

## Amended Minute of AAFWS Steering Group Meeting 18.02.13

### Present

Alan Edgar, AJPU

John Esslemont, AJPU

Sarah Bowman, Ayrshire Green Network

Nigel Wallace, AJPU/ GSA Biosphere

Steven Orr, Land Use Consultants

Neil Feggans, South Ayrshire Council (development plans)

Alison O'Kane, East Ayrshire Council (development plans)

Richard Henry, North Ayrshire Council (development plans)

Iain Hossack, North Ayrshire Council (sustainability)

Dorothy Simpson, Scottish Natural Heritage

Zoe Clelland, RSPB

Bruce Davidson, East Ayrshire Woodlands

Jim Smith, Forestry Commission Scotland

Greggor Caldwell, SGRIP

Item 1 – purpose of meeting and review of process followed to date

Alan Edgar opened the meeting and explained that the purpose of today's event is to review the amendments made to the draft Strategy document and to comment on any omissions and make recommendations for refinement of the content and presentation of the document. Alan outlined the process followed since the end of the public consultation in July 2012. The comments raised in the consultation stage were synthesised into a "Report on Consultation" prepared by LUC and AJPU between July and December 2012 with recommendations for amendments. The report's recommendations were compiled following consultation with individual stakeholders or through further study undertaken by AJPU. The report was circulated to the Steering Group members on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

Item 2 - Steven Orr from Land Use Consultants presented an overview of the Finalised Draft, highlighting some of the key amendments made to the original document.

Item 3 – Alan Edgar then opened the meeting up to all members for comments and recommendations. It was noted that not all of the recommendations made in the Consultation Report prepared by LUC/AJPU have been incorporated into the finalised draft. Steven Orr explained that in some instances amendments had been incorporated as a consequence of alterations elsewhere within the document. To help structure the discussion, it was agreed to take the document chapter by chapter. Alan Edgar led the discussion by giving a short introduction to each chapter and proposing recommendations for amendments on behalf of the Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit. The following table is a summary of the points discussed.



	<p>2/ The merits of the identification of the “Opportunities to Restore Peat Soils” were discussed. SO outlined that the areas were identified by identifying the coincidence of deeper peat with conifer woodland and comparing their relative remoteness. Those areas which are less accessible are judged to be more readily available for peat restoration as there would be less economic pressure to replant with woodland following felling. SO acknowledged that the methodology used does not identify whether the actual areas identified would be suitable for peatland restoration and that there are other areas outwith those identified that may be suitable for restoration. It was agreed to remove the “Opportunities to Restore Peat Soils” layer and replace it with either a peat depth layer or a soil carbon content layer. Allied to this amendment, it was agreed to add an additional action point under the Climate Change thematic chapter encouraging peatland restoration on suitable sites during forest restructuring (see item 8 below)</p>	Page 21
6	<p><b>Figure 3.7 native woodlands.</b> Update mapping for Arran with the IHN model data</p>	Page25
7	<p><b>Chapt 4 –Climate Change</b>  Agreed to amend action point CC1 to ensure that compensatory planting is carried out in accordance with the National Policy on Control of Woodland Removal and that such planting achieves the aims and objectives of this strategy.</p> <p><i>“Implement the Scottish Government Policy On Control of Woodland Removal, with compensatory planting planting required within Ayrshire and Arran, in accordance with the guidance contained within this Strategy”</i></p>	Page 35
8	<p><b>Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions – priorities</b>  In accordance with the decision to alter Diagram 3.5 to include areas of deeper peat, it was agreed that an additional action point should be added to the list of actions on page 35 to encourage the restoration of peatlands where opportunities arise.</p> <p><i>“CC7 encourage the restoration of peatlands during forest restructuring, in locations with suitable hydrological, soil and vegetation conditions.”</i></p>	Page 35
9	<p><b>Figure 4.1</b> The priority catchments identified are the RBMP priority catchments (water quality issues). Action point CC7 refers to sustainable flood management. Amend figure 4.1 to include Potentially Vulnerable Areas and highlight the catchments which contain them.</p>	Page 36
10	<p><b>Chapt 5 Economic Development – Timber Production &amp; Processing section.</b>  Discussed whether an additional action is required to encourage the creation of productive softwood forests in the accessible preferred locations identified in figure 3.4. The purpose of the four “woodland type” diagrams was debated and it was agreed that they indicate the locations where the different types of woodland can make the greatest contribution to achieving the aims and objectives of the Strategy. The different woodland types maps overlap in many instances, and they do not, therefore, represent the “preferred” areas for each type of woodland but instead indicate the range of woodland types that would deliver the most benefit for any given location. Users of the Strategy will need to examine all four diagrams to ascertain the range of woodland types that the strategy promotes for their area of interest.</p>	Page 43

	It was agreed that extracts from the woodland type diagrams should be included within the Spatial Guidance chapter to reinforce the guidance portrayed in them.	
11	<p><b>Chapter 5 – Economic Investment &amp; Regeneration</b></p> <p>It was discussed whether an additional action should be added encouraging the use of developer contributions for the creation and consolidation of green networks, including woodland management and creation. There was general support for this provided that the wording allowed for flexibility, in recognition of the fact that the Council’s have established developer contribution policies which do not currently reference the Central Scotland Green Network. It was proposed that an additional action be added to the priorities on page 48 as follows, but the final wording being agreed in consultation with the Planning Authorities. “Consider the use of developer contributions to support the creation and consolidation of green networks, including the delivery of the Central Scotland Green Network”.</p>	Page 48
12	<p><b>Chapt 5 Tourism &amp; Recreation</b></p> <p>Following discussion it was agreed that the main strategic woodland related tourism opportunities are the restructuring of the commercial woodlands in the South of Arran, Whitelee Forest, the Galloway Forest Park, Arecleoch Wind Farm and opportunities associated with the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere. It was further agreed that the tourism diagram should be reinstated with these locations.</p>	Page 48/49
13	<p><b>Chapt 5 Rural Diversification</b></p> <p><b>Para 5.27.</b> It was agreed to replace the words “should be” with “is” in the first sentence. It was discussed that grant funding under Scottish Rural Development Programme and its successors will be the most significant influence on achieving the aims and objectives in relation to the agricultural areas. This should be acknowledged in the text.</p> <p>It was agreed to include an additional action point in the list of priorities on page 50, seeking support for the continuation and expansion of existing training initiatives linked to woodland management and creation.</p>	Page 49/50
14	<p><b>Chapt 7 Natural &amp; Cultural Heritage</b></p> <p><b>Landscape Character section</b></p> <p>In Para 7.5 it was agreed to add reference to the Sensitive Landscape Character areas, North Arran National Scenic Area and the SNH Wild Land Search Areas. This section should also refer to the more detailed landscape guidance provided in the Spatial Guidance.</p>	Page 60 & 61
15	<p><b>Chapt 7 Conserving Important Non Woodland Habitats &amp; Species</b></p> <p>It was agreed to amend the text to make clearer reference to the NATURA 2000 NETWORK as well as designated sites and to include a reference to ARTICLE 10 locations in action point <b>ENV12.</b></p>	Page 64
16	<p><b>Chapt 7 water environment section</b></p> <p>Action ENV20 (promote role of woodland in sustainable flood management) duplicates CC7 in Chapt 4 Climate Change. Agreed to replace current action with a new action seeking to ensure that opportunities to improve water quality are taken in woodland creation and restructuring proposals.</p>	Page 68

	“Ensure that proposals for new woodland creation and restructuring of existing woodlands are aligned with River Basin Management Plans and take account of opportunities to improve water quality whilst achieving other multiple benefits”	
17	<b>Chapt 7 – air quality section</b> Agreed an additional action point encouraging street trees and woodlands created along busy transport corridors as a means of trapping air pollutants to improve local air quality.	Page 68
18	Spatial Guidance  Agreed to the proposed revised spatial zones. However it was further agreed that North and South Arran will be retained as two separate zones.  Table after para 8.2. Agreed to include data from Figure 3.3 (page 19) as a fourth column in table on page 72 or a small graph/pie chart in the ‘priorities for management and expansion’ sections of the spatial guidance.  Agreed to include extracts from the four woodland types mapping for each zone.  The meeting discussed the issues surrounding the scale of the mapping and it was agreed that a web based mapping system is needed to compliment the document. This would allow users to zoom in and out of the mapping to suit their needs. A maximum resolution will be required to prevent users zooming in past 1:150,000 beyond which the mapping is not considered to be accurate enough.	Page 72
19	Agreed to include a glossary of key terms and acronyms	

Item 4 - It was discussed that the next step is for the further amendments to be made to the document by Land Use Consultants. A revised document will then be circulated, electronically, to the Steering Group for any final comments. Thereafter, the three Councils will individually present the amended finalised draft to their respective panels for approval as non-statutory supplementary guidance. The timescale for production of the revised finalised draft was discussed briefly and LUC will advise AJPU further. Neil Feggans noted that an Equalities Impact Assessment may be required prior to the Strategy being presented to South Ayrshire Council.

End of meeting.

Prepared by:- Alan Edgar, AJPU

Date:- 25 March 2013