
**AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
7 DECEMBER 2001**

Scottish Forest Products Transport Mapping

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To advise the Committee of the conclusions of the study on Scottish Forest Products Transport Mapping by Scottish Enterprise and its implications for Ayrshire.

BACKGROUND

- 2 Last year the Committee received a report on "Roots for Growth: A Strategic Framework for Action for the Scottish Forest Industries" by Scottish Enterprise. This is one of a series of "cluster" studies undertaken as part of a review of potential growth industries in Scotland. One of the key conclusions was that transport infrastructure is currently inadequate to support the development of the timber industry and that solutions needed to be found to address the shortcomings.
- 3 As part of the development work for the cluster, Scottish Enterprise set up a study group to identify the specific barriers to the effective transportation of timber and to make recommendations to overcome those barriers. The Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and Transportation Committee, through the structure plan manager, was asked to join the study. This study reported in July 2001, though a full agenda for 7 September Committee meeting precluded reporting the conclusions until now. There is a direct link to the Ayrshire Woodland Strategy, however, and the conclusions of the transport mapping study have been used to inform its conclusions.

TRANSPORT MAPPING PROJECT

- 4 The basis of the study, carried out by consultants Spaven McCrossan, IBI and Allan Massey, sought to identify the constraints to timber movement throughout Scotland and put forward proposals for their resolution. Although at the outset of the studies it was assumed that supply and demand figures for timber would be available from the industry, this proved not to be the case.
- 5 The focus of the study, therefore, became an origin and destination study of the timber industry in Scotland and the establishment of a computerised modelling tool (LAMA) suitable for further development at a local level. The model was designed to show timber transport growth, and thus transport constraints, for the years 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2015. All forms of transport were considered.

- 6 The main conclusions of the study of interest to Ayrshire are:
- the full effects of timber transport on transportation systems may not occur until after 2015;
 - road network stress is already apparent in several regions, and is of most concern on local B/C class roads; work will be required with the transport model to identify key problem areas. South-West Scotland, including Ayrshire is seen as a priority for investigation within the next 12 months;
 - local authority input is essential to quantify local capacity assumptions, especially on the network below B class level, and identifying firm capital investment costs;
 - there is a substantial potential for modal shift to sea and rail, but not enough to reduce absolute volumes moving by road;
 - there is a specific role for the public sector in facilitating multi-user railhead facilities, and in funding selected route infrastructure enhancements;
 - key rail routes likely to justify selected investments are Kilmarnock - Dumfries - Carlisle and the West Highland Railway;
 - there will be a requirement to reconnect some destination mills more effectively to the rail network; and
 - a timber logistics manager will be appointed to take forward the main tasks including the development of the LAMA assessments.

IMPLICATIONS FOR AYRSHIRE

- 7 The study recognises that South-West Scotland is likely to provide a significant proportion of the UK timber resource both now and in the future. More significantly it recognises that the transport system that supports that resource is severely hampered by the inadequacies of the minor road system, a lack of developed railhead locations and rail network constraints and as such requires priority investigation.
- 8 This has been translated into key actions for the Ayrshire Woodland Strategy and is also being taken forward more directly by the Ayrshire Timber Transport Group to seek funding from the timber logistics project officer for the more detailed study identified. It is hoped as a result that a strongly argued and factual case can be put to government for increased funding specifically to deal with mitigation measures necessary because of timber traffic on rural roads.

CONCLUSIONS

- 9 A study has been completed by Scottish Enterprise on "Scottish Forest Products Transport Mapping" that has the potential to set the context for a way forward in delivering additional resources to transport infrastructure in Ayrshire, specifically for

the damage caused by timber transport on minor roads. Both the Ayrshire Woodland Strategy and the Ayrshire Timber Transport Group are working towards a solution of this issue, and it is now seen as a national issue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10 The Committee are asked to note the contents of the report.

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