

North Ayrshire LDP2 Proposed Plan

Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

On behalf of **North Ayrshire Council**



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Peter Brett Associates LLP (PBA) has been commissioned by North Ayrshire Council (NAC) to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the emerging North Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2 ('the LDP2'). This Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary ('the ER NTS') summarises the key findings of the SEA. More detailed analysis is provided within a full Environmental Report ('the full ER') which accompanies the LDP2 Proposed Plan.

1.2 How to Comment on this Environmental Report

- 1.2.1 This ER NTS, together with the full ER, are being issued for consultation alongside the LDP2 Proposed Plan. Subject to approval from NAC all three documents are expected to be consulted on in late Spring 2018. Details of how to participate in the consultation will be provided on NAC's website and published in a local newspaper prior to the consultation period commencing.

1.3 Structure of this Report

- 1.3.1 This report is structured as follows:
- **Section 1 – Introduction:** explains the background to the development of the LDP2 and provides a summary of the content of the LDP2 Proposed Plan;
 - **Section 2 – Environmental and Policy Context:** summarises relevant baseline environmental characteristics, considers the evolution of the baseline in the absence of the LDP2 Proposed Plan, and notes the relationship between the LDP2 Proposed Plan and other relevant policy documents;
 - **Section 3 – Approach to SEA:** describe the methodology adopted to undertake the SEA of the SPD;
 - **Section 4 – SEA Key Findings:** summarise the findings of the SEA carried out in respect of the LDP2 Proposed Plan;
 - **Section 5 – Mitigation and Enhancement Recommendations:** outlines mitigation and enhancement measures identified for the LDP2 Proposed Plan through the SEA process; and,
 - **Section 6 – Next Steps and Monitoring:** identifies the next steps in the SEA process and outlines proposed mechanisms to monitor the LDP2 Proposed Plan once adopted.

1.4 Background to the North Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)

- 1.4.1 Under Scottish planning law, local planning authorities including NAC are required to prepare a local development plan for their district at intervals of no more than five years. The existing statutory Development Plan for North Ayrshire comprises the North Ayrshire LDP, which was adopted on 20th May 2014 and has a plan period covering 10 years up to 2025. NAC are required to prepare a new LDP by May 2019, which once adopted will supersede the existing LDP. This new LDP is to be known as the North Ayrshire LDP2.
- 1.4.2 Once finalised and adopted, the North Ayrshire LDP2 will refresh the existing planning strategy for North Ayrshire. In doing so it will provide an up to date, coherent and overarching vision, spatial planning strategy, suite of development management policies and set of site allocations for the NAC area. The LDP2 will therefore provide a clear picture of NAC's plan for

delivering sustainable development, interpret national planning policies within the local context and seek to guide future development across North Ayrshire.

1.5 Form and Content of the LDP2 Proposed Plan

1.5.1 The LDP2 Proposed Plan which has been subject to SEA comprises the following components:

- LDP Vision;
- LDP Strategic Policies: Spatial Strategy, Supporting the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, Placemaking and Community Planning;
- Subject Policies; and,
- Site Allocations.

2 Environmental and Policy Context

2.1 Key Environmental Issues

2.1.1 A summary of the key environmental issues, problems and objectives which need to be considered within the LDP2 Proposed Plan and the associated SEA is provided in **Table 2.1** below. This draws upon an environmental baseline review presented within **Appendix A** of the full ER.

Table 2.1: Key Environmental Issues Relevant to this SEA

SEA Topic	Key Issues
Air Quality & Climatic Factors	<p>The need to minimise the emissions of pollutants to air.</p> <p>The need to safeguard and improve air quality.</p> <p>The need to ensure that new development is adaptable to the effects of climate change, taking account of the coastal location of North Ayrshire.</p> <p>The need to mitigate climate change including through measures to decarbonise key sectors including transport and the built environment.</p>
Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna	<p>The need to conserve and enhance biodiversity including sites designated for their nature conservation value.</p> <p>The need to safeguard and enhance the green infrastructure network within North Ayrshire</p>
Water	<p>The need to protect and enhance the quality of water sources and the water environment</p> <p>The need to locate new development away from areas of flood risk or to fully mitigate potential flood risks, taking into account the effects of climate change.</p>
Land & Soil	<p>The need to encourage and/or facilitate development on previously developed (brownfield) land.</p> <p>The need to optimise the use of available land and existing infrastructure</p> <p>The need to safeguard soil resources and remediate areas of known contamination.</p>
Health	<p>The need to protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of the resident population within North Ayrshire,</p> <p>The need to promote healthy lifestyles and in particular address obesity and levels of physical activity.</p> <p>The need to protect and enhance open space provision and accessibility across North Ayrshire.</p>

SEA Topic	Key Issues
Population (including relevant socio-economic issues)	<p>The need to align the LDP2 with the NPF3 and SPP (2014) and to respond to the latest North Ayrshire Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) to meet identified housing and employment needs.</p> <p>The need to support the development of North Ayrshire’s marketable employment/industrial land supply and to achieve economic growth A in a sustainable manner that protects the environment whilst allowing social and economic progress that recognises the needs of all people.</p> <p>The need to increase local employment opportunities and provide sufficient associated educational facilities and services.</p> <p>The need to tackle deprivation, including areas with existing deprivation linked to poor accessibility to key services, facilities and economic opportunities.</p> <p>The need to ensure that community facilities and services are appropriate and accessible to users in order to meet the diverse needs of residents and workers within North Ayrshire.</p>
Cultural Heritage	The need to protect and enhance cultural heritage assets and their settings within North Ayrshire.
Landscape	The need to conserve and enhance townscape character, key views and visual amenity within North Ayrshire.
Material Assets	The need to optimise the efficient use of natural resources and infrastructure.

2.2 Predicted Evolution of the Baseline in the Absence of the Emerging LDP2

- 2.2.1 In overall terms, the absence of the LDP2 could prevent NAC from arresting projected population declines, rebalancing the population and meeting the needs of changing demographic groups, in particular a significant projected increase in the elderly population. This could adversely impact the vitality, vibrancy and functioning of local communities across North Ayrshire. At the same time the absence of the LDP2 Proposed Plan would also be likely to increase development pressures in areas where market interest is currently concentrated, in particular for new housing, which could exacerbate environmental problems and lead to environmental degradation if development proceeds unchecked.
- 2.2.2 Further consideration of the likely evolution of current baseline conditions in the absence of the LDP2 Proposed Plan are detailed within **Table 3.2** within the full ER.

2.3 Review of Plans, Programmes and Strategies

- 2.3.1 A review of relevant plans, programmes and strategies (RPPS) has been carried out to inform the SEA, as detailed in **Appendix B** of the full ER. This RPPS included a review of relevant national and European legislative requirements, as well as relevant international, national, sub-regional and local plans and strategies.
- 2.3.2 The RPPS identified a number of policy requirements, targets and relevant issues were identified as requiring consideration in the preparation of the emerging LDP2 and this associated SEA. Key issues identified pointed to the need for the emerging LDP2 to:
- Secure inclusive economic growth across North Ayrshire through delivering the development and investment required to increase connectivity, improve community and social infrastructure and increase access to high quality employment and economic opportunities;
 - Identify and plan to meet the development needs of North Ayrshire's population over the periods to 2024 and 2029, including the allocation of sufficient effective housing site allocations to achieve North Ayrshire's housing land requirements (HLR) for the LDP2 plan period;
 - Deliver well-designed homes to meet identified housing needs, including providing a range of sizes and tenures;
 - Reduce the need to travel, provide opportunities to travel by means that are capable of improving health and wellbeing such as cycling and walking;
 - Seek to use development to deliver improved and expanded transport links, public transport and enhanced communications infrastructure;
 - Seek to protect, enhance and, where necessary, increase outdoor sports facilities, parks and open spaces;
 - Seek to protect heritage assets and sites of potential archaeological interest in ways appropriate to their significance;
 - Develop effective community engagement techniques to respond to the views of wider communities and facilitate effective neighbourhood planning;
 - Promote the efficient use of resources, including moving towards a low carbon economy, use of waste as a resource, energy efficient buildings, and appropriate renewable and low carbon energy;

- Seek to improve air quality and ensure that North Ayrshire continues to have no areas designated as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs);
- Ensure that there are no significant negative impacts on internationally and nationally designated nature sites (refer to separate **Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report** produced by NAC for further details);
- Give full consideration to the potential impacts on water, including water quality, ecosystems, sustainable use of water, capacity of sewerage, flood risk and the opportunities to improve flood risk management;
- Seek ways to maximise green infrastructure coverage (linked areas of open space and wildlife corridors) and connectivity across a wide range of scales and increase ecosystems services including biodiversity;
- Seek ways to maximise the health benefits of green infrastructure;
- Use land efficiently by prioritising the use of previously developed land;
- Consider soil quality and agricultural land classification when assessing potential development sites;
- Recognise the different landscapes within North Ayrshire and their differing capacity to accommodate change; and,
- Promote development that minimises landscape impacts and protects landscapes appropriate to their significance.

3 The SEA Process

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This section provides an overview of the SEA process which has been undertaken for the emerging LDP2. It also outlines the approach taken specifically to assess the LDP2 Proposed Plan through the preparation of the full ER and this ER NTS.

3.2 SEA Purpose and Objectives

- 3.2.1 The purpose of SEA is to identify, assess and evaluate the likely significant environmental effects of a qualifying plan, programme or strategy (PPS). A key objective of SEA, incorporating SEA, is to enhance the environmental and wider sustainability performance of a PPS. This is achieved through identifying any likely significant effects from implementation of the PPS as drafted, proposing mitigation measures to address any identified significant adverse environmental effects, and identifying enhancement measures to improve the overall performance of the PPS. As such, SEA is an integral part of good policy development.

3.3 SEA Project Team

- 3.3.1 The SEA of the emerging LDP2 was initially progressed in-house by NAC officers involved with the preparation of the Plan itself, but in December 2017 PBA was appointed to undertake the SEA of the LDP2 Proposed Plan. This was done to address resource pressures within NAC, to ensure that the SEA is undertaken by experienced specialists and to allow the SEA to act as an independent 'critical friend' to support the development of the emerging LDP2.
- 3.3.2 The consultant team from PBA undertook SEA of all LDP2 Proposed Plan components and identified reasonable alternatives. except in relation to candidate site allocations, which were assessed by NAC officers. The independence of the consultant team within PBA who have carried out this SEA of the LDP2 Proposed Plan has therefore aided its objectivity and led to the production of a robust suite of mitigation and enhancement recommendations to improve its effectiveness.
- 3.3.3 Regular discussions have been held between PBA and senior NAC officers throughout the SEA of the LD2 Proposed Plan, which has allowed informal and early feedback of key issues to take place. For example, following an inception meeting and initial review of the draft LDP2 spatial strategy by PBA in December 2017, the strategy was amended by NAC officers to respond to key issues identified in the review. The amended spatial strategy was then subject to a full SEA assessment, which identified only a limited number of further mitigation and enhancement recommendations.
- 3.3.4 Further details of how the SEA process has informed the preparation of the LDP2 Proposed Plan are provided in **Section 5** within the full ER.

3.4 Previous SEA Reporting

- 3.4.1 Two previous stages of SEA have been undertaken regarding the emerging LDP2:

LDP2 SEA Scoping

- 3.4.2 In April 2016, NAC prepared an SEA Scoping Report and consulted with the SEA Consultation Authorities in order to set the SEA Framework for use in assessing the emerging LDP2. The main output from this stage of the SEA process was the production of an SEA Framework, which comprised a suite of 11 environmental objectives relevant to North Ayrshire which may affect (or be affected by) the emerging LDP2. The SEA objectives were accompanied by a set of guide questions to inform the assessment of emerging LDP2 components and any identified reasonable alternatives.

LDP2 Main Issues Report Interim Environmental Report (January 2017)

- 3.4.3 An Interim Environmental Report (IER) was published in January 2017 alongside the LDP2 Main Issues Report (MIR). The purpose of the IER was to report the findings of an SEA undertaken in respect of the LDP2 Main Issues Report (MIR). Reflecting the content of the MIR, the IER focused on identifying likely significant effects from broad policy options and reasonable alternatives, rather than providing a detailed assessment of full draft LDP policies. The IER also reported on the site assessment process undertaken by NAC up to that point.
- 3.4.4 Key findings and consultee responses from these two previous stages of the SEA process have informed both the content of the LDP2 Proposed Plan and the associated ER. In particular, at IER stage the SEA Framework was amended to take account of consultee feedback, although the 11 SEA Objectives remained similar to those originally proposed at SEA Scoping stage (see above). No further changes have been made to the SEA Framework, which is provided in full in **Appendix C (Table C.1)** of the full ER. The 11 SEA Objectives set out in the SEA Framework are listed in **Table 3.1** below.

Table 3.1 SEA Objectives within the North Ayrshire LDP2 SEA Framework

North Ayrshire LDP2 SEA Objectives	
1.	Protect and improve soil and land resources
2.	Manage and reduce flood risk
3.	Protect and enhance the water environment
4.	Protect local air quality
5.	Provide support for achievement of a more balanced population structure.
6.	Promote improved health of the human population
7.	Protect, and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment
8.	Manage, maintain and promote efficient use of material assets
9.	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contributes to improving North Ayrshire's resilience to climate change impacts.
10.	Protect, enhance and, where appropriate, restore the quality and distinctiveness of North Ayrshire's landscape.
11.	Conserve, or, where appropriate, enhance local biodiversity, including statutory and non-statutory designations and protected species.

3.5 Preparation of this Environmental Report

- 3.5.1 PBA commenced work on the SEA of the LDP2 Proposed Plan in December 2017 following completion of the draft LDP2 Proposed Plan by NAC officers.

SEA Matrices

- 3.5.2 All components of the LDP2 Proposed Plan were assessed in detail using matrices to identify likely significant effects on the SEA objectives. This approach allowed for systematic recording of potential effects and their significance together with any assumptions, uncertainties and suggested mitigation or enhancement measures (e.g. changes to policy wording). The assessment of each SPD component was undertaken in January 2018 on a pre-mitigation basis, i.e. assuming full implementation of the LDP2 Proposed Plan as drafted at that point, without the provision of additional policy safeguards or mitigation measures. The assessment was then updated to take account of the incorporation of recommended mitigation and enhancement measures into the LDP2 Proposed Plan in March 2018.
- 3.5.3 Owing to the high-level nature of the proposed LDP2 vision and spatial strategy it was not possible to identify individual likely significant effects from these Plan components with certainty. In contrast, the greater detail of individual site allocations and precise wording within all other LDP policies allowed for the clear identification of likely significant effects from these LDP2 Proposed Plan components. A compatibility matrix and scoring system was therefore developed to test the alignment of the LDP2 vision and spatial strategy with the SEA Framework, whilst a detailed assessment matrix and associated scoring system was developed to identify likely significant effects from all other LDP policies. These scoring systems are shown in **Tables 4.3** and **4.4** within the full ER.
- 3.5.4 Likely significant effects from proposed site allocations and reasonable alternatives were assessed through:
- Completion of individual site assessment proformas for all new candidate housing sites – by NAC officers in consultees with the Scottish Government’s Key Agencies. A traffic light system was adopted in the site assessments, so for the purposes of this SEA:
 - where a site scored ‘red’ this is considered to indicate a likely significant adverse effect (in the absence of any mitigation); and,
 - where a site scored ‘green’ this indicates a likely significant positive effect.
 - Analysis of the alignment between the site assessment criteria used previously in the SEA of the North Ayrshire LDP1 (in relation to sites which are proposed to be rolled over into the LDP2), the site assessment criteria within the new candidate site assessment proformas and the LDP2 SEA Framework;
 - Production of constraints mapping, with all potential sites (all LDP1 rollover sites and all new candidate sites) overlaid against constraint layers relevant to the 11 SEA Objectives within the LDP2 SEA Framework. This provides a consistent ‘base’ level SEA for all potential sites considered to date in the preparation of the LDP2. The constraints mapping is provided in **Appendix F.4** of the full ER:
 - Where the mapping indicates that a site overlaps with an identified constraint, this indicates the potential for a significant adverse effect which may require mitigation if the site were to be taken forward for allocation within the LDP2 (or otherwise subject to a windfall planning application). Potential mitigation to address these constraints is therefore identified within **Section 4** and **Appendix F** of the full ER; and,
 - Conversely, where a site overlaps with an environmental asset, this indicates the potential for a likely significant positive effect. However, the new candidate site

proformas for preferred allocations and reasonable alternative sites also identified likely significant effects from these sites.

- Based on the above constraints mapping, preparation of qualitative cumulative site assessments for each of the six localities defined within the LDP2 Proposed Plan.

Identification of Reasonable Alternatives

- 3.5.5 A core SEA requirement is to identify likely significant effects of implementing both a plan or programme (i.e. the emerging LDP2) and reasonable alternatives to it, as well as explaining rationale for the identification of any such reasonable alternatives. To be considered as reasonable alternatives, options (e.g. alternative policy criteria or site allocations) must relate to the plan or programmes' objectives and geographical scope.
- 3.5.6 For this SEA of the LDP2, the following reasonable alternatives were identified where possible and subject to SEA in the same way as proposed plan components:
- Alternative policy criteria/tests considered by NAC officers during the preparation of the LDP2 Proposed Plan. Where it has been possible to identify reasonable alternatives to proposed policies, this is noted within relevant SEA matrices provided in **Appendix G** within the full ER; and,
 - Alternative candidate sites – all sites considered for potential allocation in the LDP2, including existing housing allocations from the North Ayrshire LDP1 which are proposed to be rolled-over into the LDP2 and all new sites put forward by site promoters as new candidate allocations, have been subject to a base level of SEA. In addition, NAC have undertaken a detailed site assessment process in consultation with Key Agencies to identify a smaller a set of preferred site allocations and reasonable alternatives, which have been subject to more detailed analysis. Other candidate site allocations, which are not considered to constitute reasonable alternatives, have been rejected from further consideration.
- 3.5.7 As reasonable alternatives must relate to the objectives of the emerging LDP2, no reasonable alternatives to the vision or spatial strategy within the LDP2 Proposed Plan could be identified, as any alternatives would fundamentally change the strategic direction of the emerging LDP2.

3.6 How has the SEA informed the LDP2 Proposed Plan?

Review of Emerging LDP2 Proposed Plan Components

- 3.6.1 Prior to the LDP2 Proposed Plan being subject to a formal SEA (leading to the preparation of the full ER and this NTS as described above), the SEA project team provided advice to NAC officers regarding mitigation requirements for proposed site allocations and undertook reviews of emerging LDP2 Plan components. In particular, reviews of the emerging LDP2 Vision and Policy 1: Spatial Strategy identified a number of uncertainties and omissions from these components and recommended changes to address this.

- 3.6.2 NAC officers subsequently re-wrote the LDP2 Proposed Plan Vision and Policy 1: Spatial Strategy. The revised Vision was designed to align closely with the North Ayrshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) and therefore did not specifically respond to the environment focused recommendations from the SEA project team's earlier review. The revised version of Policy 1: Spatial Strategy did however seek to respond to each of the recommendations from the review of this emerging policy, meaning that this policy now clearly aligns with the LDP2 SEA Framework.

Identification and Implementation of SEA Mitigation and Enhancement Recommendations

- 3.6.3 The identification of any assumptions and uncertainties is an important element of SEA, as all LDP2 Proposed Plan components need to be unambiguous to ensure they can be implemented as intended. A key role of SEA is therefore to devise appropriate mitigation and enhancement recommendations to prevent or avoid significant adverse environmental effects, address identified uncertainties, resolve deficiencies and strengthen the environmental performance of the plan or programme being assessed.
- 3.6.4 The assessment of each LDP2 Proposed Plan component was initially undertaken on a pre-mitigation basis, which allowed any ambiguities and other weaknesses to be identified and appropriate mitigation or enhancement recommendations to be devised by the SEA project team. A draft ER containing a schedule of proposed mitigation and enhancement recommendations was issued by PBA to NAC in early February 2018, following which PBA held a series of meetings with NAC officers to explain the recommendations and agree how each could be implemented. Details of all policy level SEA mitigation and enhancement recommendations made at this point, together with a summary of how each recommendation has been addressed by NAC, are provided in **Table 5.2** within the full ER.
- 3.6.5 Through identifying weaknesses and recommending associated changes to the LDP2 Proposed Plan, the SEA process has closely influenced the LDP2 Proposed Plan. As a result, the Plan is now considered to be more robust and effective in terms of addressing relevant environmental issues.

Mitigation Requirements for Proposed Site Allocations

- 3.6.6 With respect to proposed site allocations, constraints mapping was produced for each of the six localities defined within the LDP2 Proposed Plan and is provided in **Appendix F** within the full ER. Where this mapping indicated that a site overlaps with an identified constraint, this highlights the potential for a likely significant adverse effect which may require mitigation. Policy level mitigation requirements for each site has therefore been identified, as listed in **Table 5.3** within the full ER. This mitigation has also been included within the LDP2 Proposed Plan to ensure that the development of each site allocation proceeds in accordance with the required mitigation and therefore does not result in any significant adverse effects on the environment.

4 SEA of the North Ayrshire LDP2 Proposed Plan

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 This section provides the results of the SEA undertaken for each constituent part of the LDP2 Proposed Plan. The following plan components have been subject to SEA and are considered below in turn:
- Vision, Spatial Strategy and Strategic Developments;
 - Other Strategic or Overarching Policies;
 - Draft Development / Non-Strategic Policies; and,
 - Preferred Site Allocations and Reasonable Alternatives.
- 4.1.2 Full details of the assessment findings are provided in **Section 7** and **Appendices D – G** of the full ER. **Sections 4.2 – 4.4** below outline the predicted likely significant effects of each component of the SPD in turn.
- 4.1.3 The assessment was first undertaken on a pre-mitigation basis, following which SEA mitigation and enhancement recommendations have been incorporated into the LDP2 Proposed Plan to address identified uncertainties and strengthen its environmental performance. Taking account of this mitigation and enhancement, some of the assessment findings have changed and a greater number of the LDP2 Proposed Plan components are now likely to result in Major Positive and significant effects, with no significant adverse effects now being considered likely. Any further mitigation or enhancement measures which are recommended (e.g. to improve clarity) but which have not yet been incorporated into the LDP2 Proposed Plan are listed in **Section 6** within the full ER.

4.2 SEA of the Proposed LDP Vision, Spatial Strategy and Strategic Developments

LDP2 Vision

- 4.2.1 As required by Scottish planning law, the LDP2 Proposed Plan is underpinned by a proposed vision, which a spatial strategy and individual policies seek to implement.
- 4.2.2 The proposed LDP2 Vision is designed to integrate the LDP2 Proposed Plan with the North Ayrshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (2017 – 2022) and thus to align spatial planning with community planning. In consequence, the LDP2 Vision is focused on meeting population needs and tackling inequality rather than on environmental protection or enhancement, although the need to support the environment and value the area's countryside and coastal assets is recognised. The focus on community planning within the LDP2 Vision therefore means it would have a Neutral effect on many physical environmental SEA Objectives. However, the proposed LDP2 Vision is considered to align well with the following SEA Objectives, indicating the potential for significant beneficial effects:
- SEA Objective 5 - Provide support for achievement of a more balanced population structure; and,
 - SEA Objective 6 - Promote improved health of the human population.

Policy 1: Spatial Strategy

- 4.2.3 As detailed in Appendix D, the LDP spatial strategy set out in Policy 1: Spatial Strategy is considered to align well with the following SEA Objectives, indicating the potential for significant beneficial effects:
- SEA Objective 1 - Protect and improve soil and land resources;
 - SEA Objective 2 - Manage and reduce flood risk;
 - SEA Objective 5 - Provide support for achievement of a more balanced population structure;
 - SEA Objective 6 - Promote improved health of the human population;
 - SEA Objective 7 - Protect, and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment;
 - SEA Objective 8 - Manage, maintain and promote efficient use of material assets;
 - SEA Objective 9 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contributes to improving North Ayrshire's resilience to climate change impacts;
 - SEA Objective 10 - Protect, enhance and, where appropriate, restore the quality and distinctiveness of North Ayrshire's landscape; and,
 - SEA Objective 11 - Conserve, or, where appropriate, enhance local biodiversity, including statutory and non-statutory designations and protected species.
- 4.2.4 The proposed LDP vision and Policy 1: Spatial Strategy are not considered to be incompatible with any SEA Objectives. However, the limited coverage of environmental issues within these LDP2 Proposed Plan components prevent them from contributing positively to some of the SEA Objectives within the LDP2 SEA Framework. Recommendations to enhance the alignment of the proposed LDP2 Vision and Policy 1: Spatial Strategy with the LDP2 SEA Framework are therefore detailed in **Appendix D** and listed in **Section 7** within the full ER

Policy 3: Supporting the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

- 4.2.5 The following strategic developments outlined within Policy 3: Supporting the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on individual SEA Objectives:
- Strategic Development 2: Irvine Harbourside – SEA Objective 8 (material assets);
 - Strategic Development 4: Ardrossan Harbour Redevelopment and Ardrossan North Shore – SEA Objective 8 (material assets);
 - Strategic Development 5: Millport CARS and Flood Defence Scheme – SEA Objectives 2 (flood risk) and 7 (historic environment);
 - Strategic Development 6: Stoneyholm Mill, Kilbirnie – SEA Objective 7 (historic environment); and,
 - Strategic Development 9: Brodick Masterplan – SEA Objective 8 (material assets).
- 4.2.6 No Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects are considered likely, although insufficient details are currently available to demonstrate how most of the strategic developments would contribute positively to many of the SEA Objectives. Enhancement measures to improve the

coverage of relevant environmental issues within the strategic developments and enhance their contribution to relevant SEA Objectives have been proposed, as detailed in **Appendix D** and listed in **Section 7** within the full ER.

4.3 SEA of Other Strategic Policies

Placemaking and Community Planning Policies

- 4.3.1 Policy 2: Placemaking has been amended through the SEA process and now requires development proposals to safeguard and where possible enhance environmental quality, as well as to avoid unacceptable adverse environmental or amenity impacts. In addition, the policy seeks to achieve high quality design in all development proposals. As detailed in Appendix E, this policy is therefore predicted to result in the following Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on individual SEA Objectives:

Pre-Mitigation

- SEA Objective 5 - Provide support for achievement of a more balanced population structure;
- SEA Objective 6 - Promote improved health of the human population;
- SEA Objective 8 - Manage, maintain and promote efficient use of material assets;
- SEA Objective 9 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contributes to improving North Ayrshire's resilience to climate change impacts; and,
- SEA Objective 11 - Conserve, or, where appropriate, enhance local biodiversity, including statutory and non-statutory designations and protected species.

Post Mitigation

- SEA Objective 1 - Protect and improve soil and land resources;
 - SEA Objective 2 - Manage and reduce flood risk;
 - SEA Objective 3 - Protect and enhance the water environment;
 - SEA Objective 4 - Protect local air quality;
 - SEA Objective 7 - Protect, and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment; and,
 - SEA Objective 10 - Protect, enhance and, where appropriate, restore the quality and distinctiveness of North Ayrshire's landscape.
- 4.3.2 Policy 4: Community Planning is predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on SA Objectives 5 (population) and 6 (health) through requiring NAC to take account of community priorities, the contribution of development proposals to inclusive growth and the promotion of equal opportunities, and other likely beneficial impacts for communities.
- 4.3.3 Neither of the assessed policies are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

4.4 SEA of Proposed Subject Policies

- 4.4.1 The summary assessment provided below uses each of the SEA Objectives from the LDP2 SEA Framework as headings, whilst detailed assessment matrices identifying all likely effects from the policies is provided in **Appendix G** within the full ER.

SEA Objective 1: Protect and Improve Soil and Land Resources

- 4.4.2 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 6: Regeneration Opportunities;
- Policy 18: Green and Blue Infrastructure;
- Policy 30: Digital Infrastructure and New Communications Equipment; and,
- Policy 37: Responsible Extraction of Mineral Resources.

Post Mitigation

- Policy 33: Energy Infrastructure Development.

- 4.4.3 These policies set out criteria to:

- Support urban regeneration and the re-use of brownfield land;
- Require development proposals to optimise the use of land and consider future land uses;
- Require energy infrastructure development proposals to avoid unacceptable adverse environmental effects, including specifically on carbon rich soils including peat;
- Supports the temporary use of unused or underused land as green infrastructure to create landscape frameworks for future development, which would improve soil quality; and,
- Avoid the sterilisation of economically recoverable natural resources.

- 4.4.4 None of the proposed policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 2: Manage and Reduce Flood Risk

- 4.4.5 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 26: Water Environment Quality;
- Policy 27: Flood Risk Management; and,
- Policy 28: Alignment with Marine Planning.

Post Mitigation

- Policy 33: Energy Infrastructure Development.

4.4.6 These policies set out criteria to:

- Direct development proposals away from known flood risk areas;
- Require energy infrastructure development proposals to avoid unacceptable adverse environmental effects, including specifically on flood risk;
- Requires development proposals to incorporate measures and materials to protect against or manage flood risk; and,
- Promote the deployment of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS).

4.4.7 None of the proposed policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 3: Protect and Enhance the Water Environment

4.4.8 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 20: Protection of Our Designated Sites; and,
- Policy 26: Water Environment Quality.

Post Mitigation

- Policy 28: Alignment with Marine Planning;
- Policy 29: Supporting Aquaculture; and,
- Policy 33: Energy Infrastructure Development.

4.4.9 These policies set out criteria to:

- Requires proposals to avoid unacceptable adverse effects, including specifically on water bodies, the water environment and water quality;
- Protect and enhance a range of designated sites and protected species, which would help to protect riparian and aquatic ecology from adverse impacts and would help to improve water quality;
- Require development proposals to protect or improve the water environment and contribute to the achievement of Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan objectives; and,
- Direct construction works and structures away from the water environment, which would safeguard water quality.

4.4.10 None of the proposed policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 4: Protect Local Air Quality

4.4.11 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 7: Network of Town Centres;
- Policy 31: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel;
- Policy 37: Responsible Extraction of Mineral Resources; and,
- Policy 39: Hazardous Installations and Substances.

Post Mitigation

- Policy 6: Regeneration Opportunities.

4.4.12 These policies set out criteria to:

- Direct high footfall and significant traffic generating uses to locations that are highly accessible using active or public transport, including within North Ayrshire's Network of Centres. This would reduce the need for car travel and associated traffic pollution;
- Requires development proposals within North Ayrshire's Network of Centres to contribute to accessibility and community wellbeing, which would include improving public and active travel links;
- Require development proposals likely to generate significant additional journeys to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment, air quality assessment and, where appropriate, a Green Travel Plan; and,
- Require proposal for minerals extraction, at hazardous installations or involving the use, transmission or storage of hazardous substances not to result in unacceptable environmental or amenity impacts or significant adverse effects on air quality.

4.4.13 None of the proposed policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 5: Provide Support for Achievement of a more Balanced Population Structure

4.4.14 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

- Policy 6: Regeneration Opportunities;
- Policy 7: Network of Centres;
- Policy 9: Leisure, Retail and other Tourism-Related Development On Arran;
- Policy 10: Supporting Sustainable Tourism;
- Policy 11: Business and Industry Employment Locations;
- Policy 12: Business Development On Arran and Cumbrae;

- Policy 30: Digital Infrastructure and New Communications Equipment;
- Policy 31: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel;
- Policy 32: Transport as an Economic Driver; and,
- Policy 35: Future Proofing for Heat Networks.

4.4.15 These policies set out criteria to:

- Support urban regeneration and the re-use of urban brownfield land for uses including residential, community and leisure, and employment development to meet identified needs;
- Support development proposals which improve the economic outlook of the area surrounding a site;
- Support proposals for increased residential use within the Network of Centres and the integration of the Centres with surrounding residential areas. This would encourage new residential development within highly accessible urban locations;
- Support the growth of the leisure and tourism economic sectors, including on Arran and Cumbrae. This would increase economic opportunities available to North Ayrshire's population;
- Support efforts to improve digital connectivity and mobile coverage, particularly within rural areas;
- Enhance the accessibility of economic opportunities, community facilities, recreational activities and other key amenities, in particular by active and public transport;
- Deliver a transport network that supports economics growth, including through supporting upgrades to rail freight, road junction, lorry parking, park and ride and active travel infrastructure; and,
- Support the development of new or expanded district heating networks and maximise the energy generation potential of proposed developments. Depending on the implementation of heat networks, this could provide low-cost energy and therefore help to tackle fuel poverty.

4.4.16 None of the proposed policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 6: Promote Improved Health of the Human Population

4.4.17 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 7: Network of Town Centres;
- Policy 8: Leisure, Retail and other Tourism-Related Development On Arran
- Policy 21: Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park;
- Policy 23: Development involving Open Space;

- Policy 24: Outdoor Sports;
- Policy 31: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel;
- Policy 34: Waste Management Facilities
- Policy 37: Responsible Extraction of Mineral Resources; and,
- Policy 39: Hazardous Installations and Substances.

Post Mitigation

- Policy 6: Regeneration Opportunities;
- Policy 18: Blue and Green Infrastructure;
- Policy 33: Energy Infrastructure Development; and,
- Policy 35: Future Proofing for Heat Networks.

4.4.18 These policies set out criteria to:

- Protect and enhance green and blue infrastructure, open space, active travel routes and recreational opportunities, all of which would improve physical and mental health outcomes;
- Support a range of uses on urban brownfield land where this would improve amenity, which could help to enhance environmental quality and protect and enhance green networks and open space, with associated health benefits;
- Encourage the deployment of district heating networks, which depending on implementation could provide low cost energy and therefore help to tackle fuel poverty; and,
- Control potentially hazardous forms of development to avoid unacceptable health and environmental risks.

4.4.19 None of the proposed policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 7: Protect, and, where appropriate, Enhance the Historic Environment

4.4.20 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 13: Preserving and Enhancing Our Conservation Areas Policy 26b: Listed Buildings;
- Policy 14: Listed Buildings;
- Policy 15: Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes;
- Policy 16: Scheduled Monuments;

- Policy 17: Non-designated archaeological sites and monuments;
- Policy 19: Landscape and Seascape; and,
- Policy 37: Responsible Extraction of Mineral Resources.

Post Mitigation

- Policy 19: Landscape and Seascape;
- Policy 22: Forestry, Woodland, Trees & Hedgerows;
- Policy 33: Energy Infrastructure Development; and,
- Policy 29: Supporting Aquaculture.

4.4.21 These policies set out criteria to protect, conserve, manage, enhance or avoid unacceptable effects (as appropriate) on specific heritage assets and their landscape setting, thereby helping to conserve, protect and enhance the historic environment.

4.4.22 None of the proposed policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 8: Manage, Maintain and Promote Efficient Use of Material Assets

4.4.23 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 6: Regeneration Opportunities;
- Policy 11: Business and Industry Employment Locations;
- Policy 12: Business Development On Arran and Cumbrae;
- Policy 14: Listed Buildings;
- Policy 24: Outdoor Sports Facilities;
- Policy 26: Water Environment Quality;
- Policy 27 Flood Risk Management;
- Policy 30: Digital Infrastructure and New Communications Equipment;
- Policy 31: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel;
- Policy 32: Transport as an Economic Driver;
- Policy 33: Energy Infrastructure Development;
- Policy 34: Waste Management Facilities;
- Policy 35: Future Proofing for Heat Networks;

- Policy 36: Safeguarding of Workable Mineral Resources; and,
- Policy 39: Hazardous Installations and Substances.

Mitigation

- Policy 6: Regeneration Opportunities;
- Policy 7: Network of Town Centres;
- Policy 18: Blue and Green Infrastructure; and,
- Policy 22: Forestry, Woodland, Trees and Hedgerows.

4.4.24 These policies set out criteria to:

- Optimise the efficient use of available land and existing infrastructure;
- Support the re-use of urban brownfield land for urban uses including residential, community and leisure, and employment development;
- Require development proposals to safeguard town centre vitality, the effective housing land supply and the industrial land supply;
- Support infrastructure improvements to unlock the full employment potential of sites allocated for business and industrial uses;
- Concentrate high footfall development in highly accessible locations within the Network of Town Centres;
- Direct development proposal to accessible locations with existing infrastructure;
- Promote the re-use and restoration of listed buildings;
- Protect and enhance multi-functional green and blue infrastructure features, which would help to maximise the efficient use of land as a finite resource and improve environmental quality;
- Support proposals for dedicated timber export facilities and timber export developments;
- Protect against the loss of outdoor sports facilities;
- Restrict development within flood risk areas, thereby helping to protect new buildings and infrastructure from potential flooding whilst not preventing water compatible uses and essential infrastructure from being developed in appropriate locations;
- Improve the coverage and quality of communications networks;
- Make the best use of existing infrastructure and safeguard the operation of existing waste management infrastructure and hazardous installations;
- Improve the functioning of the transport network and ensure that the transport network supports economic growth. This includes a commitment to upgrade existing or provide new infrastructure to address identified priorities and needs;
- Support the development in appropriate locations of renewable and low carbon energy generation infrastructure, transmission infrastructure and new infrastructure to prioritise resource recovery;

- Support the development of new or expanded district heating networks and maximise the energy generation potential of proposed developments; and,
- Avoid the sterilisation of land and workable mineral resources of economic or conservation value.

4.4.25 None of the proposed policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 9: Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Contributes to Improving North Ayrshire's Resilience to Climate Change Impacts

4.4.26 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 31: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel;
- Policy 32: Transport as an Economic Driver;
- Policy 33: Energy Infrastructure Development; and,
- Policy 37: Responsible Extraction of Mineral Resources.

Post Mitigation

- Policy 7: Network of Town Centres; and,
- Policy 18: Blue and Green Infrastructure.

4.4.27 These policies set out criteria to:

- Concentrate high footfall development in highly accessible locations within the Network of Town Centres;
- Direct significant traffic generating uses to locations well served by public transport;
- Requires development proposals to promote active transport opportunities;
- Support upgrades to rail freight, park and ride and active travel infrastructure, which would promote sustainable modal shifts;
- Protect and enhance the provision of multi-functional green and blue infrastructure features, including open spaces and SuDs. This would directly contribute to climate change adaptation through increasing opportunities for natural attenuation and reducing pressures from surface water run-off on foul drainage systems;
- Support for energy infrastructure development proposals in appropriate locations which contribute to the transition to a low carbon economy; and,
- Oppose development proposals for the exploration, appraisal and extraction of hydrocarbons using unconventional means.

4.4.28 None of proposed draft policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 10: Protect, Enhance and, where appropriate, Restore the Quality and Distinctiveness of North Ayrshire's Landscape

4.4.29 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 7: Network of Town Centres;
- Policy 8: Leisure, Retail and other Tourism-Related Development On Arran;
- Policy 9: Shopfronts, Signs and Advertisements;
- Policy 14: Listed Buildings;
- Policy 15: Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes;
- Policy 21: Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park;
- Policy 30: Digital Infrastructure and New Communications Equipment; and
- Policy 37: Responsible Extraction of Mineral Resources.

Post Mitigation

- Policy 18: Blue and Green Infrastructure;
- Policy 19: Landscape and Seascape;
- Policy 28: Alignment with Marine Planning;
- Policy 29: Supporting Aquaculture;
- Policy 30: Digital Infrastructure and New Communications Equipment;
- Policy 31: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel; and,
- Policy 33: Energy Infrastructure Development.

4.4.30 These policies set out criteria to:

- Ensure development proposals respect, conserve, protect and enhance landscape character, landscape features (e.g. heritage assets, etc.) and the wider physical environment;
- Direct development away from unspoiled sections of coast;
- Requires marine and aquaculture proposals to avoid unacceptable adverse effects on the environment, including specifically on landscape, seascape and visual amenity;
- Direct proposals for the siting of new communications equipment to existing infrastructure clusters, thereby minimising visual amenity impacts;
- Protect and enhance multi-functional green and blue infrastructure features, including in relation to their amenity value;

- Support proposals which take a design-led approach to street design, which would enhance the placemaking qualities of public realm and contribute to local distinctiveness;
- Requires energy infrastructure development proposals to avoid unacceptable adverse effects, including specifically on landscape designations, whilst also requiring proposals to accord with a wind energy spatial framework prepared in accordance with the SPP (2014) and to comply with the Council's landscape capacity study;
- Safeguard the visual amenity, landscape quality and recreational value of the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park; and,
- Require development proposals to safeguard visual amenity and avoid unacceptable environmental (including landscape and visual) impacts.

4.4.31 None of the proposed policies within the LDP2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

SEA Objective 11: Conserve, or, where appropriate, Enhance Local Biodiversity, including Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations and Protected Species

4.4.32 The following draft policies are predicted to have Major Positive (i.e. significant beneficial) effects on aspects of this SEA Objective:

Pre-Mitigation

- Policy 19: Green and Blue Infrastructure;
- Policy 23: Development involving Open Space;
- Policy 21: Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park;
- Policy 31: Water Environment Quality; and,
- Policy 54: Responsible Extraction of Mineral Resources.

Post Mitigation

- Policy 20: Protection of Our Designated Sites;
- Policy 22: Forestry, Woodland, Trees & Hedgerows;
- Policy 26: Water Environment Quality;
- Policy 28: Alignment with Marine Planning;
- Policy 29: Supporting Aquaculture;
- Policy 33: Energy Infrastructure Development; and,
- Policy 38: Protecting Peatland and Carbon Rich Soils.

4.4.33 These policies set out criteria to:

- Avoid unacceptable adverse effects on sites designated for reasons of ecological importance;

- Set out multiple criteria to protect and enhance a designated sites and protected species;
- Protect against the loss of natural features including tree, hedgerows and woodland of merit;
- Set out criteria to designate Tree Preservation Orders where necessary to protect the significant value of specific trees or woodlands;
- Support development proposals which create, enhance or enlarge green and blue infrastructure;
- Protect against the loss of open space, which would safeguard access to nature;
- Requires development proposals in the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park to have regard to ensuring the Park increases its biodiversity value;
- Direct development away from unspoiled sections of coast;
- Requires marine proposals to avoid unacceptable adverse effects on the environment;
- Requires aquaculture proposals to avoid unacceptable adverse effects, including on the biological carrying capacity of land and water bodies and on coastal and marine species and habitats;
- Support development proposals which protect or improve the water environment and contribute to the achievement of Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan objectives. This would protect and enhance the ecological status of waterbodies and the quality of aquatic habitats;
- Avoid unacceptable amenity or environmental impacts; and,
- Safeguard peatland habitats from disturbance.

4.4.34 None of the draft policies within the LDP 2 Proposed Plan are predicted to have Major Negative (i.e. significant adverse) effects on this SEA objective.

4.5 SEA of Site Allocations

4.5.1 NAC issued a formal 'Call for Sites' in 2016 to potential new land allocations for inclusion within the LDP2, to complement the un-developed and effective site allocations from the North Ayrshire LDP1 (2012) which are proposed to be rolled over into the LDP2. All sites put forward at this stage were subject to individual site assessments using a standard proforma developed by NAC officers, which included relevant environmental criteria. Additional sites were submitted to NAC for consideration in response to the LDP2 MIR (January 2017) and these were subsequently assessed by NAC officers using the same proformas. The Scottish Government's Key Agencies were consulted throughout this site selection process and provided comments that were included within individual site assessments where relevant.

4.5.2 Following the LDP MIR consultation and the receipt of further information regarding the deliverability of some sites, NAC officers undertook a filtering process to identify:

- Preferred Sites – new candidate sites which are recommended for inclusion in the LDP2 Proposed Plan as site allocations;
- Reasonable Alternative Sites – new candidate sites which are not recommended for inclusion in the LDP2 Proposed Plan as housing allocations on planning grounds alone, but nonetheless constitute reasonable alternatives in the context of the 2005 Act; and,

- Rejected Sites – all other new candidate sites.
- 4.5.3 The specific reason for the current status of each site is detailed in **Appendix F.2**. This includes the identification or absence of significant infrastructure or environmental constraints, site effectiveness and deliverability of the site.
- 4.5.4 A gap analysis has also been undertaken by PBA to assess the compatibility of the criteria used within NAC’s site assessment proformas and the compatibility of the site assessment approach previously undertaken for the SEA of the LDP1 with the current LDP2 SEA Framework. The results of this gap analysis, provided in **Appendix F** within the full ER, demonstrates that both site assessment frameworks have good coverage of the environmental issues considered within the LDP2 SEA Framework. However, the analysis identified some differences between the LDP1 SEA and LDP2 new candidate site assessment criteria, as well as where environmental constraint layers used within the previous LDP1 SEA have since been superseded or updated. To ensure parity in the assessment of the proposed LDP1 rollover sites with all new candidate sites (including those now rejected by NAC as well as the preferred sites and reasonable alternatives), a base level of SEA has been undertaken by mapping all of the sites against a single set of constraints relevant to the LDP2 SEA Framework, as shown in **Appendix F.4** within the full ER.
- 4.5.5 For the avoidance of doubt, the decision-making process to identify the LDP2 preferred site allocations, reasonable alternative sites and rejected sites was undertaken by NAC in consultation with Key Agencies. PBA were not involved in this process. All decision-making took account of relevant information submitted by site promoters and responses provided by the Key Agencies, as well as the findings from the site assessment proformas.

Cumulative Site Assessment

- 4.5.6 The LDP2 Proposed Plan adopts the six Localities identified by NAC for community planning purposes, which have also been used to undertake an SEA cumulative site assessment. The six Localities comprise:
- Arran;
 - Garnock Valley;
 - Irvine;
 - Kilwinning;
 - North Coast and Cumbraes; and,
 - Three Towns (Ardrossan, Salcoats and Stevenson).
- 4.5.7 Cumulative site assessment matrices for these localities are provided in **Tables 6.1 – 6.6** within the full ER. These assessments have been prepared using GIS analysis and professional judgement, based upon the LDP2 SEA Framework and the constraints mapping referred to above (which is provided in **Appendix F.4** within the full ER).

5 Further Mitigation and Enhancement Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The LDP2 Proposed Plan was initially assessed on a pre-mitigation basis following which a suite of mitigation and enhancement recommendations were devised by the SEA project team to address uncertainties and strengthen the alignment of the plan with the North Ayrshire LDP2 SEA Framework. These recommendations were addressed by NAC officers and the LDP2 Proposed Plan was then re-assessed, with the residual assessment findings summarised in **Section 4** of this ER NTS. This section lists any outstanding or further mitigation or enhancement measures which are recommended (e.g. to improve clarity) but which, as on 28th March 2018, have not been incorporated into the LDP2 Proposed Plan.

5.2 Further Mitigation and Enhancement Recommendations - LDP2 Vision

- 5.2.1 The findings detailed in **Section 6.2** and **Appendix D** within the full ER indicate that a number of further clarifications and additional elements could usefully be added to the proposed LDP Vision to enhance its alignment with the LDP2 SEA Framework. These recommendations relate to the potential insertion of references to urban regeneration, improving environmental quality, improving health and wellbeing outcomes, protecting and enhancing the historic environment, maximising the efficient use of land, supporting the transition to a low carbon economy and adapting to climate change within the LDP2 Vision.

5.3 Further Mitigation and Enhancement Recommendations – Strategic Policies

- 5.3.1 The findings detailed in **Sections 6.2 – 6.3** and **Appendices D - E** within the full ER indicate that a number of further clarifications and additional elements could usefully be added to the proposed strategic policies of the LDP2 Proposed Plan to enhance their alignment with the LDP2 SEA Framework. These further mitigation and enhancement recommendations are listed in **Table 7.1** within the full ER. In general, these recommendations relate to the insertion of additional policy tests to protect and enhance physical environmental quality. Further work is also recommended to identify and address likely environmental effects of the strategic developments supported by Policy 3: Supporting the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) once the design of each strategic development has been refined.

5.4 Further Mitigation and Enhancement Recommendations – Subject Policies

- 5.4.1 The findings detailed in **Section 6.4** and **Appendix D** within the full ER indicate that a number of further clarifications and additional elements could usefully be added to the proposed subject policies of the LDP2 Proposed Plan to enhance their alignment with the LDP2 SEA Framework. These further mitigation and enhancement recommendations are listed in **Table 7.2** within the full ER. In general, these recommendations relate to the insertion of additional policy tests and clarifications to safeguard specific environmental receptors and to more clearly protect and enhance the quality of natural, historic and built environments across North Ayrshire.

6 Conclusions, SEA Next Steps and Monitoring

6.1 Summary

6.1.1 The full ER and this associated NTS have been prepared to accompany the LDP2 Proposed Plan. This ER NTS has:

- Provided an overview of the LDP2 Proposed Plan;
- Outlined the approach to undertaking the SEA of the LDP2 Proposed Plan;
- Summarised the findings of the SEA of the LDP2 Proposed Plan, specifically in terms of the identification of likely significant effects on the environment; and,
- Proposed mitigation and enhancement measures to improve the effectiveness and environmental performance of the LDP2 Proposed Plan.

6.2 How to Comment on this Environmental Report

6.2.1 This ER NTS, together with the full ER, are being issued for consultation alongside the LDP2 Proposed Plan. Subject to approval from NAC all three documents are expected to be consulted on in late Spring 2018. Details of how to participate in the consultation will be provided on NAC's website and published in a local newspaper prior to the consultation period commencing.

6.3 Next Stages of North Ayrshire LDP2 Preparation

6.3.1 The full ER and this ER NTS will be consulted on in tandem with the LDP2 Plan. All representation received regarding these documents will then be analysed by NAC to determine whether:

- Notifiable (i.e. substantive) modifications need to be made to the LDP2 Proposed Plan, resulting in the need to re-consult on a revised LDP2 Proposed Plan and associated ER; or,
- Only non-notifiable (i.e. non-substantive) modifications need to be made to the LDP2 Proposed Plan, following which it would be submitted to the Scottish Ministers to undergo a formal examination process by an appointed Reporter.

6.3.2 The formal examination process will then consider all unresolved issues raised in representations regarding the LDP2 Proposed Plan. This ER will be a key document to inform the examination. Following the examination, the appointed Reporter will identify any modifications necessary before the LDP2 can be adopted by NAC. Any such modifications will undergo SEA screening and are largely binding upon NAC.

6.3.3 Once the modifications identified through the examination have been incorporated into the LDP2 Proposed Plan, the final LDP will be presented to a full meeting of NAC for formal adoption as the new statutory Development Plan for North Ayrshire. At this time an SEA Post Adoption Statement will be prepared to explain how the SEA process has informed the development of the LDP2.

6.4 Monitoring

6.4.1 To comply with statutory requirements NAC is developing an LDP2 Action Programme, which will set out an LDP2 monitoring framework. This will be used as the main tool to monitor and review the implementation of the LDP2 (once adopted) and the associated environmental

effects. The LDP2 Action Programme will also identify and monitor the actions required by multiple stakeholders to deliver the strategic developments outlined in Policy 3: Supporting the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, one of which is to deliver NAC's approved capital investment programme. It is proposed that monitoring will be undertaken through the preparation of annual monitoring reports (AMR), which will report progress against the actions and monitoring framework set out in the LDP2 Action Programme.

- 6.4.2 For a successful monitoring framework, NAC must ensure that the indicators they choose for monitoring are specific, manageable and targeted towards measuring the implementation of the LDP2. For instance, demonstrating a relationship between the condition of a specific environmental receptors and the LDP2 may be difficult. In addition, monitoring indicators must be relevant and should also only address matters required through substantive components of the LDP2, rather than with reference to quantified targets that fall outwith the scope of the plan. The LDP2 monitoring framework should be based around the LDP2 SEA Framework and therefore should include specific targets and indicators in response to each of the 11 SEA Objectives within the LDP2 SEA Framework.

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