development may gravitate to areas of highest demand and away from less favoured areas, further exacerbating their problems. This would particularly apply to housing on brownfield areas, which due to the cost of development could be likely to be avoided in favour of greenfield land. New development would also likely to be less well related to existing public transport infrastructure and opportunities to improve public transport (thus limiting the scope for reducing car-dependency and promoting sustainable transport patterns) and to existing community facilities.

Environmental Stewardship

In the absence of a structure plan unchecked development may take place in areas of environmental importance and there is likelihood that it would spoil and/or damage these special areas. It would be harder to plan for large-scale developments, for example windfarms, and which may have environmental impacts that cross council boundaries. Designated sites, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, which are protected under mechanisms outside the planning system, are unlikely to be directly affected in the absence of a planning system but may suffer indirectly from the loss of other areas of high environmental value. In addition, if open space is not positively planned there is the chance that there will not be adequate provision with the resulting loss of amenity, landscape and wildlife value.

Infrastructure

Without support from the structure plan certain types of infrastructure are less likely to be provided, for example footpaths, cycle paths and access to public transport. This is likely to impact on human health as fewer people have a chance to exercise. It is

also likely to encourage car use, which in turn will have additional negative environmental impacts. Car use is also likely to be increased if the development pattern is more sporadic, as it is likely to be if left uncontrolled.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Assessment Methodology

The EA of the plan takes a similar form to the SEA of the National Planning Framework. It was late in the process of developing the structure plan to go through a screening and scoping stage and to examine alternative scenarios, however the work done for the Sustainability Appraisal will have partly fulfilled this stage. The questions that were asked of the policies are listed to give clarity and transparency to the assessment and to provide a consistency of approach throughout the assessments. These are broadly similar to those contained in the Interim Planning Guidance, in part because if the Councils devised the questions there would be the danger of posing questions knowing that there would be a positive fit with the policies in the plan.

The plan is designed to be read as a whole, with different policies being grouped into themes, but often relating to the whole of the plan. This is especially the case with the environmental policies and other policies should be regarded in the context of them. SCHEDULE 1 incorporates many of the environmental issues and aims of the plan and STRAT 1 ensures that these are prime considerations in local plans. In some cases there may be perceived to be conflict between different policies in the plan and in this instance any single policy will be assessed primarily on its own merits.

The principles and strategic policies in the Structure Plan were each assessed against the eighteen environmental objectives. The assessments were based on the question ‘If a planning application was determined according to this policy, what would be the outcome for the environment?’ The assessment was made on the totality of the policy but sought to identify and recognise the main thrust, thus for example policy ECON 1 has a sub-clause that supports proposals which “...promote the expansion of airport and runway facilities for Glasgow Prestwick Airport, provided that adequate measures are taken to limit any harmful environmental consequences of the airport’s operation.” This policy would be assessed as primarily promoting the expansion of Glasgow Prestwick Airport, with the secondary criteria being limiting the environmental consequences. In other words the assessment will be made on the intention of the policy and compared to the likely situation that would arise without a plan on the current state of the environment.

The plan largely directs the location of development rather than increasing or lowering the levels of development pressure, for example it cannot create industries that will then establish themselves in Ayrshire. Similarly, allocating land for these developments is not the same as actually building them. Because of this, for most of the policies the assessment focussed on the environmental impacts of locating the development in a particular area against a situation of there being no planning system. For example, if it assumed that land allocated for housing or industry will be developed, and as a result of this energy usage increases in the locality, the assessment will only be negative (against the environmental objective of ‘Reduce Energy Consumption’) if directing the developments to this particular area would cause them to use comparatively large amounts of energy. Where the policy promotes or encourages development, it will be assumed that this will be at a greater level than would occur without the plan and so the impacts of the developments themselves will be taken into account.

Where locations are identified for development in the plan they were assessed using a sieve mapping exercise. This involved the production of a composite GIS map of an extensive range of the environmental coverages, including cultural heritage sites, nature conservation designations and sensitive landscape areas, around alternative locations that were proposed for development. The environmental data used to compile the sieve map was related as closely as possible to the environmental objectives used to assess the other policies (see Appendix 5).

Following the examples in the Scottish Executive's SEA template, a number of different assessment matrixes that asked for varying levels of detail were tested against a two policies in the plan to see if they provided worthwhile results. The matrixes assessed against 'Magnitude', 'Extent', 'Timescale' and whether the impacts were likely to be short or long term and indirect and direct. It was found that due to a lack of details and the wording of the policies, it was only possible to make any meaningful assessment against 'Magnitude' but it was felt that this could encompass elements of the other criteria. This information is important as it gives more clarity as to the nature of the environmental effects and means that fewer explanatory notes are required to accompany the matrix.

The Structure Plan sets out a vision for the development of Ayrshire over the next 20 years and the policy aims are devised to benefit the long term future of the area. Therefore none of the policies are aimed to have only short or medium term impacts. It is accepted that as the policies are implemented on the ground there may be short term impacts, for example there may be only temporary disturbance as a development is undertaken, however the detail and impacts of these works is undeterminable at the strategic scale and is more appropriately assessed as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment. Some developments such as wind farms may only have a limited lifespan and it could be argued that this would mean that they have only a short or medium term impact. However the presence of any development, even if in itself it is only relatively short-lived, will have some impact on the long term development potential of the site. As a result all proposals in the Structure Plan are regarded as having a potentially long term effect and will be assessed accordingly.

In order to give a more accurate assessment of the likely effects of the policy, the table will include a rating of the magnitude of the impact – whether it is 'Small', 'Medium' or 'Large'. This will qualify whether the policy is likely to have an indirect, minimal impact on the environmental objective or a direct, major one. The policy will be assessed as 'Neutral' if it precludes damage to the environmental objective or the policy has no impact on the objective. It will be assessed as 'Not Known' if it is felt that there may be an environmental impact but it cannot be assessed. This could be because there is limited information on the issue or because the impacts are not discernable due to the level of detail that structure plans go in to, as the policies and proposals cannot be site specific. Some policies may have both positive and negative impacts on the environmental objectives and will be recorded as such. They will not be recorded as 'Neutral' as it is not necessarily the case that the impacts balance each other out. Magnitude will also take into account whether or not the policy will lead to enhancement of the environmental objective, for example providing for new wildlife habitat, or merely protects against adverse impacts on the objective.

In the assessment, the objective 'Energy Use' will not take into account energy use from transport, as there are already three transport related indicators. If another objective were to include this sector it would skew results disproportionately against schemes that have a negative environmental impact from transport. Similarly the objective addressing habitats avoids duplicating the water environment objective, though it is clear that if the water environment is improved it will improve it as a habitat.

4.2 Policies Scoped out of the Assessment

The following policies were not assessed:

COMM 4 – will not have any significant environmental impacts.

ENV 9 – does not provide further interpretation of national policy.

IMP 1 – does not provide further interpretation of national policy.

IMP 2 – does not provide further interpretation of national policy.

5 FINDINGS OF THE ASSESSMENT

The assessment indicates that the most significant, potentially negative impacts of the Structure Plan on the environment come from transport related policies. The developments promoted as part of the Gateway Locations have the potential to have large adverse impacts on different aspects of the environment, however whilst they are supported in the Structure Plan, it should be noted that the development of a deep water port facility at Hunterson and the expansion of Prestwick Airport, are both proposed in the National Planning Framework, which must be regarded as a material consideration when framing planning policy. The trunk road schemes supported in policy TRANS 3 are planned designed and implemented by the Scottish Executive through Transport Scotland and so would be likely to be taken forward regardless of the support of the Plan.

6 CONCLUSION

This environmental assessment demonstrates that the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan 2025 will have a largely positive effect on the environment, safeguarding and enhancing environmental features and directing new development to areas of low environmental sensitivity and where there is the capacity to absorb it. SPP1 states that the aim of the planning system is to “ensure that development and changes in land use occur in suitable places and are sustainable” and the Structure Plan can be seen to achieve this. The assessment indicates that there is the potential for a limited number of the policies in the plan to have an adverse effect on some aspects of Ayrshire’s environment. Wherever possible this has been mitigated for to ensure that any damage is minimised, however in some instances there are other interests that must be balanced against the absolute protection of the local environment.

APPENDIX 1**Blank assessment matrix**

Environmental Objective	Assessment Criteria	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1. Respect land form, natural processes and systems	Does the policy respect the influences of landform, geology, geomorphology and natural systems such as coastal erosion and unstable land or is it likely to significantly exacerbate risks?			
2. Protect and use soils in a sustainable way	Does the policy encourage an efficient use of good quality soils and reduce soil pollution or will it sterilise and pollute them?			
3. Protect and enhance the water environment including coastal and river systems	Is the policy likely to help protect or enhance the water environment, for example by reducing the risk of development being flooded or is it likely to have significant adverse effects on the water environment?			
4. Protect, enhance and where necessary restore species and habitats	Does the policy protect species or habitats especially those noted or designated for their local, national or international importance or is it likely to have a negative effect on them?			

5. Protect, enhance and where necessary restore landscape character, local distinctiveness and scenic value	Does the policy enhance the quality and increase the enjoyment and understanding of the landscape or is it likely to diminish landscape character and quality?			
6. Protect, enhance and create green spaces important for recreation and biodiversity	Does the policy protect, enhance or create green spaces and provide for a green network or is it likely to diminish them?			
7. Regenerate degraded environments	Does the policy help to regenerate degraded environments, such as former coalfields or is it likely to create them?			
8. Respect urban form, settlement pattern and identity	Does the policy respect urban form, the setting of buildings and encourage sustainable travel patterns?			
9. Protect, enhance and where necessary restore the historic environment	Does the policy enhance and restore the historic environment or does it degrade it			
10. Improve design quality in new development	Does the policy ensure that good practice design is implemented or is it likely to lead to falls in design quality?			

11. Reduce energy consumption	Is the policy likely to lead to an increase or decrease in per capita energy use?			
12. Facilitate renewable energy	Does the policy help facilitate renewable energy development or is it likely to hinder it?			
13. Reduce the need for travel and journey length	Is the policy likely to lead to a reduction in the amount of journeys taken and journey length or an increase?			
14. Encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport	Does the policy encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport or is it likely to discourage it?			
15. Reduce waste	Is the policy likely to lead to a reduction in waste and encourage recycling or lead to an increase in waste production?			
16. Protect the environment from pollution	Is the policy likely to protect the environment from pollution or expose it to it?			
17. Environmental capacity and the precautionary principle	Does the policy encourage development to stay within limits of acceptable change e.g water demand or is it likely to stretch capacity?			

18. Address Climate change	Is the policy likely to expose more people to the effects of climate change either through producing greenhouse gases or developing in areas that are likely to be negatively affected by changes in climate?			
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APPENDIX 2**Relationship of the Structure Plan to International, National, Regional and Local Documents.**

Document/ Plan	Responsible Authority	Content of Plan and Relationship to Structure Plan
International Legislation	UK or Scottish Parliament (sites include Ramsar Sites and World Heritage Sites)	This legislation is transposed into the legislation of the national government. The Structure Plan must ensure that the legislation is adhered to in the Ayrshire area.
European Legislation	Scottish Parliament, Scottish Executive and other relevant bodies such as SNH and SEPA.	The Structure Plan must help to promote this legislation and put it into a regional context for delivery. The Structure Plan itself must abide by this legislation.
National Planning Framework	Scottish Executive	Sets out land use issues at a national level. It sets out a vision and national plan that the Structure Plan should accord with.
Planning Legislation	Scottish Executive	This legislation sets out the scope and structure of the development plan system. The Structure Plan must conform to this legislation.
National Planning Policy Guidance and Scottish Planning Policy	Scottish Executive	Provide guidance and statements of Scottish Executive policy on nationally important land use and other planning matters. The Structure Plan must interpret these into a regional context.
Planning Advice Notes	Scottish Executive	Provide advice on good practice and other relevant information. The Structure Plan would normally be expected to accord with the content of these unless there is a good reason otherwise.
Planning Circulars	Scottish Executive	These provide statements of government policy,

		contain guidance on policy implementation through legislative or procedural change.
Local Plans	Local Plans	Local Plans form the site and areas specific detail of the development plan and must conform to the policies in the Structure Plan.
National Waste Strategy and Area Waste Plan	Local Authorities	Sets out a structure for the management of the area's municipal solid waste. The Structure Plan should take this into account in its waste policies.
Local Biodiversity Action Plan	Local Authorities, SNH and other partners.	Identifies priority habitats and species which require action to protect and enhance them. Structure Plans should be supportive of the actions within this.
Regulatory Bodies Plans	Various organisation such as SNH, SEPA, Forestry Commission.	These plans set out the policy and action plans for each of the various organisations. Whilst they do not have a statutory standing Structure Plans attempts to take them into account.

APPENDIX 3**Environmental Framework of Structure Plan and Responsible Authority**

Environmental Policy	Responsible Authority
Special Protection Areas	European Legislation (managed by SNH,)
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	SNH
Water Framework Directive	European Legislation (managed by SEPA)
World Heritage Sites	UNESCO
Listed Building	Local Authorities, Historic Scotland
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	Historic Scotland
Countryside Stewardship Schemes	SEERAD
National Parks	Scottish Executive
Regional Parks	Regional Park Authority
National Nature Reserves	SNH, various NGOs
Local Nature Reserves	Local Authorities, SNH, various NGOs
Special Areas of Conservation	SNH
Country Parks	Local Authorities
Regional Scenic Areas	Local Authorities
Country Parks	SNH
National Scenic Areas	SNH
High Quality Agricultural Land	SEERAD
Flooding	Local Authorities, SEPA

APPENDIX 4

Wider environmental protection objectives and how they are incorporated into the Structure Plan

Environmental Protection Objectives	Structure Plan Reference
Kyoto Protocol	Policy STRAT 1 requires new development to take into account the impact of climate change.
Habitats and Birds Directives	Policy STRAT 1 ensures that development should not lead to unacceptable damage to priority species and habitats. Policy ENV 7 recognises international and national natural heritage designations.
Water Framework Directive	Policy ENV 9 states that the three Ayrshire Councils shall work with other agencies to ensure that the Directive is incorporated into planning policy. Other policies in the Plan also address issues of flooding and water pollution.
Waste Framework Directive (and other waste directives)	Paragraphs 49 – 51 and policies ECON 9 and ECON 10 address the relevant environmental issues relating to waste highlighted in the Directives.
UK Air Quality Strategy	Policy ENV protects people from air pollution.
Scottish Sustainable Development Strategy	Policy STRAT 1 contains overarching policies to achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development lies at the core of the Structure Plan.
Scottish Biodiversity Strategy	Policy STRAT 1 ensures that development should not lead to unacceptable damage to priority species and habitats. Policy ENV 7 supports the work of the Ayrshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

APPENDIX 5**Environmental Features Taken Account of in Environmental Assessment**

Factor
Landscape
Sensitive Landscape Character Areas
National Scenic Areas
Natural Heritage
Special Protection Areas
Special Areas of Conservation
Sites of Special Scientific Interest
National Nature Reserves
Raised Bogs
Intermediate Bogs
Scottish Wildlife Trust Sites
Local Wildlife Sites
Local Nature Reserves
Regional Park
Country Parks
Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland
Important Bird Areas
Cultural Heritage
Historic Gardens & Designed Landscapes
Archaeology Consultation Areas
Scheduled Ancient Monuments
Urban Conservation Areas
Non Renewable Resources
Opencast Coal Preferred Areas
Bauxitic Clay Reserves
Limestone Reserves
Prime Agricultural Land (3.1 or better)
Water Environment
100 Year Flood Risk Areas
River water classification

PART 2
ASSESSMENT OF THE AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN 2025

+ ve = Likelihood of significant beneficial effects

N = Objective not relevant, or likelihood of no significant or only neutral effects.

- ve = Likelihood of significant adverse effects.

N/K = Uncertain or unpredictable effects.

STRAT 1: Sustainable Development

The three Councils shall regard the Guiding Principles of Sustainable Development as identified in Schedule 1 as prime considerations in preparing local plan/ local development plans.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	+ ve	Large	Directs development away from areas where there is a risk from coastal erosion and ground instability.
2	+ ve	Moderate	Encourages the prudent use of non-renewable resources but not soil quality explicitly. Directs development away from greenfield land in preference to brownfield land.
3	+ ve	Large	Protects against flooding, tidal inundation and adverse effects on water quality.
4	+ ve	Large	Encourages the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and protects against damage to priority species and habitats.
5	+ ve	Large	Protects against damage to landscape character.
6	+ ve	Large	Directs that recreational and amenity open space will be safeguarded and enhanced.
7	+ ve	Moderate	Directs that efficient use will be made of vacant and derelict land, which may encourage the regeneration of degraded environmental. Encourages the enhancement of the natural and built environment, which will apply to degraded environments. Does not directly mention regeneration of degraded landscapes.
8	+ ve	Moderate	Directs development to locations that are well integrated with walking, cycling and public transport networks. Does not mention the need to safeguard urban form explicitly.
9	+ ve	Large	Encourages the protection and enhancement of the built environment. Directs that important cultural heritage resources will be safeguarded.
10	+ ve	Large	Encourages the use of good design and consultation with Architecture and Design Scotland.
11	+ ve	Large	Encourages developers to take account of energy efficiency.
12	+ ve	Large	Encourages developers to include renewable energy sources within the layout and design of proposals.
13	+ ve	Large	Directs development to locations that are well integrated with walking, cycling and public transport networks. Requires Green Travel Plans for trip generating developments.
14	+ ve	Large	Directs development to locations that are well integrated with walking, cycling and public transport networks.
15	+ ve	Large	Encourages proposals that promote the reuse and recycling of waste.
16	+ ve	Large	Protects against pollution of land air and water.
17	+ ve	Large	Requires developers to show that environmental thresholds have not been exceeded.
18	+ ve	Large	Requires new development to take account of climate change.

Summary: STRAT 1 is in accord with all of the environmental objectives. Because this policy is overarching the benefits are likely to be large, and are assessed as such.

STRAT 2: Development Framework

The three Ayrshire Councils, working in conjunction with the public and private sector agencies, will seek to increase the attraction of Ayrshire as a place to live, work visit and invest by:

Providing for integrated and complementary development within the Core Investment Area and promoting the area as the primary focus for all major development;

Supporting an appropriate scale of residential, business and environmental action in the Investment Corridors;

Supporting the Service Centres as the primary focus for development in the Investment Corridors.

Providing for an appropriate level of development commensurate with capacity to accommodate growth in Local Communities; and

Supporting Rural Areas through measures that seek to diversify the rural economy and facilitate appropriate new rural business and industry.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N/K		
2	+ ve		
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	+ ve	Large	Focuses development to certain areas, which are generally of an urban or developed nature. This limits sporadic development Ayrshire that would have a negative impact on the landscape.
6	N/K		
7			
8	+ ve	Large	Focuses development to certain areas, which are generally of an urban or developed nature.
9	N/K		
10	N/K		
11	N/K		
12	N/K		
13	+ ve	Large	Focuses development and services in certain areas. This limits sporadic development that may lead to increased travel.
14	+ ve	Moderate	Focuses development and services in certain areas, which likely to be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
15	N/K		
16	N/K		

17	+ ve	Large	Ensures that capacity, including environmental capacity, is taken into account.
18	N/K		

Summary: STRAT 2 focuses development in certain areas, which is likely to limit sporadic development and the adverse environmental impacts this has. Many of the impacts cannot be predicted at this level. Because this policy is overarching the benefits are likely to be large, and are assessed as such.

ECON 1: Gateway Locations

The three Ayrshire Councils shall, in conjunction with other agencies, support the Gateway locations as key drivers of the economy through proposals which:

- A) Promote the development of an international transshipment hub requiring deep water for sea freight movement at Hunterston and safeguard existing rail and road access in the vicinity against adverse development;
- B) Promote the expansion of airport and runway facilities for Glasgow Prestwick Airport, provided that adequate measures are taken to limit any harmful environmental consequences of the airport's operation; and
- C) Promote the development of ports of Ayr and Troon and Ardrossan Harbour, including the safeguarding of land for port-related activities, the development of related opportunities and enhanced surface access links.

South Ayrshire Council in conjunction with public and private sector agencies shall prepare an Action Plan for Glasgow Prestwick and the surrounding area.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	- ve	Moderate	The development of Hunterston could disrupt coastal systems in the area because of its size and the amount of dredging the development is likely to require.
2	+ ve	Small	Makes efficient use of existing infrastructure or prime locations.
3	- ve	Moderate	Possible negative impact on water quality during the construction of Hunterston. The increase in usage by boats and shipping and run off from airport is likely to lead to some local pollution.
4	- ve	Large	There is likely to be significant damage to Portencross Coast SSSI with the construction of Hunterston. SSSIs close to the ports of Ayr, Troon and Ardrossan may be affected by disturbance and pollution. SSSI close to the runway at Prestwick airport may suffer from disturbance and pollution.
5	- ve	Moderate	Hunterston will be a large development in a prominent position surrounded by areas of Sensitive Landscape Character.
6	N		
7	+ ve/ -ve	Moderate	Will regenerate the area surrounding the ports. May degrade environment close to Glasgow Prestwick Airport and Hunterston.
8	+ ve/ - ve		There are limited areas where the airport and ports could be situated. Use of the ports is likely to remove freight traffic off the roads and on to an arguably less polluting form of transport. All developments are close to public transport or rail links. Aviation allows much larger and arguably unsustainable travel patterns.
9	+ ve	Small	The development of the ports of Ayr, Troon and Ardrossan Harbour has the potential to restore building character and regenerate the townscape.
10	N		
11	+ ve/ -ve	Large	Airports and Ports will have significant energy demands as large developments. Ports may save energy overall when compared to moving freight by other transport types.
12	N		

13	+ve/ -ve	Large	Will increase levels of travel by shipping and aviation. Development of ports may displace some freight from roads to shipping, which is arguably a more sustainable form of transport.
14	+ ve/- ve	Small	Short haul flights may substitute for some train journeys. All sites are reasonably accessible by public transport.
15	N		
16	- ve	Large	The burning of large amounts of fuel causes air and water pollution. The ports and airport are also cause likely to cause noise and light pollution.
17	- ve	Moderate	Large developments are likely to put intensive pressure on local environment.
18	-ve	Large	Being on a coastal area may mean that the ports and airport are subject to the effects of climate change and sea-level rise. Aviation is one of the fastest growing sources of Greenhouse Gases. Disruption to coastal systems as a result of the construction or the expansion of the ports may increase the risks of damage to developments on nearby coastline.

Summary: The development of deep-water facilities at Hunterston is identified in the National Planning Framework, as is the need to build on the success of Prestwick Airport. The development of the Gateway locations is likely to cause a number of negative environmental impacts due to the size of the developments and the fact that they are in relatively sensitive locations within Ayrshire. The Gateway locations are reasonably well served by public transport and train services. An increase in shipping freight may displace some freight from roads, which is arguably an improvement in environmental terms.

ECON 2: Strategic Business Locations

The three Ayrshire Councils shall safeguard, enhance and promote the following locations for major industrial and business development:

Existing Strategic Business Sites:

Irvine Riverside
Kilmarnock North and Rowallan
Prestwick Aerospace Park

Business Sites in Core Investment Area Towns and Service Centres:

Kilmarnock Town Centre
Irvine Town Centre
Ayr Town Centre
Prestwick Aerospace Park
Service Centres identified in Schedule 3

Business sites elsewhere in Core Investment Area

Irvine Tournament Park
Kilmarnock Moorfield
Ayr Corton
Monkton

Bulk Freight Locations

Ardeer
Hunterston
Irvine: Meadowhead
Auchinleck: Barony
Girvan: Grangestone
Barrhill

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	+ ve/- ve	Small	Some of the developments are likely to be on prime agricultural land. However, steering business and development to town centres and existing industrial sites is likely to help avoid encroachment on greenfield land.
3	N		
4	N		
5	+ ve	Small	Steers development towards brownfield sites and existing business and industrial locations, which limits the impact on the landscape.
6	N		
7	+ ve	Large	A number of the sites are on degraded land, which is likely to benefit from some regeneration.
8	+ ve	Large	Directs business and industry to urban areas or brownfield land close to urban areas.
9	N		
10	N		
11	N/K		
12	N		
13	N/K		
14	+ ve	Moderate	Most of the sites identified are accessible by public transport.
15	N		
16	N		
17	+ ve	Moderate	Steers new business and industries to developed areas where there is capacity to cope with them.
18	- ve	Small	Some of the sites are in locations with the potential to be affected by sea level rise, storm surges and flooding.

Summary: The majority of the developments are steered towards either urbanised areas or brownfield sites and so the negative impacts on the environment are limited.

ECON 3: Local and other Business Opportunities

The three Ayrshire Councils shall make provision for an adequate supply of land for office, business and industrial use throughout their areas to cater for locally based services and other business development opportunities providing the development is small in scale and in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N/K		
3	N		
4	N		
5	+ ve	Moderate	Directs developments to appropriate locations.
6	N		
7	+ ve/ - ve	Moderate	Allows for the renewal of some urban areas. Industrial development may cause degradation of some environments.
8	+ ve	Moderate	Directs developments to appropriate locations.
9	+ ve	Moderate	Directs developments to appropriate locations.
10	+ ve	Moderate	Ensures and awareness of scale and character.
11	N/K		
12	N		
13	N/K		
14	N		
15	N/K		
16	N		
17	N		
18	N		

Summary: Specifically directs development to ensure that it is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

ECON 4: Reallocation of Surplus Industrial Land

The three Ayrshire Councils shall identify and review all surplus industrial land at the earliest opportunity for reallocation to other uses.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	+ ve	Moderate	Makes efficient use of existing land. May lead to clean-up of contaminated land.
3	N		
4	N		
5	N		
6	+ ve	Small	Industrial land is unlikely to be currently accessible and so reallocation to other uses is likely to increase the provision.
7	+ ve	Large	Ensures that industrial land is fully utilised and prevents degeneration. May lead to clean-up of contaminated land.
8	N/K		Depends on the uses to which the land is reallocated.
9	N		
10	N		
11	N/K		Depends on the uses to which the land is reallocated.
12	+ ve	Small	Former industrial land may provide good locations for renewable energy developments.
13	N/K		Depends on the uses to which the land is reallocated.
14	N/K		Depends on the uses to which the land is reallocated.
15	N/K		Depends on the uses to which the land is reallocated.
16	N		
17	N/K		Depends on the uses to which the land is reallocated.
18	N		

Summary: Many of the potential environmental impacts of this policy are dependent on what use any surplus industrial land is reallocated to. Some environmental benefits are likely to be gained from regenerating degraded areas.

ECON 5: Knowledge Economy

The three Ayrshire Councils shall:

A) Support proposals which expand or consolidate existing higher educational facilities, including associated research and development facilities and / or which enhance closer integration with the universities in the Conurbation;

And

B) Work together to identify a suitable location for a potential future university campus for Ayrshire within the Core Investment Area.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N/K		
3	N		
4	N		
5	N		
6	N		
7	N/K		
8	N/K		
9	N/K		
10	N/K		
11	N/K		
12	N/K		
13	+ ve	Small	Developing a university in Ayrshire may remove the need for local students to travel to university outside the area.
14	N/K		
15	N/K		
16	N		
17	N/K		
18	N/K		

ECON 6: Renewable Energy

Proposals for the generation and utilisation of renewable energy should be promoted and will conform to the plan both in stand alone locations and as integral parts of new and existing developments where it can be demonstrated there will be no significant adverse impact, including adverse cumulative impact or infrastructure constraints, and where the design of the development is sensitive to landscape character, biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N		
3	N		
4	N		
5	N/K		
6	N		
7	+ ve	Moderate	Can bring degraded environments, which may not be suitable for other lands uses, in to productive use.
8	N		
9	N		
10	N		
11	N		
12	+ ve	Large	Supports proposals for renewable energy.
13	N		
14	N		
15	N		
16	N/K		
17	N		
18	+ ve	Large	Supports an alternative form of energy to the burning fossil fuels, which emit greenhouse gases.

Summary: The promotion of renewable energy developments in the policy implies that there will be an active support of these developments, as opposed to simply allocating land for them. This affects the assessment as it means that the stipulation that the developments should have no significant adverse environmental impacts is assessed largely as 'Neutral'. The policy clearly has a beneficial impact on renewable energy. It directs that renewable energy developments should have no significant adverse effect on the environment.

ECON 7: Wind Farms

- A) Development proposals for large-scale wind farm development shall be directly firstly to the Preferred Areas of Search as identified on the Key Diagram.
- B) Outside the Preferred Areas of Search, proposals for wind farm development, including their construction, siting, access and transmission links to the grid shall conform to the plan only where it can be demonstrated there is no significant adverse effect on:
- i) Communities
 - ii) Landscape character and visual amenity
 - iii) Natural environment
 - iv) Built and cultural heritage
 - v) Telecommunications, transmitting or receiving systems
 - vi) Operational requirements of Glasgow Prestwick and Glasgow Airports

When assessing proposals, account will be taken of existing sites with planning proposals and the cumulative impact of known development proposals.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	+ ve	Large	Directs windfarms to areas with most accommodating landform.
2	+ ve	Moderate	Preferred Areas of Search are not in locations of prime agricultural land.
3	N		
4	+ ve	Moderate	Directs windfarms to less sensitive areas.
5	+ ve	Large	Directs windfarms to less sensitive landscape areas.
6	N		
7	N		
8	+ ve	Moderate	Directs windfarms to appropriate locations.
9	N		
10	N/K		
11	N		
12	+ ve	Large	Identifies Preferred Areas of Search for windfarm development.
13	N		
14	N		
15	N		
16	N/K		
17	+ ve	Moderate	Ensures that windfarm developments take into account environmental capacity.
18	+ ve	Large	Gives direction for an alternative form of energy to the burning fossil fuels, which emit greenhouse gases.

Summary: The policy directs windfarm development to Preferred Areas of Search, where development is likely to be less environmentally damaging. Outside these areas the policy puts in place criteria to ensure that damage to the environment as a result of windfarm development is limited. The policy facilitates windfarm development by identifying areas where applications are likely to be met with approval. The policy does not limit Ayrshire's renewable energy capacity as this can be easily met within the Preferred Areas.

ECON 8: Biomass

Biomass power generation, co-fired power plants and combined heat and power plants shall conform to the plan where it can be demonstrated that:

- A) Fuel sources, processing, bulk freight facilities and energy generating plants can be co-located;
- B) Generating plants can be co-located with a significant energy user to meet on site requirements or where the users of surplus heat or power are in close proximity; and
- C) There are no unacceptable, significant adverse impacts on communities, landscape character and visual amenity, natural environment, and the built and cultural heritage.

A search area for a power plant based specifically on clean coal technology is identified on the Key Diagram.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N/K		
2	N/K		
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	N/K		
6	N		
7	N/K		
8	N		
9	N		
10	+ ve	Moderate	Biomass power generation is uncommon in the UK and yet is regarded as good environmental practice. If developed, biomass power plants would be an example of good practice design.
11	+ ve	Large	The energy contribution from biomass is small when compared to other form of generation.
12	N		
13	N		
14	+ ve	Small	Co- locating of fuel sources, processing, bulk freight facilities and generating plants is likely to limit the transport of materials and infrastructure.
15	N		
16	N/K		
17	N/K		
18	+ ve	Small	Gives direction for an alternative form of energy to the burning fossil fuels, which is a major source of greenhouse gases.

Summary: The energy plants mentioned in the policy all have the potential to cause significant adverse environmental impacts and could be permitted through reasons of public interest. However, these are difficult to assess at this level.

ECON 9: Strategic Waste Management Facility

The three Councils shall provide an integrated network of waste management facilities to comply with government guidance and will identify through a local plan or subject plan a site for a joint waste treatment plant in the search area identified for this purpose on the Key Diagram.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N/K		
2	N/K		
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	N/K		
6	N		
7	N/K		
8	- ve	Moderate	A single joint facility means that waste has to be transported for treatment from all across Ayrshire.
9	N/K		
10	N/K		
11	N/K		
12	+ ve	Small	A joint waste facility may allow for some capture of energy from waste.
13	- ve	Moderate	A single joint facility means that waste has to be transported for treatment from all across Ayrshire.
14	N		
15	+ ve	Large	A joint waste facility is likely to make recycling and energy reclamation facilities more viable.
16	+ ve	Small	A single joint facility has the potential to be more efficient in managing waste and so reducing the pollution it creates.
17	N/K		
18	N/K		

Summary: Ayrshire has to provide for the treatment of waste. The decision to establish a search area for a joint waste facility is likely to lead to some increase in travel as a result of waste having to travel from across Ayrshire. Whilst it is not specified what type of treatment facility it will be, having a larger-scale joint facility is likely to make recycling and energy reclamation more viable.

ECON 10: Waste Locations

In identifying locations for new waste management facilities the three Councils shall, in the first instance, give preference to new facilities within or immediately adjacent to existing waste management sites. Where this is not possible, Councils should explore the possibility of accommodating new facilities within existing industrial sites or other suitably located areas of brownfield or previously contaminated land. All potential new locations will be assessed against proximity to the waste source, the Ayrshire Dumfries and Galloway Area Waste Plan, physical and environmental constraints including the effect on community well being, ground and surface water conditions and the capacity of transport systems.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	+ ve	Moderate	Directs waste facilities to brownfield and industrial sites.
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	+ ve	Small	Directs waste facilities to sites which are likely to have low landscape value.
6	N		
7	+ ve	Moderate	Ensures that waste facilities are located on sites that are likely to have been subject to some environmental degradation already.
8	N/K		
9	N/K		
10	N/K		
11	N		
12	N		
13	+ ve	Moderate	Locating waste management facilities close to waste source reduces length of journeys.
14	N		
15	+ ve	Moderate	The development of new facilities is likely to facilitate waste reduction.
16	+ ve	Moderate	Locating waste management facilities close to waste source reduces length of journeys and so pollution from the transporting of it.
17	N		
18	N/K		

Summary: The policy encourages waste facilities to be located in areas which are already likely to be in some way degraded or contaminated and makes it less likely for there to be a net reduction in environmental quality. In combination with Econ 9, there may be a reduction in the amount of waste produced as better facilities are developed.

ECON 11: Environmental Business Village

The three Ayrshire Councils shall explore the opportunities for the creation and promotion of integrated business and residential villages based on sustainable technologies and aimed at facilitating and accommodating indigenous business growth and demonstration projects in the environmental sectors of the economy – focused initially on the regeneration and remediation potential of Glengarnock.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N/K		
3	N		
4	N		
5	N		
6	N		
7	+ ve	Large	Focuses on regenerating and remediating Glengarnock. New business villages have the potential to be aimed at other areas in need of regeneration.
8	+ ve	Moderate	Aims to mix residential and businesses, which may encourage people to live close to their work.
9	N		
10	+ ve	Moderate	Focuses on the need to improve design quality.
11	+ ve	Moderate	Sustainable technologies may include mechanisms to reduce energy consumption as may pilot environmental projects.
12	+ ve	Moderate	Sustainable technologies may include mechanisms to reduce enhance renewable energy as may pilot environmental projects.
13	+ ve	Moderate	Aims to mix residential and businesses, which may encourage people to live close to their work.
14	+ ve	Moderate	Aims to mix residential and businesses, which may encourage people to live close to their work. Glengarnock has a regular train service.
15	+ ve	Moderate	Sustainable technologies may include mechanisms to reduce waste as may pilot environmental projects.
16	N		
17	+ ve	Large	A business village based around sustainable technology and environmental principles is likely to encourage people to live within their environmental capacity.
18	+ ve	Small	Technologies to reduce energy usage and develop renewable energy, along with developments to reduce transport use, may reduce greenhouse gas production.

Summary: Developing an environmental business village at Glengarnock is likely to help to regenerate the area, while facilitating the development of environmentally sustainable living practices.

ECON 12: The Tourism Resource

The three Ayrshire Councils shall, in conjunction with other agencies, promote the development of tourism to increase the range, geographic spread and quality of accommodation, facilities, attractions and supporting infrastructure where it contributes to environmental quality, extends the visitor season, provides further job opportunities, supports communities and encourages rural diversity.

ECON 13: Tourism Opportunities

The three Ayrshire Councils shall, in conjunction with other agencies:

- A) Support the development of outdoor access tourism, together with associated accommodation and infrastructure;
- B) Support proposals that would contribute to the development of major integrated coast based tourist, leisure and recreational area focussed on the Firth of Clyde and the Islands of Arran, the Cumbraes and Ailsa Craig in the context of ENV 10;
- C) Safeguard and promote the locations, landscapes and buildings associated with Robert Burns and seek designation of these locations as a possible World Heritage Site; and
- D) Explore the potential offered by the natural environment in developing marine-based tourism opportunities in the Firth of Clyde, a Biosphere Reserve in southern Ayrshire and a Geopark on Arran.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		Coastal development may adversely impact on natural process but the policy would not support this.
2	N/K		
3	N		
4	+ ve	Small	Increasing visitor numbers to wildlife sites may increase understanding of wildlife and indirectly lead to greater protection of it. Revenues from visitors may also help new reserves to be developed.
5	+ ve	Moderate	Increasing tourism can attach value to local distinctiveness and encourage its preservation, enjoyment and enhancement. Achieving international recognition as a World Heritage Site, Geopark or Biosphere Reserve would put a focus on the need to protect these resources.
6	+ ve	Small	Tourism developments often provide areas of accessible green space.
7	+ ve	Moderate	A number of Ayrshire's coastal resorts have suffered from dereliction as a result of a loss of tourism. Efforts to promote tourism could help to restore these areas.
8	- ve	Small	May be some increase in private car journeys as day trips increase.
9	+ ve	Moderate	Increased tourism can attach a value to the historic environment, which visitors often specifically want to see. This helps to encourage its preservation and enhancement.
10	+ ve	Small	Design and aesthetic is important for tourism and so it may encourage its promotion.
11	- ve	Small	May be some increase in energy consumption due to new, tourism related developments and an increase in visitors.
12	- ve	Small	The need to preserve landscapes and areas for tourism may restrict renewable energy developments.
13	- ve	Moderate	Increases in day trips and tourist related journeys in general would result in an increase in private car journeys and air travel.

14	+ ve	Small	Increased tourism is likely to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport as visitors use these modes as vehicles to get around but also as activities in themselves.
15	- ve	Small	May be some increase in waste due to new, tourism related developments and an increase in visitors.
16	N		
17	- ve	Small	Increase in tourism development may put some strain on water resources.
18	- ve	Moderate	Increase in travel is likely to lead to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Development on the coast is likely to expose more people to possible risks from coastal inundation as a result of sea level rise and storms.

Summary: Promoting the development of tourism in Ayrshire is likely lead to a focus on the quality of the environment and may provide a financial incentive for it to be maintained and enhanced. Increasing visitor numbers and the number of trips taken is likely to lead to an increase in the use of all forms of transport.

ECON 14: Rural Diversification

The three Ayrshire Councils shall

A) Support the principle of rural diversification, particularly through proposals for small scale renewable energy; forest based products and industries; leisure, recreation and tourism; non-food crops and local quality food initiatives; appropriate rural housing and small business development; and

B) Identify appropriate criteria for the assessment of proposals related to the diversification and growth of existing rural businesses and for the establishment of appropriate new business development in rural areas.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N/K		
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	+ ve/ -ve	Moderate	The policy supports developments that are appropriate to the local area, however it may also mean that new businesses are developed which change the landscape and lead to a loss of some of the things that had previously made it distinct.
6	N/K		
7	+ ve	Moderate	The policy allows rural communities flexibility to adapt to change and so remain viable.
8	+ ve/ -ve	Moderate	Encourages the growth of appropriate industries in rural locations, however this may cause a more dispersed settlement pattern in Ayrshire.
9	N		
10	N/K		
11	N/K		
12	+ ve	Moderate	Facilitates renewable energy project, however as they are only at a small scale they are unlikely to a significant contribution to overall production.
13	N/K		It is uncertain as to whether encouraging developments in rural areas will lead to people and goods having to travel further or whether the local businesses and industries can serve and be serviced by the local population.
14	- ve	Moderate	Rural areas are less well served by public transport and distances between centres are likely to be less accessible by foot or bicycle.
15	N/K		
16	N		
17	+ ve	Moderate	Allows for flexibility to develop appropriate businesses and industries. Dispersing business growth outside of core settlements could ease some of the strain on these environments.

18	+ ve	Moderate	Supports for renewable energy development as an alternative form of energy production to burning fossil fuels, which release green house gases. Allowing for flexibility in businesses in rural areas may make it easier to adapt to impacts of climate change.
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Summary: The policy allows a flexibility to develop appropriate business and industries in the rural environment. This maintains the character and viability of rural communities but it may lead to changes in the landscape and supports a more disperse settlement pattern.

COMM 1: Regeneration

The three Ayrshire Councils shall as appropriate:

- A) give priority to proposals that regenerate existing communities;
- B) keep under review the opportunities that urban renewal and regeneration sites can make towards meeting future land requirements; and
- C) promote the Coalfield Communities Initiative Area and Irvine Bay as national regeneration priorities.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	+ ve	Large	Encourages reuse of brownfield sites and sterilised land in preference to development on greenfield land.
3	N/K		
4	+ ve	Moderate	A number of the Coalfield Communities Initiatives have included developing wildlife sites from previously degraded land.
5	N/K		
6	+ ve	Small	Provision of green spaces often takes place as part of urban renewal
7	+ ve	Large	Focuses new development on areas most in need of renewal.
8	+ ve	Large	Focuses new development on existing communities, maintaining the settlement pattern.
9	N/K		
10	N/K		
11	N		
12	N		
13	+ ve	Small	Focuses new development on existing communities, which may be in preference to more dispersed forms of settlement.
14	+ ve	Moderate	Existing communities are already likely to be served by public transport.
15	N		
16	N/K		
17	N/K		
18	N		

Summary: The regeneration of existing communities is likely to have significantly fewer negative environmental impacts than developing on greenfield land.

COMM 2: Housing Investment

The three Councils shall work with public and private sector agencies to:

- A) maintain sufficient land to meet future housing land requirements for each Council area for the period 2005 to 2017 and give strategic guidance regarding possible future developments to 2025;
- B) maintain as a minimum a five year effective housing land supply at all times, with figures being reviewed annually for each Council area;
- C) meet the housing allocations to 2012 and 2017 identified in Table 2 by identifying appropriate sites for development in local plans or local plan alterations; and
- D) facilitate the levels of development proposed within the strategic expansion locations identified in Schedule 5.

COMM 3: Housing Land Release

In allocating sites the three Councils shall:

- A) manage and programme any greenfield housing land release so as not to prejudice development of brownfield land;
- B) specify the sequence in which sites will be released for development taking into account the phasing of any future infrastructure investment;
- C) identify those sites where an appropriate mix of housing tenures and housing types, including affordable and special needs housing, will be considered appropriate;
- D) give preference to the residential development of sites within those communities located on key transport corridors, and particularly along rail lines to Glasgow; and
- E) ensure that any new greenfield housing land releases to be identified are within the environmental capacity levels of the particular community concerned to accommodate the scale of development proposed

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N/K		
2	+ ve	Large	The policy directs housing initially on to brownfield sites and away from prime agricultural land
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	N/K		
6	+ ve/ - ve	Moderate	Whilst there is likely to be some overall loss of greenfield land at the edge of communities, greenspaces should be provided as part of new development.
7	+ ve	Moderate	May help to maintain communities and avoid creating degraded environments. The phased release of land will ensure that surplus land is not released prematurely, which could blight the environment.
8	+ ve	Large	Directs new development towards existing settlements and within these settlements gives preference to brownfield land being developed.
9	N/K		
10	N/K		
11	N		
12	N		
13	N/K		
14	+ ve	Moderate	Gives preference to developments along rail lines.
15	N		
16	N/K		
17	+ ve	Moderate	Emphasises that developments should be within the environmental capacity of their locality.
18	N		

Summary: The policy helps to minimise impacts on the environment by giving preference to housing on brownfield land and along rail lines. More detailed impacts on the environment can only be assessed at a lower level.

COMM 5: Housing in the Countryside

Throughout the rural areas there shall be a general presumption in favour of housing development within existing communities, the reuse and redevelopment of redundant buildings for housing, the development of infill sites within existing housing groups and clusters and the development of housing to meet the operational requirements of agriculture and other rural businesses.

The three Councils shall identify in local plans or supplementary planning guidance policies where various types of residential development in the countryside would be considered acceptable, and establish criteria against which single or small scale residential development in the countryside can be assessed.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	+ ve	Small	Steers housing to existing communities.
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	N/K		
6	+ ve/- ve	Small	May lead to some loss of greenspaces within communities through infilling but reduces the need to develop on greenfield land
7	+ ve	Small	May help to maintain the viability of rural communities, preventing degradation of the environment within them.
8	+ ve	Large	Directs new development to existing communities.
9	N/K		
10	N/K		
11	N		
12	N		
13	+ ve/ -ve	Moderate	New housing is steered towards existing rural communities, which may have services available and so reduce the need to travel. However, people in rural communities are likely to have to travel further to work/ access services than those in urban areas.
14	+ ve/ -ve	Moderate	Existing communities are already likely to be serviced by public transport, however, when compared to urban areas, rural communities are less likely to use travel by foot, bicycle or public transport.
15	N		
16	N/K		
17	N/K		
18	N		

Summary: Allowing some housing attached to existing communities in rural areas helps respond to development pressure but minimises the potential environmental impacts. There may be some increase in the distances people have to travel to access services and jobs.

COMM 6: Town Centres

The three Councils shall promote the viability and vitality of town centres by proposals that;

- A) encourage a wide range of retail, commercial, business, entertainment and leisure and residential opportunities;
- B) provide development of a size and scale appropriate to the function of the centre and serve the need of its catchment;
- C) identify sufficient land to accommodate development to meet the projected growth in surplus retail expenditure set out in Schedule 6 having regard to extant planning permissions for retail development, land allocated through local plans and the level of vacant premise;
- D) adopt a sequential approach to the approval of retail and commercial leisure development with new investment directed first to town centre and then edge-of centre locations;
- E) restrict new retail floorspace at out of centre locations to the sale of Do-It-Yourself , furniture, carpets, electrical and gardening goods; and
- F) keep under review the retail capacity assessment and have regard to any revised figures when identifying land in accordance with C) above.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	+ ve	Small	Directs retail development to town centres and away from out of centre locations that may be on prime agricultural land.
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	N/K		
6	N/K		
7	+ ve	Moderate	Focuses retail development on town centres, which may lead to the regeneration of degraded brownfield sites and help prevent further areas of degradation occurring.
8	+ ve	Large	Focuses retail development on town centres makes them more likely to remain viable and the urban form maintained.
9	+ ve	Small	Town centres are often the oldest and most historically important parts of the town. In maintaining their viability the historic environment may be more likely to be preserved.
10	N/K		
11	N/K		
12	N		
13	+ ve/ -ve	Moderate	Focuses retail development on town centres, which is likely to mean that they are closer to a greater proportion of the population. It may lead to more congestion, as delivery vehicles have to access the retail developments.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

14	+ ve	Large	Town centres are likely to be more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport than alternative out of centre sites.
15	N		
16	N/K		
17	N		
18	N		

Summary: The policy guides retail and commercial development to town centres and away from out of centre locations, where there is often significant pressure to build. This is likely to benefit the environment by limiting development on greenfield land and maintaining urban form.

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 contributes to local distinctiveness including:

- A) settings of communities and buildings within the landscape;
- B) patterns of woodland, fields, hedgerows and tree features;
- C) special qualities of rivers, estuaries and coasts;
- D) historic landscapes; and
- E) skylines and hill features, including prominent views.

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

ENV 2: Landscape Protection

In the National Scenic Area and the Sensitive Landscape Characters Areas, the protection and enhancement of the landscape shall be given prime consideration in the preparation of local plans and the determination of development proposals.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	+ ve	Moderate	Landscape protection often takes into account landform and natural processes.
2	N		
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	+ ve	Large	
6	N/K		
7	+ ve	Large	Landscape enhancement is likely to restore and regenerate degraded landscapes.
8	+ ve	Large	
9	+ ve	Large	
10	+ ve	Large	Efforts to protect landscape quality are likely to stimulate good design.
11	N		
12	- ve	Large	Landscape issues are one of the main reasons cited in opposition to the development of wind farms.
13	N		
14	N		
15	N		
16	N		
17	+ ve	Moderate	Landscape capacity may be one indicator of environmental capacity.
18	N		

Summary: The policy has a good compatibility with most environmental issues.

ENV 3: Core Investment Area Landscape

The current greenbelt at Ayr, Prestwick and Troon is confirmed. In addition, the three Councils together shall explore the concept of a landscape protection area for the Core Investment Area, including the possibility of defining a joint greenbelt.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	+ ve	Moderate	Landscape protection often takes into account landform and natural processes.
2	+ ve	Moderate	Is likely to protect the prime agricultural land around the three towns.
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	+ ve	Large	
6	+ ve	Large	Protects access to open space around the urban areas.
7	N/K		
8	+ ve	Large	Helps maintain the form of the three towns and prevents coalescence.
9	+ ve	Moderate	Is likely to maintain the setting of the historic environment.
10	+ ve	Moderate	If development is permitted in the green belt or landscape protection area, greater emphasis will be placed on high quality design.
11	N		
12	- ve	Small	May restrict some development of renewable energy.
13	N/K		
14	+ ve	Small	Protection accessible green space around the towns is likely to encourage walking and cycling as recreational activities.
15	N		
16	N		
17	N/K		
18	N		

Summary: The greenbelt at Ayr, Prestwick and Troon has been incorporated into the Local Plan of South Ayrshire Council. The policy aims to protect the landscape setting of the urban areas and prevent their coalescence. It also helps to protect access to open space.

ENV 4: Green Network

- A) The three Ayrshire Councils shall develop and promote a Green Network for Ayrshire.
- B) Development within, adjacent to or affecting the areas identified in the Green Network should be designed to enhance the landscape quality and expand the habitat potential of the areas concerned.
- C) Within the Investment Corridors the three Councils shall ensure the landscape setting of communities, and the opportunities to link green spaces within and outside communities, shall be an integral consideration in the assessment of all local development proposals.
- D) The three Councils shall prepare a Woodlands In and Around Towns Initiative to promote environmental regeneration and recreational access, especially within and between communities in the Core Investment Area and Investment Corridors.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	+ ve	Moderate	The Green Network is likely to take into account and protect landform.
2	+ ve	Moderate	May help to protect the prime agricultural land around the Investment Corridors.
3	N/K		
4	+ ve	Large	The Green Network will protect and create wildlife habitats in urban and peri-urban areas. The Network will allow for the movement of wildlife between different areas. Appropriate woodland planting will create an important wildlife habitat
5	+ ve	Large	
6	+ ve	Large	
7	+ ve	Large	Degraded environments will be targeted by the Woodlands In and Around Towns Initiative. Further environmental degradation may be prevented.
8	+ ve	Large	Safeguards the landscape setting of communities.
9	N		
10	+ ve	Moderate	The emphasis on landscape protection is likely to encourage better design in the areas around the Green Network. Providing high quality green space as part of developments is seen as a key aspect of good design.
11	N/K		
12	N		
13	N		
14	+ ve	Moderate	Providing for and protecting accessible green space around developments is likely to encourage walking and cycling both as recreational activities and forms of transport.
15	N		
16	+ ve	Small	Tree planting near communities can help to improve air quality and reduce noise and light pollution.
17	N		
18	N		

Summary: The policy has significant benefits against a wide range of environmental objectives. The Green Network will be developed partly in conjunction with new development.

ENV 5: Woodland and Forestry

Proposals for woodland and forestry will be supported where they are consistent with the objectives and key actions of the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy and consistent with policies in both the structure plan and local plans

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N		
3	+ ve	Moderate	Woodland planting can enhance the quality of watercourses.
4	+ ve	Large	Woodland planting can provide a rich habitat for wildlife. The expansion of native woodland is an objective of the Ayrshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan.
5	+ ve	Large	Woodland planting can help to restore landscape character and enhance local distinctiveness.
6	+ ve	Large	Setting aside land for woodland planting can help to create green spaces. Woodland planting can enhance green spaces.
7	+ ve	Large	Woodland planting can help to restore degraded environments.
8	N		
9	N		
10	N		
11	N		
12	+ ve	Small	Forestry is a key source of fuel for biomass power generation. Overall contribution of biomass to energy provision is relatively low.
13	N		
14	+ ve	Small	Woodland planting often comes with access provision, which is likely to encourage walking and cycling as a recreational activity.
15	N		
16	+ ve	Small	Tree planting near communities can help to improve air quality and reduce noise and light pollution.
17	N		
18	+ ve	Small	Woodland planting may help store green house gases.

Summary: Woodland planting and forestry can have both positive and negative impacts on the environment, however because the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy has strong environmental objectives, the positive benefits are likely to be captured.

ENV 7: Natural Heritage Designations

The three Ayrshire Councils shall:

- A) recognise international and national natural heritage designations and the statutory protection afforded by them;
- B) support the identification of additional Local Nature Reserves and continue to work with other stakeholders to implement the Ayrshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Local plans shall prepare detailed policies for the protection and enhancement of all sites of recognised international and national natural heritage importance.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	+ ve	Moderate	Protected sites, local nature reserves and LBAP all help to protect natural processes.
2	N/K		
3	+ ve	Moderate	A number of protected sites are connected to the water environment. The water environment is also recognised as important in the LBAP.
4	+ ve	Large	
5	+ ve	Small	Habitats are often an integral part of landscape character and identity.
6	+ ve	Moderate	Local Nature Reserves are intended to provide green spaces for people to enjoy.
7	+ ve	Small	The creation of wildlife sites can help to regenerate degraded environments.
8	N		
9	N		
10	N		
11	N		
12	N		
13	N		
14	N		
15	N		
16	+ ve	Moderate	Protecting wildlife sites from pollution is likely to reduce pollution levels in the wider environment.
17	+ ve	Moderate	Protecting wildlife sites provides reserves of species that can repopulate areas conditions improve for them.
18	N		

Summary: Statutory designations are protected outside the planning system. The policy encourages protection of natural heritage in the wider environment, which is likely to have benefits against other environmental objectives.

ENV 8: Flooding

- A) New development will only be permitted where the probability of watercourse, tidal or coastal flooding lies within 0.1% - 0.5% (1: 1000 – 1: 200) flood event period. There will be a presumption against land raising except in exceptional circumstances and, only then, on brownfield sites and in situations where this would not increase the risk of flooding within the area.
- B) The three Ayrshire councils shall take into account the need to preserve, enhance and create water storage areas, such as flood meadows, to reduce the risk of flooding in built up areas.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	+ ve	Large	Guides development to ensure that water systems flow freely and are not restricted by flood defences and other limitations.
2	N		
3	+ ve	Large	Guides development to ensure that water systems flow freely and are not restricted by flood defences and other limitations, which are likely to have a negative effect on the water environment.
4	+ ve	Small	Preservation, enhancement and creation of water storage areas will have benefits for important species and habitats.
5	N		
6	+ ve	Small	Preservation, enhancement and creation of water storage areas is likely to lead to some green space provision.
7	N		
8	N		
9	N		
10	N		
11	N		
12	N		
13	N		
14	N		
15	N		
16	N		
17	+ ve	Moderate	Flooding is an indication of environmental capacity. Development of flood defences restricts this capacity.
18	+ ve	Large	Helps adapt to the more frequent flooding episodes, which are likely to occur as a result of climate change.

ENV 10: Integrated Coastal Zone Management

North and South Ayrshire Councils shall bring forward proposals for a coastal zone management plan for the Ayrshire coastline.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	+ ve	Large	Likely to help protect coastal systems.
2	N		
3	+ ve	Large	Likely to help protect coastal systems and the coastal environment.
4	N		
5	N		
6	N		
7	N		
8	N		
9	N		
10	N		
11	N		
12	N/K		
13	N		
14	N		
15	N		
16	+ ve	Moderate	ICZM would be likely to steer polluting developments away from sensitive marine sites.
17	+ ve	Moderate	ICZM would help ensure that the environmental capacity of the marine environment was taken into account.
18	+ ve	Moderate	ICZM would help adapt for potential sea level rise and increasing frequency of storms in coastal areas.

Summary: The policy supports the preparation of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan, which is likely to help planners take into account environmental issues.

ENV 11: Air, Noise and Light Pollution

The three Ayrshire Councils shall not be supportive of new development that would expose large numbers of people to unacceptable levels of air, noise and light pollution.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N		
3	N		
4	+ ve	Small	Pollution that will have a detrimental effect on people is also likely to cause harm to wildlife and habitats.
5	N		
6	N		
7	N		
8	N		
9	N		
10	+ ve	Moderate	Good design is likely to avoid exposing people to high levels of pollution.
11	N		
12	N		
13	N		
14	N		
15	N		
16	+ ve	Moderate	Preventing exposing people to high levels of pollution is likely to put some limit on pollution in the wider environment.
17	+ ve	Moderate	High levels of pollution indicate a strain on environmental capacity, limiting them will reduce this strain.
18	N		

ENV 12: Mineral Resources

The three Ayrshire councils shall safeguard specialised and economically important mineral resources from sterilisation by permanent development.

ENV 13: Aggregates

Proposals to extend the supply of land with planning consent for the winning and working of aggregates shall accord with the provisions of the structure plan at existing workings. Extraction at other locations will only be considered acceptable:

- A) if it can be clearly demonstrated there is a specific need for the mineral within Ayrshire or where the resource is required to meet the needs of an adjoining area which cannot be met more locally; and
- B) where the development proposal will have no significant adverse impact on local communities or the environment.

ENV 14: Locational Criteria for Aggregates

All applications for the winning and working of aggregates shall be considered against the following criteria:

- A) whether the proposals are an extension of an existing consent;
- B) the availability of alternative supplies, including supplies from recycled or secondary sources;
- C) the impact on the countryside, landscape character, visual amenity and the natural and built environment;
- D) the impact caused by noise, dust and the contamination of ground and surface water;
- E) any adverse effect on communities within Ayrshire;
- F) the extent of directly related community benefit derived, such as the enhancement and creation of landscapes and habitats, and removal of dereliction;
- G) opportunities to maximise transport by rail and sea;
- H) other inward investment opportunities in the area;
- I) any cumulative impact of proposals in one area;
- J) the extraction period;
- K) the suitability of restoration and aftercare proposals.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N		
3	+ ve	Small	Protects against contamination of ground and surface water.
4	+ ve	Small	Ensures that the natural environment is taken into account.
5	+ ve	Small	Ensures that the landscape impacts are taken into account.
6	N		
7	N/K		
8	N		
9	N		
10	N		
11	N		
12	N/K		
13	N/K		
14	N		
15	N/K		
16	N		
17	N		
18	N		

Summary: The policy ensures that many of the significant negative impacts of mineral workings are avoided. An assessment of 'Neutral' has been put against some of the objectives due to them being unlikely to face significant pressures.

TRANS 1: Land use and Transportation

The three Ayrshire Councils shall ensure that:

- A) all significant new trip generating development is closely linked to existing and proposed walking, cycling and public transport networks;
- B) adequate access is provided for a range of transport modes to areas of economic opportunity and particularly to the Gateway and strategic business locations identified in Econ 1 and Econ ;
- C) all appropriate measures are promoted to minimise any negative environmental impacts of road traffic;
- D) essential use of the private car is accommodated within the context of an integrated approach to transport;
- E) accessibility to local services is maintained and improved by the integration of transport networks linking services to local communities; and
- F) costs of new transport infrastructure incurred as a result of development proposal are met by developers.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N		
3	N		
4	N		
5	N		
6	N		
7	N		
8	+ ve	Large	Providing an integrated transport system maintains the urban form and encourages sustainable transport.
9	N		
10	N		
11	N		
12	N		
13	+ ve/ -ve	Moderate	By making Ayrshire more accessible to all forms of transport the number and length of journeys are likely to increase however by encouraging the accessibility of services there is also an implication that the distance to them will be limited.
14	+ ve	Large	Encourages the provision and integration of walking, cycling and public transport into new developments.
15	N		
16	N		
17	N		

18	N		
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Summary: The policy places emphasis on reducing the environmental impacts of new transport provision and ensuring that an integrated approach to transport is taken, including provision of public transport and walking and cycling. However, there is also support for increasing the accessibility of Ayrshire, which makes the impact of the policy more neutral than positive.

TRANS 2: Rail Investment

The three Ayrshire Councils shall work in partnership with relevant transport bodies to:

- A) increase capacity on the rail network, including those sections beyond the boundaries of Ayrshire which affect the operational requirements for Ayrshire's network of freight and passenger services;
- B) encourage greater use of rail services in general by measures to improve facilities at existing stations and, where appropriate, identify, safeguard and promote new rail station locations particularly as an integral part of new developments as identified in Schedule 7 and on the Key Diagram; and
- C) safeguard existing rail freight facilities and former rail columns from adverse development.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N		
3	N		
4	N		
5	N		
6	N		
7	+ ve	Small	Promoting accessibility and new stations may facilitate the regeneration of areas.
8	+ ve	Moderate	Promotes use of public transport and encourages development around a core.
9	N		
10	N		
11	N		
12	N		
13	- ve	Moderate	Better rail facilities may lead to more frequent and longer journeys, though some traffic may be diverted from road.
14	+ ve	Large	Better rail facilities are likely to encourage public transport use.
15	N		
16	N		
17	N		
18	N		

Summary: The main impact of this policy is to improve the existing rail network and so there are unlikely to be any large new developments that may have negative environmental impacts. The environmental objectives affected are largely transport-related.

TRANS 3: Strategic Road Development

The three Ayrshire Councils shall work in partnership with relevant transport bodies to:

- A) ensure that strategic traffic flows will be channelled on to the strategic road network as defined by the Key Diagram;
- B) give priority to the study, promotion and development of:
 - i) an enhanced east – west link to the M74 motorway.
 - ii) upgrading the A727 between Kilwinning and Howwood.
 - iii) improvements to the A77 between Kilmarnock and Stranraer.
 - iv) improvements to the A76 between Kilmarnock and Dumfries.
- C) develop and promote improvements to other parts of the strategic road network in the investment corridors, including traffic relief for communities and the safeguarding of land for strategic road network enhancement where appropriate.
- D) support measures to improve safety on the strategic road network and ensure it is maintained to a suitable standard to accommodate long distance traffic and freight movements.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N/K		
2	N/K		
3	N/K		
4	- ve	Moderate	Expanding the road network is likely to cause increased fragmentation of habitats. The A77 scheme passes close to internationally designated sites but the impacts on them cannot be predicted at this stage.
5	+ ve/ - ve	Moderate	A77 and A76 pass through Sensitive Landscape Character Areas and improvements to them are likely to increase their impact on the landscape. Expanding the road network can scar the landscape but may also make it more accessible for people to enjoy.
6	N/K		
7	+ ve	Moderate	Promoting accessibility may facilitate the regeneration of areas. Upgrading and improvements to the A76, A77 and A737 is likely to benefit communities along these routes as heavy traffic is redirected away from them.
8	- ve	Moderate	Expanding the road network is likely to lead to a more dispersed settlement pattern and increased use private car.
9	+ ve	Moderate	Road improvements are intended to bypass communities, which is likely to remove traffic from their centres and improve the historic setting.
10	N		
11	N		
12	N		

13	- ve	Large	Expanding the road network is likely to lead to more frequent and longer journeys.
14	+ ve/ -ve	Moderate	Expanding the road network may encourage some additional cycling, however it may mean that fewer people choose to use public transport as an alternative to private car use.
15	N		
16	N		
17	N/K		
18	N/K		

Summary: Promoting improvements to the road network is partly intended to redirect traffic so that it is removed from the communities the roads currently pass through. This is likely to result in improvements to the quality of the environment. However, expanding the road network is also likely to have a number of significant adverse environmental impacts, both as a result of the new or expanded road infrastructure and the increased traffic it is likely to accommodate. The M74, A77 and A76 proposals all have the potential to negatively impact on important and sensitive environmental sites but the specific impacts cannot be determined at this level.

TRANS 4: Public Transport

The three Ayrshire Councils shall work in partnership with relevant transport bodies to:

- A) maintain and enhance local rail and road based public transport services;
- B) develop appropriate ancillary transport infrastructure, including bus priority measures, interchange facilities and through ticketing;
- C) identify, develop and promote new and enhanced park and ride facilities identified in Schedule 8 and on the Key Diagram.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N		
3	N		
4	N		
5	N		
6	N/K		
7	+ ve	Small	Promoting accessibility and new stations may facilitate the regeneration of areas.
8	+ ve	Moderate	Promotes use of public transport and encourages development around a core.
9	N		
10	N		
11	N		
12	N		
13	- ve	Moderate	Better rail facilities may lead to more frequent and longer journeys.
14	+ ve	Large	
15	N		
16	N		
17	N		
18	N		

Summary: The policy does not propose extensive development and so the environmental impact against the objectives is limited.

TRANS 5: Freight Transport

The three Ayrshire Councils shall work in partnership with relevant agencies to:

- A) encourage the movement of freight by alternative means to road haulage where practicable by supporting, developing and promoting proposals for rail and sea transit;
- B) identify as appropriate preferred routes for heavy goods vehicles;
- C) promote road freight movement in a manner that minimises disruption to local communities and the use of inappropriate public roads; and
- D) support the development of multi-modal interchange facilities at the locations identified by Schedule 9 and key Diagram.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N/K		
2	N		
3	N/K		
4	N/K		
5	N		
6	N		
7	+ ve	Small	Removing freight traffic away from certain areas may allow encourage regeneration.
8	+ ve	Moderate	Directs heavy freight away from settlements.
9	N/K		
10	N		
11	N		
12	N		
13	N		
14	+ ve	Large	Supports public transport for the movement of freight.
15	N		
16	N/K		
17	N		
18	N		

Summary: The policy encourages a movement of freight on to public transport, which has some benefits against the travel related environmental objectives.

TRANS 6: Town Centre Traffic Management

Within the town centres of the Core Investment Area and Investment Corridors where appropriate, the three Ayrshire Councils shall:

- A) introduce measures to facilitate accessibility by a range of transport modes giving priority to walking, cycling and public transport where possible;
- B) discourage long-stay commuter parking within town centre and give priority to short-stay parking in areas adjacent to key retail locations;
- C) apply maximum parking standards as appropriate with regard to new development proposals;
- D) seek developed contributions, as appropriate, to supplement the overall supply of parking and improve transport services in towns centre; and
- E) consider the needs of non-retail land-uses within the context of an integrated approach to parking.

Environmental Objective	Effect	Magnitude	Comments
1	N		
2	N		
3	N		
4	N		
5	N		
6	N/K		
7	N/K		
8	+ ve	Moderate	May help reduce the number of cars in town centres, which can have positive on the urban form.
9	N/K		
10	N		
11	N		
12	N		
13	N/K		
14	+ ve	Large	Gives priority to walking, cycling and public transport.
15	N		
16	N		
17	N		
18	N		

Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan 2025: Growing a Sustainable Ayrshire

Publicity Statement & Summary of Consultation

- 1 AJSP 2025 – Results of Consultation
- 2 AJSP 2025 – Results of Consultation Appendix 1 - 7

Technical Reports

- 1 Strategic Assessment of Housing Land Requirements
- 2 Study of Urban Capacity within Ayrshire
- 3 Renewables
- 4 Community Profiles
- 5 Retail Capacity Assessment - East, North & South Ayrshire 2004 to 2012
- 6 New Housing – The Key to Developing a Sustainable Ayrshire
- 7 Distribution of Population and Development Land for Housing between Core Area, Investment Corridors and Non-Corridor Communities

Supporting Environmental Information

- 1 Environmental Assessment
- 2 An Assessment of the Impact of the AJSP on Natura 2000 (Appropriate Assessment)

Background Reports

- 1 Ayrshire Development Study (Drainage)
- 2 Housing Land Supply 2005 (Draft)
- 3 Sustainability Report
- 4 Scottish Executive Form for Objections or Representations