

To: PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE	Subject: South Lanarkshire Local Plan Consultative Draft October 2005
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT	
Date: 16 November 2005      Ref: SG/31/07	

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the publication of the Consultative Draft South Lanarkshire Local Plan (SLLP), highlight areas within the Plan of significance to North Lanarkshire Council as an adjoining local authority, and thereafter set out the Council's response to the strategy contained within the Local Plan. (The Council's suggested response is detailed in Appendix One).

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Since local government reorganisation, South Lanarkshire Council has been working towards the review and consolidation of its Minerals Subject Local Plan and five Local Plans, which cover Cambuslang/Rutherglen, East Kilbride, Hamilton, Lower Clydesdale and Upper Clydesdale. This culminated in the publication of a Council wide Local Plan in October 2005, which will eventually replace all of the area plans once adopted. North Lanarkshire Council has been formally consulted on the content of the document and any relevant comments are sought by 25<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

## 3. Sustainability Implications

- 3.1 While the SLLP does not directly affect the use of land within North Lanarkshire, its preparation is subject to new European Directives requiring the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of all policies and programmes of local authorities. The Consultative Draft is therefore accompanied by a separate Environmental Report, which outlines the potential consequences to the environment associated with the Plan. These will require to be adequately addressed before the plans eventual adoption.

## 4. Local Plan Form and Content

- 4.1 The Plan comprises a Written Statement, set out in two Volumes, one setting out the overall Development Strategy and appraising the need for policy change, the other establishing the detailed Development Control policies to be applied. These are accompanied by a Proposals Map, which defines particular policy areas and identifies proposed development sites and pressures for change. Members should note that the general approach and format being adopted by South Lanarkshire Council is similar to that being undertaken by North Lanarkshire Council as part of its emerging North Lanarkshire Local Plan. The Plan also contains a CD that contains further details of the Pressure for Change sites, Appendices and a selection of Cognitive Maps (maps that show peoples perceptions about the places in which they live).
- 4.2 The SLLP has been drafted to take account of national policy and advice in a range of areas such as sustainable development, economic competitiveness, social justice, environmental quality and design. Moreover, the overall strategic thrust of the plan is informed by the Agenda for Sustained Growth set out in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan, of which

the North and South Lanarkshire Council are key partners. The overarching objective of the SLLP is Regeneration. In particular it focuses upon the need to:-

- Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town, village and neighbourhood centres
- Protect and provide land for work and business
- Support the re-use (including greening) of previously developed land within urban areas
- Guide and support partnership activities in priority regeneration areas
- Protect and conserve natural and built environment assets
- Require the design of new development to improve the quality of the environment
- Require the integration of land use and transportation, particularly in relation to walking, cycling and public transport

## **5. Local Plan Strategy**

- 5.1 The SLLP contains a detailed Settlement and Area Strategy. This has been influenced by a major review of the Green Belt to take account of planning consents granted and to define a more sustainable long-term boundary. This exercise has been undertaken in parallel with the review of the Structure Plan and has resulted in the identification of six strategic housing search areas which have potential to meet part of the housing shortfall predicated across the conurbation. The suitability of sites at Ferniegair/Larkhall, Newton/Blantyre, Thorntonhall, East Kilbride SW, Hamilton SW and Carluke, will be assessed as part of the local plan consultation process. The Plan also seeks to maintain an effective supply of housing land to meet future requirements over a period of at least 5 years and identifies a range of sites across South Lanarkshire to satisfy this need.
- 5.2 The SLLP also includes land within Rutherglen/Cambuslang associated with the Clyde Gateway Initiative, which is one of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan's three Metropolitan Flagship Initiatives (the other two being Ravenscraig and the Clyde Waterfront). However, it is recognised that the completion of the M74 is fundamental to the successful regeneration of this area, which has considerable development potential to provide over 5,000 jobs and upwards of 4,000 new homes. The Initiative also has considerable potential to make a significant contribution to the wider green network that extends into North Lanarkshire.
- 5.3 Although the SLLP largely focuses major development activity within those urban areas surrounded by Green Belt, it also places an emphasis on rural regeneration, particularly within those settlements identified as the M74 Commuter Settlements (Blackwood & Lesmahagow) and Areas in Economic Transition such as Forth. A Rural Protection Area is also defined covering much of the central part of South Lanarkshire outwith the main settlements – this seeks to build on the economic and tourism potential linked with the area's high quality natural environment. In the more remote dispersed communities on the southern periphery the policy is one where the Council will support proposals that enable their long-term future.
- 5.4 One interesting element of the SLLP is the approach taken towards assessing sites highlighted during early consultation on the Plan by landowners and developers as being suitable for development. Some 387 Pressure for Change sites are shown on the Proposals Map, the object being to ensure that there is the widest possible consultation on their suitability or otherwise for release. This is similar to the North Lanarkshire Local Plan's ongoing site assessment exercise, although the main difference is that the assessment of sites within North Lanarkshire will be undertaken prior to the publication of the Consultative Draft Local Plan using the criteria established through the members workshops.
- 5.5 The SLLP also recognises the importance of the Strategic Green Network as a conurbation wide resource that underpins the quality of life of its residents, providing a setting for development, opportunities for formal and informal recreation and promoting biodiversity. This approach accords fully with that set out in the Structure Plan Review. A number of these green network components such as the area known as Uddingston Clyde, together with the Clyde Valley Woodlands, link directly to green network resources within North Lanarkshire.

## 6. Other Key Components of the Local Plan

- 6.1 The SLLP is a comprehensive document that covers a very large geographical area. While most of its policies have no direct implications for North Lanarkshire Council there are a number of policies that are worthy of note:-

**Town Centres and Retailing:** The SLLP identifies ten main town centres and a number of smaller village and local neighbourhood centres. These are to be sustained and enhanced in accordance with the provisions of both NPPG 8 Town Centres and Retailing and policies contained within and the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan. Core areas are identified within main centres whereby the Plan seeks to maintain at least 75% of units within a retail use (this figure is 60% for other centres). Although the sequential approach to site selection is highlighted, the Plan does not establish a requirement for significant additional retail floorspace. The SLLP also defines a number of out of centre retail locations such as Hamilton Retail Park but these do not form part of the hierarchy of centres to be protected.

**Land for Work and Business:** Although the SLLP does not identify an overall shortage of industrial land within South Lanarkshire, some minor allocations are required to address a shortfall of small sites for local needs. The Plan also identifies a range of strategic locations for business across the Plan Area, including strategic business centres at East Kilbride and Hamilton, along with six strategic industrial locations and two nationally safeguarded inward investment sites. (Including a site at the Raith Interchange, adjacent to Strathclyde Park).

**Travel Demand:** The Local Plan seeks to encourage and support the development of integrated transport systems by seeking to focus development on sustainable transport locations well served by public transport and at locations that reduce the need to travel, particularly by car. A series of proposed improvements to the public transport network such as new stations at Law and Symington and the provision of new or extended park and ride stations underpin this approach. (Those at Carluke and Uddingston are closest to communities in North Lanarkshire). A limited number of road proposals are also highlighted including the completion of the M74 and junction improvements at Raith.

## 7. Corporate Considerations

- 7.1 There are no direct financial or administrative implications for North Lanarkshire Council with respect to the provisions of the Consultative Draft South Lanarkshire Local Plan 2005.

## 8. Recommendations

- 8.1 It is recommended that the committee:
- (a) Notes the main provisions of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan referred to in this report, and
  - (b) Agrees to respond to South Lanarkshire Council in terms of the main points set out within Appendix One to this Report.



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(27<sup>th</sup> October 2005)

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report, please contact Stevan Gilchrist, on 01236 616246.

Background Paper: South Lanarkshire Local Plan Consultative Draft October 2005

## Appendix One

### North Lanarkshire Council

#### Comments on the Consultative Draft South Lanarkshire Local Plan 2005

- A1 The overall strategy set out in the SLLP is welcomed and generally supported. It represents a sound basis for the sustainable development of South Lanarkshire in accordance with the regeneration principles established within the emerging Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan, within which both North and South Lanarkshire are key partners.
- A2 Many of the proposals within the Plan, especially those that have the potential to create new employment opportunities such as the Clyde Gateway Initiative, offer significant benefits to North Lanarkshire and the wider conurbation, and their implementation is therefore supported. However, in view of the issues concerning infrastructure constraints, particularly relating to water services, the scale of the opportunities that might be achieved requires to be clarified as part of the Local Plan process to ensure that adequate forward planning of infrastructure can be undertaken.
- A3 Similarly, while the need to address the structure plan requirement for strategic search areas for possible housing development is recognised, it is noted that the search areas are very extensive. It is therefore expected that the Final Plan will use the principles established through the Structure Plan to determine the appropriateness for development and the scale of release should be commensurate with the scale of development identified in the Structure Plan.
- A4 The SLLP's continued emphasis on supporting the existing hierarchy of town centres is supported.
- A5 The need to continue to safeguard the Nationally Significant Inward Investment Site at Raith is welcomed. It is however noted that if the changes proposed in draft SPP 21 Green Belts are carried through this may ultimately require the site to be removed from the Green Belt to provide long-term certainty over the Green Belt boundary at this location. Given that accessibility to the site is of particular concern, support given by the SLLP for improvements to Junction 5 to allow the site to be accessed are also supported. It should be noted that these improvements would make a significant contribution towards relieving congestion at the M74/A725 and be of mutual benefit to both Councils.
- A6 Improvements to the Green Network extend beyond the boundaries of South Lanarkshire and benefit the wider conurbation in terms of improving overall quality of life and making it a more attractive place for investors and developers. The priorities identified in the SLLP are welcomed and particular support given to the development of the Clyde Valley component of the Green Network. It is also recommended that the two Council's work closely to ensure that connections between strategic elements of the Green Network are secured and access to them enhanced.
- A7 With regard to the SLLP's detailed environmental policies it is noted that natural environment designations often transcend local authority boundaries. While many are fairly minor in scale such as Nature Conservation Sites, the Clyde Valley Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) is a significant feature running from Strathclyde Park past Garrion Bridge and into the heart of South Lanarkshire. This represents a shared resource between North and South Lanarkshire and the SLLP approach which seeks to ensure that development does not compromise the overall integrity of this area is supported.

- A8 Following an assessment of the potential for wind energy across the conurbation as part of the Structure Plan Review, the Local Plan identifies a number of extensive areas of 'potential' for wind farm development. While most of these are remote from North Lanarkshire, an extensive area in the vicinity of Forth, to the south of Shotts is identified. This is welcomed, fulfils a requirement set out in the Structure Plan and provides certainty to the wind energy industry in their search for suitable sites. North Lanarkshire Council will be required to identify the extent of the search area within its own Council area as part of the forthcoming Council wide local plan.
- A9 The SLLP's Tourism Development Policy seeks to develop and expand tourism-related activities, especially along the Clyde Valley. This is supported and joint working between North and South Lanarkshire in this area should be encouraged to ensure that the maximum benefit be accrued for the mutual benefit of both Councils.
- A10 The emphasis on securing good design is a constant thread running through the SLLP, which requires new developments to apply the principles of sustainable development and to positively contribute to the character and appearance of their surroundings. This approach is in line with the current design agenda being promoted by the Scottish Executive and is fully supported.