

Renfrewshire Council

To: **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY BOARD**

On: **9 AUGUST 2005**

Report by
Director of Planning & Transport
The Glasgow and the Clyde Valley 2025
Consultative Draft Structure Plan

1.0 **Summary**

The Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan Committee is currently preparing an alteration to the Structure Plan and issued the Consultative Draft Structure Plan 2005 for public consultation on 10 May 2005 with the closing date for submissions on 21 June 2005. This report provides a summary of the issues raised and offers the Council's response to the Joint Structure Plan Committee.

2.0 **Recommendation**

It is recommended that this report be submitted to the Joint Structure Plan Committee as its formal response to the Consultative Draft.

3.0 **Background**

3.1 At the meeting of the Planning and Development Policy Board on 8 February 2005, the Structure Plan Manager made a presentation on the Structure Plan alteration and the Board approved a report on a discussion document which had been issued by the Joint Structure Plan Committee entitled "Future of Glasgow and the Clyde Valley 2025 - Discussion Document." This set out broad issues which the Joint Structure Plan Committee intended to take into account in preparing the alteration to the Structure Plan. At the meeting of 7 March 2005 the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan Committee, approved the Consultative Draft Structure Plan. This was issued for public consultation on 10 May 2005 with the closing date for submissions on 21 June 2005 and embodies the issues which were raised in the earlier discussion document.

3.2 The Consultative Draft has been widely distributed, jointly by the Structure Plan Manager and by each of the constituent Councils. All members of the Council have received a copy and copies were also sent to all community councils, all MPs and MSPs and a wide range of public and private organisations who may have an interest in the preparation of the plan. A briefing for community councils was held in the Paisley Town Hall on 24 May 2005. The responses received as a result of the consultation exercise will be considered by the Joint Structure Plan Committee at a special meeting to be held on 29 August 2005 and it remains the Joint Committee's intention to submit the Finalised Plan for approval to the Scottish Ministers by the end of 2005.

- 3.3 The Consultative Draft sets out the proposed changes to the approved Structure Plan 2000; only those aspects of the approved plan which are covered in the Consultative Draft will be altered, other policies will remain unchanged. This report does not aim to provide a comprehensive inventory of all aspects of the Consultative Draft, instead it highlights the issues which require a response by the Council.

The Consultative Draft - Key Issues

- 3.4 The Consultative Draft Structure Plan proposes an agenda for sustained growth to 2025. This is reflected in higher forecasts of population growth which have implications for the supply of land for housing and business and industry and other aspects of the plan. The document also continues to give priority to the improvement of town centres and provides an opportunity to clarify the policy for Braehead shopping centre in relation to the existing network of town centres and other out-of-town retail centres. The Consultative Draft reflects the joint working between the Structure Plan and the West of Scotland Transport Partnership and Strathclyde Passenger Transport in the preparation of the Joint Transport Strategy and highlights priorities for the transport network in the Structure Plan area to support the sustained growth agenda. It also highlights the importance of resolving constraints on development resulting from drainage and water service infrastructure and proposes to update the policy coverage for flooding. The document continues to give prominence to the importance of the quality of the urban and rural environment and the new plan will set out a revised Green Network which will provide a framework for investment in the improvement of the environment. The alteration has also provided an opportunity to clarify and supplement Strategic Policies 9 and 10 which are used in the development control process to assess development proposals.

3.5 Recommendation - Key Issues

The Council generally supports the proposed alterations set out in the Consultative Draft subject to the specific comments listed below.

Issues for Renfrewshire and responses.

4 Implications of agenda for sustained growth

- 4.1 As stated above, the Consultative Draft sets out an agenda for growth aimed at achieving a major shift in the economic competitiveness for the Structure Plan area. This assumes a faster rate of development than was assumed in the Approved Structure Plan 2000 and is based on sustaining the rate of improvement of the area which has been experienced in recent years.

Housing Land

- 4.2 National planning policy and advice requires the Structure Plan to make provision for housing developments for a minimum of 5 years and also to take a longer term view. In accordance with these requirements the Consultative Draft provides forecasts to 2010 and 2017. The key assumption in the forecasts is that out-migration will be reversed earlier than anticipated in the approved Structure Plan 2000. This results in a requirement for a

significantly higher level of house building than was provided for in the approved plan. The Consultative Draft estimates a requirement for an additional 112,700 private houses over the period to 2017 across the whole Structure Plan area.

- 4.3 As part of the process of preparing the alteration to the Structure Plan, a detailed assessment of known housing proposals and commitments has been made by all eight constituent councils. These are updated annually in the Housing Land Supply and are subject to audit by the house builders represented by Homes for Scotland. In addition, a capacity study has been undertaken to identify additional sites which have potential to be developed during the period to 2017. In Renfrewshire this includes, for example, Hawkhead Hospital and surplus school sites and other proposals within the built up area, which accord with Local Plan policy, and which are known to be potential development proposals but which have not been formalised to planning application stage.
- 4.4 On the basis of this assessment the Consultative Draft concludes that the land supply to 2010 is adequate but that there is a substantial shortfall for the period 2010 - 2017 across the Structure Plan area. These figures will require to be confirmed during the process of preparing the Finalised Plan and may result in increased housing requirements for 2010 and 2017. The assessment concludes that there is a need to identify an additional supply of housing land across the conurbation, capable of accommodating some 23,000 houses for the period 2010 - 2017. However, it should be noted that the latest population and household estimates from GROS for 2004, which were released after the preparation of the Consultative Draft, suggest that the shortfall projected in the Consultative draft may be further increased. This figure will be confirmed during the process of preparing the Finalised Plan.
- 4.5 The process used to estimate the demand for housing divides the Structure plan area into Housing Market Areas (HMAs) and assesses locally based demand which will be satisfied within each HMA and mobile demand which can be allocated across different HMAs. This latter aspect of demand can be allocated across councils within the relevant housing market area depending on the availability and suitability of housing land. As a detailed assessment of potential brownfield sites has been undertaken as part of the Housing Land Supply and Urban Capacity Study, the bulk of the additional sites are likely to be located on greenfield and Green Belt locations. It should be noted that the current process is not new and has been undertaken previously as part of the regular replacement and update of the Structure Plan. The approved Structure Plan 2000 undertook a similar process, Green Belt sites were released in several councils and the Royal Ordnance Bishopton site was identified as a site with long term potential for development under Strategic Policy 2. Previously, the Strathclyde Structure Plan Update 1990 proposed Green Belt land release at Bishopton, Houston and Howwood. The site at Houston was rejected by the Secretary of State for Scotland at that time, but the other sites were progressed through the Renfrew District Local Plan and have been fully developed.

Request for suggested Urban Expansion Sites

- 4.6 In order to accommodate the shortfall, suggestions for land release have been requested through the consultation procedure. It is expected that developers and land owners will submit proposals and the Council requires to consider whether it also wishes to suggest sites for assessment through the Structure Plan process. This is further discussed below. All sites suggested through the consultation process will be assessed against criteria which are set out in Background Report BR 7/05 "Criteria for Assessing Potential Future Urban Expansion Areas" and the Joint Committee will require to identify locations for release as part of the Finalised Structure Plan. The extent of the requirement for land release in Renfrewshire will take account not only of the final demand forecasts for each council and the mobile demand estimates for the wider housing market area but also an update of the Housing Land Supply and Urban Capacity Study and the relative suitability of sites which are proposed across the Structure Plan area. On the basis of the current estimates, it is to be expected that Renfrewshire will require to release land currently in the Green Belt for housing development. The Council, along with the other seven councils which comprise the Joint Structure Plan Committee, will all contribute and be directly involved in the assessment and selection process which will be co-ordinated by the Structure Plan Manager.
- 4.7 It is important therefore that the Council engages in the process and considers potential sites to be assessed. It is recognised that the release of Green Belt land in Renfrewshire is not likely to be popular and it is therefore essential that the demand assessments upon which the release will be based are agreed in principle with the Scottish Executive to ensure that the release of Green Belt sites is strictly controlled to the level which is required to meet demand. In view of the fact that the release requirements are for the longer term, it will be essential that mechanisms are included in the Structure Plan to control the phasing of release sites, to avoid blight and to ensure that development of the sites is undertaken in conjunction with the provision of infrastructure. Also, in view of the fact that the release is based on long term projections, it will be important that the release mechanism is related to the regular roll forward and update of the demand and supply for housing which is undertaken by the Joint Structure Plan Committee and through the Local Plan process.

Implications and choices for the Council

Population - Implications for Renfrewshire

- 4.8 The Structure Plan Manager undertakes population projections for structure planning purposes on behalf, and in conjunction with, the constituent councils. These have resulted in more optimistic forecasts than those prepared by the General Register Office (Scotland) (GROS). (The Council has previously disputed the forecasts with the GROS for being too low.) Estimates from the GROS and the Structure Plan are provided below for comparison in Table 1. It should be noted that the figures shown relate to

home based demand and do not take account of mobile demand which relates for example to people moving into the Structure Plan area as well as existing residents who may consider locations across the Structure Plan area.

Table 1 Population Projections For Renfrewshire (2002 based projections)

Year	GROS	Structure Plan
2005	169,410	170,647
2017	158,786	167,049
Population fall	-10,624	-3,598

- 4.9 Renfrewshire's population grew during the first half of the 1990's reaching an estimated total of 176,390 in 1996. Since then there has been a decline in the estimated population levels. It is anticipated that the GROS projections for 2005 will be marginally increased on the basis of the latest population estimate. Population decline has been experienced across Scotland as a whole and stemming it is an important objective of the Scottish Executive. Population decline has been affected by natural decline (death rate exceeding birth rate) and net out-migration. In spite of this population decline, there has continued to be an increase in housing stock, which reflects the national pattern of a reduction in household size with an increasing number of houses being occupied by smaller households. The population estimates produced by the GROS and the Structure Plan forecast a continuing decline in the population of Renfrewshire but with the GROS forecast showing a larger decline. These are shown in Table 1.
- 4.10 The GROS 2002-based projections forecast a continuing net out-migration from Renfrewshire of 600 persons per year, whereas the Structure Plan forecast indicates out migration reducing to zero by around 2012 / 2013 with a small, but increasing level of in-migration thereafter. The Structure Plan estimates that population will continue to decline, albeit at a slower rate, until after 2017 due to natural change (births and deaths), thereafter it is projected to start to increase.

Royal Ordnance Bishopton

- 4.11 Before considering options for the Council it is necessary to take account of the potential development of the Royal Ordnance site at Bishopton (ROB) as the decision on the current proposal to redevelop the ROB site will have major implications for the supply of housing land in Renfrewshire. The Royal Ordnance Bishopton (ROB) site is already identified in both the approved Structure Plan 2000 and the Finalised Renfrewshire Local Plan as a site with longer term development potential. It is not located within the Green Belt but is allocated a specific policy requiring the environmental and future development potential of the site to be assessed, pending which the site is safeguarded for its existing use. As the development of the site has not been approved by the Council it has not been included in the estimate of potential supply of houses outlined in paragraph 4.3 above, so any development which takes place there, as part of the renewal of the site, would count towards the housing shortfall. The exercise of identifying potential sites should therefore

take account of the potential contribution of ROB. In the discussion below, the forecast of housing land supply provides estimates which both include and exclude housing development at ROB. These estimates of capacity and development rates are based on information provided by BAE Systems, the owner of the site, and assume first house completions at ROB during 2008/09, with an annual completion rate of 150 units per year. However if ROB does proceed the start date and the rate of build could vary.

4.12 The Consultative Draft states that the Finalised Structure Plan will include the agreed potential of the ROB site where appropriate by its inclusion in Schedule 1(c) Established Urban Expansion Areas. It is anticipated that an application for planning consent will be submitted at the end of 2005 and a decision on the future redevelopment of the land will be made in relation to the application. In assessing an application for planning consent the Council will take careful account of the concerns of the local Bishopton community. A number of representations have been received from residents in Bishopton and local bodies in response to the Consultative Draft. Two key issues are:- the implications of the treatment of contamination on the ROB site on the health and safety of existing residents and for residents in houses which may be developed on the site; and the implications of the development on the existing village way of life and the extent to which any new residential development will be integrated into the existing community. Bishopton Community Council has raised a number of issues including the strategic demand for housing as well as detailed local issues including:- water service infrastructure; flood management; the level of business land to be provided; impact on the provision of health, educational, social and recreational facilities; the level of retail provision; and transport infrastructure including park and ride facilities at Bishopton Station, and the impact on demand for public transport services. These issues will be fully considered through the determination of the application for planning consent for the redevelopment of the ROB site. In view of the status of the current proposals, it is suggested that the site should be identified as being suitable, in principle, for inclusion in Schedule 1(c) with the final determination of the nature and scale of development being subject to the grant of planning consent for the redevelopment of the site.

4.13 In order to provide an indication of local housing requirements it is necessary to convert population projections to household projections. The full Structure Plan exercise is complex and involves calculation of home based and mobile demand and the use of tiers of housing market areas which cross council boundaries referred to in paragraph 4.5 above. Based on the simplified local assessment of housing supply compared with Structure Plan household projections, Renfrewshire should have sufficient housing supply to accommodate demand at 2010 whether or not ROB proceeds.

However by 2017 a shortfall is projected, even with the development of ROB, but the extent of this will require to be confirmed through the Structure Plan preparation process which may result in higher housing land requirements being identified for 2010 and 2017.

Choices for the Council

- 4.14 The Consultative Draft makes clear that the identified potential sites, including ROB, may not meet the emerging shortfall and that there is a need to consider additional options. All options submitted, including those from development interests submitted in response to consultation exercise will be subject to assessment as described in 4.6 above. The Council has to decide whether it wishes to suggest sites to be included in the assessment process. In deciding, the Council has to consider the benefits of seeking to reduce population decline against the drawbacks associated with the release of Green Belt land. The Council has consistently and successfully supported the Green Belt policy and recently successfully upheld its policy of severely restricting Green Belt land release through the Local Plan Public Local Inquiry held in December 2003 - January 2004. The Renfrewshire Local Plan was based on the 2001/2008 Housing Land Supply, and the Structure Plan Consultative Draft requires the Council to consider the long term development of the area beyond the period of the Local Plan. The Council needs to consider, among other things, the benefits of maintaining a buoyant population in the longer term, which will make best use of the facilities in Renfrewshire and support local business and employment opportunities. The future level of population also has implications for the provision of Council services.
- 4.15 In his response to the Consultative Draft, the Director of Finance has pointed out that the level of population and housing within the Council are key drivers of major income flows to the Council. The Council is currently suffering in terms of revenue support grant which accounts for 80% of the Council's funding as a result of the declining population of the area. The impact of this is a significant grant loss to the Council without any noticeable decline in the demand for levels of service, given economies of scale and the requirement to sustain an appropriate coverage of service provision throughout the area. This clearly brings about significant financial pressures upon the Council to sustain the level and breadth of existing services to a declining population on the back of a declining financial base. He also pointed out that decline in the younger age groups has a particularly severe impact on grant distribution as a fall in this group reduces the share of education related funding which represents the most significant element of grant distribution. He stated that he would welcome a clear and sustainable effort by the Structure Plan to halt population decline within Renfrewshire with a view to supporting the continued delivery of quality services to our customers. The Director of Education and Leisure Services has also indicated a desire to ensure that the current investment in schools will be supported by an appropriate school age population.

Implication and actions proposed

- 4.16 The important contribution which the ROB site would make has already been highlighted. It is recognised that the release of land in the Green Belt has been resisted by the Council and is not likely to be popular with local residents but there is a need to recognise the benefits of identifying sites for release which include:-

- ensuring that options which the council considers to be beneficial are included in the assessment process;
- as a final decision on ROB has not been made by the Council, other options would provide for alternatives or additions to ROB in the longer term;
- ensuring that Renfrewshire makes a contribution to meeting part of the shortfall identified in the Structure Plan Consultative Draft;
- allowing for the assessment of options which will assist in reducing population decline and assist in supporting and making best use of the facilities and infrastructure which currently exist in Renfrewshire;
- reducing the projected fall in the population of Renfrewshire

4.17 The estimated shortfall of 23,000 dwellings will be subject to confirmation through the process of preparing the Finalised Plan and may require to be increased. However the current estimate provides a useful starting point for considering the scale of the release sites which the Council may wish to propose for inclusion in the assessment process. It has already been made clear that the shortfall will not be allocated on a pro-rata basis, but if Renfrewshire were to make a contribution based on the existing number of households it would accommodate approximately 10% of the total shortfall, some 2,300 dwellings. If ROB proceeds at 150 per year this would result in an additional 1,350 houses over the period 2010/17. This would be about 1000 less than the pro-rata number for the period. In view of the increase in the latest population estimates from GROS, the household projections may be revised upwards as part of the preparation of the Finalised Structure Plan, with a consequent increase in housing requirements. It is to be expected that, even taking into account potential development at the ROB site, additional Green Belt land release will require to be accommodated in Renfrewshire to meet part of the housing land requirements identified for the Structure Plan area as a whole. It is therefore proposed that an exercise be undertaken to assess the suitability of locations in Renfrewshire to accommodate Green Belt land release for housing. This will include sites suggested by private interests submitted as part of the Local Plan consultation process and the current consultation on the Structure Plan. The Council will wish to take a cautionary approach to ensure that any land release is limited to meet the identified requirements. It will also wish to ensure that measures are included in the Structure Plan to manage and control any housing land release in the longer term to avoid blight, and to ensure that the location and phasing of development is undertaken in conjunction the provision of infrastructure and takes account future roll forward of demand and supply estimates

Criteria for assessment

4.18 As stated above, the Structure Plan Joint Committee has approved a paper setting out criteria for assessing urban expansion areas. This has been issued as Background Report BR7/05.

Public transport

The Structure Plan aims to support sustainable transport modes and preference will be given to sites which have ready access to rail stations. The background paper recognises that there are locations which have capacity to absorb major development but which have poorer transport links or links which can only be created in the longer term. However, in the first instance accessibility to rail stations should be a key consideration in identifying potential sites.

In summary other criteria include:-

The longer term settlement strategy:- Release sites should:-

- be integral to the urban renewal process
- avoid development of particularly important areas of the Green Belt
- reinforce the role of existing communities
- be deliverable through a controlled programme.
- ensure the stability and endurance of Green Belt boundaries:-

Other issues

Additional issues which also have to be considered are:-

The Structure Plan paper also states that the identification of potential release sites should also consider opportunities which may exist to improve areas of poor environment. It is also essential that sites which are identified are capable of development within the period to 2010 to 2017. It also states a preference for a smaller number of larger sites rather than a proliferation of smaller sites.

4.19 Proposed response to request for suggestions for release.

It is proposed that a study be undertaken, similar to studies being undertaken by the seven other councils which comprise the Joint Committee, to assess the potential for Green Belt release within the Council area. This will allow the sites submitted in response to the Consultative Draft to be assessed against other potential sites based on the criteria set out by the Structure Plan Joint committee. The Board will be advised of the outcome and the results will be fed into the assessment process to be undertaken as part of the preparation of the Finalised Structure Plan.

Preliminary assessment

Access to rail stations

- 4.20 As stated above, the Structure Plan highlights access to the fixed public transport routes as a primary consideration in proposed releases. Map 1 shows the rail stations located in Renfrewshire and land within a 1 Km radius. Of the stations in Renfrewshire there are five which have potential greenfield development sites within 1 kilometre. These are Bishopton, Langbank, Lochwinnoch, Howwood, and Milliken Park, Johnstone.

- 4.21 The ROB proposal at Bishopton has been considered above and in view of this current proposal the Council would not wish to suggest additional locations around Bishopton. The Council has recently rejected proposals for the expansion of Langbank through the Local Plan Public Local Inquiry and the village is not considered to be suitable for substantial housing land release. It is located on a steeply sloping location, and whilst it is located on a rail line it is remote from the main facilities within Renfrewshire. It is located on the same rail line which passes through Bishopton and the impact of any proposals at ROB would require to be taken into account before the Council would wish to propose additional release in the village. It is also a small village and new development of any substantial scale could have a major impact on the community.
- 4.22 Lochwinnoch Station is rather remote from the village and the built up area of the village is more than 1 km from it. Distance by road from the station to the village centre is between 1.3 and 1.5 Km depending on which route is used. In addition the village has, in the recent past, had a number of house completions on two large former industrial sites and a further site close to the village centre has been granted outline consent for residential development and is currently subject to an application for detailed planning consent. It is considered that more suitable options for release exist in other locations as described below.
- 4.23 In terms of access to stations it is considered that an area to the south-west of Johnstone located within reach of Milliken Park Station offers a potential opportunity which merits further assessment through the Structure Plan process. The site lies to the south-west of the Corseford housing estate and St.Cuthbert's High School which is scheduled for closure in June 2005. Preliminary discussions with the Director of Education and Leisure Services have indicated that capacity exists within the existing and proposed new schools which will serve the area. If the Council agrees to propose this location there will be a need to evaluate its potential in detail, in terms of the criteria set out in paragraph 4.18 above and to consider in particular the way in which any proposed development would relate to the renewal initiatives in Johnstone West. In particular it would be essential to ensure that any development would be complimentary to renewal initiatives and would not divert investment in new house building from renewal areas.
- 4.24 Howwood is well placed in respect of access to a rail station. A substantial Green Belt land release was made at Howwood under the Strathclyde Structure Plan 1990 Update. The Reporter to the Local Plan Public Local Inquiry identified a site at Midton Road, Howwood which he recommended be brought forward in preference to any other greenfield site within the plan area, should a shortage of housing land to supply the upper or upper-middle ranges occur during the plan period. However it is considered that, in view of the size of the village and the known difficulties in terms of ground conditions, any release within Howwood would require to be strictly limited. Although any release proposed through the Structure Plan will be at the end of the Local plan period, in view of the Reporter's expressed views, it is considered that the site at Midton Road, Howwood should be considered in the current exercise. It is worthy of note that the Reporter to the Local Plan Public Local Inquiry suggested that the release of the site should be for housing in upper

market sectors. However, Howwood Community Council have advised that whilst they are not seeking additional housing in Howwood, they have requested that any new housing development in the village should include affordable housing and small scale housing specifically for the elderly.

Recommendation on Urban Expansion Areas

4.25 In response to the request by the Joint Structure Plan Committee for the Council to identify urban expansion areas to accommodate the identified shortfall in the supply of land for housing it is recommended that:-

(a) The Royal Ordnance Bishopton site should be identified as being suitable, in principle, for inclusion in Schedule 1(c) with the final determination of the nature and scale of development being subject to the grant of planning consent for the redevelopment of the site.

The Council acknowledges the concerns of the local community in respect of the proposals for the redevelopment of the site and will give careful consideration to the concerns raised during the preparation of the Finalised Plan and in relation to any planning application which is submitted in respect of the development of the site.

(b) The Board notes that further work will be undertaken to assess potential sites which could be considered for Green Belt release if required which will be reported to the Board and will contribute to the assessment process to be undertaken as part of the preparation of the Finalised Structure Plan. This will include further more detailed consideration of land to the south-west of Johnstone which is well located in relation to existing rail links.

(c) The Joint Structure Plan committee should undertake detailed consultation with the Scottish Executive to confirm the final demand and supply assessment and any resultant shortfall to ensure that the level of release proposed conforms to the national planning framework and to ensure that the release included in the Finalised Structure Plan is strictly controlled and limited in scale to meet identified requirements.

(d) The Joint Structure Plan should include measures to manage and control any housing land release in the longer term to avoid blight, and to ensure that the location and phasing of development is undertaken in conjunction the provision of infrastructure and takes account future roll forward of demand and supply estimates.

5 Affordable and social rented housing

5.1 The approved Structure Plan 2000 makes reference to major imbalances in housing tenure in some areas and specifies a number of areas and towns where owner occupied stock is less than 50%. It also makes reference to poor quality stock in some areas and the need to replace these, together with

the opportunities these offer for rebuilding. It also refers to the limited supply of affordable housing in some parts of the Structure Plan area, including the Renfrewshire villages, and recommends that Local Plans should consider the need for action to improve the choice of tenure & cost of housing in these areas. The approved Structure Plan 2000 also encourages private builders to build to varying needs standards.

- 5.2 The Structure Plan Consultative Draft acknowledges the recent Planning Advice Note 74, "Affordable Housing," and the Local Housing Strategies which have been prepared by each council and states that further technical work will be required to determine whether a specific policy on affordable housing is required in the Structure Plan. The problem of availability of affordable housing varies across the Structure plan area. The Council is currently working on the development of policies for affordable housing through the roll forward of the Local Housing Strategy. The problem of the availability of affordable housing varies across Renfrewshire and it is important to distinguish between the nature and scale of problems identified in East Renfrewshire and East Dunbartonshire where there is a shortage across virtually the whole of the council area and the more diverse situation in Renfrewshire. The alteration should therefore emphasise the need for continued monitoring of affordable housing issues and the need to develop policies on affordable housing through local plans which are appropriate to local circumstances and in accordance with Local Housing Strategies.
- 5.3 The Consultative Draft states that any longer term Urban Expansion areas will be required to incorporate a range of house types & tenures; the Council will wish to support this and will seek to secure an appropriate mix taking account of Scottish Planning Policy 3, "Planning and Housing," which seeks to encourage the creation of mixed communities.
- 5.4 The Council will also wish to support the continuing reference in the Consultative Draft to the need to restructure parts of the existing social rented stock and the alteration should continue to support the provision of social rented and affordable housing in these areas.
- 5.5 The Consultative Draft does not make a specific reference to building to varying needs standards, but if Communities Scotland intend to promote shared equity as part of the solution to the affordable housing issue, there will be greater requirement for private developers to be aware of the build standards they will require to meet to be eligible for shared equity schemes. Consideration should therefore be given to supporting the provision of housing for varying needs in the altered plan.

Recommendation - Affordable and Social Rented Housing

- 5.6 **It is recommended that the Structure Plan should:**
- **emphasise the need for continued monitoring of affordable housing issues and support joint working between authorities to develop common approaches in Local Housing Strategies to help to develop policies in local plans which are appropriate to local circumstances;**
 - **acknowledge the varying requirements for affordable housing in different parts of the Structure Plan area and, any reference to this issue in the Finalised Plan should make a clear distinction between**

- requirements for local plan policies in Renfrewshire from those in East Dunbartonshire & East Renfrewshire;
- continue to support the redevelopment of poor quality council stock and support the provision of new social rented & affordable housing in these areas;
- require the urban expansion areas to incorporate a range of house types and tenures to support the creation of mixed communities, where possible encourage a mix of house types in all new housing developments ; and
- support the construction of housing to varying needs standards to satisfy the requirements for funding for shared equity developments.

6 Retailing

6.1 Hierarchy of Town Centres

The Consultative Draft indicates an intention to change policy relating to town centres by moving back to a hierarchical approach which places more importance on the role and status of town centres. It is recommended that the Council should support this proposed approach. The change would mean that when assessing proposals for retail developments in and around town centres, regard would be taken of the role and status of the centres concerned. This should assist in the assessment of such development proposals as the recent proposal for the Pollok Centre regeneration which is very large and will have a substantial potential impact on other centres including Paisley Town Centre.

- 6.2 Glasgow City Centre is recognised as serving a core role for the whole metropolitan area. Because of its unique nature, the extent of further retail development in the City Centre retail area is expected to be determined largely by market forces. A concern has been expressed in the Retail Focus Group that expansion of major retail developments in the City outside the principal retail areas, for example the proposals for Glasgow Harbour, may dilute the strength of the City Centre. It is important for the metropolitan economy that the principal retail area in the City Centre remains the strong focus for retailing in the metropolitan area.
- 6.3 Paisley Town Centre plays a key role in the community and economy of Renfrewshire and it is essential that the Structure Plan reflects this. The Council supports the policies of the Approved Structure Plan 2000 which recognise Paisley as a Town Centre Renewal Area Priority (in Schedule 1(a)), Strategic Business Centre (in Schedule 5 (a)) and Tourism Development Area (in Schedule 5(e)). The identification of Paisley as one of the nine sub-regional centres in the Structure plan area reflects its role in the retail hierarchy and should be supported by the Council.

Recommendation - Hierarchy of Town Centres

- 6.4 **It is recommended that the Council expresses support for the introduction of the town centre hierarchy shown in Diagram 3 in the Consultative Draft which designates Paisley as a sub-regional centre**

and Johnstone, Erskine and Renfrew as local centres. The Council recommends that the Structure Plan policy should:

- **continue to support town centres and Glasgow City centre; and**
- **include a policy structure for the assessment of the acceptability of proposals for retail developments in and around town centres which will require consideration of the scale and appropriateness of the proposal and the likely effects on the vitality and viability of other centres, taking account of the status of the centres in the hierarchy.**

Quality of Town Centres

- 6.6 The Council supports the current Structure Plan policy which encourages urban renewal through redevelopment and development of vacant and under-utilised sites in town centres. The Council recognises that Paisley Town Centre has lost market share to Braehead shopping mall and retail warehouse park and has worked closely with its partners (including Scottish Enterprise Renfrewshire, Communities Scotland, Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce and retailers) through the Paisley Vision Partnership, to enhance the attractiveness of Paisley Town Centre . The partnership has addressed issues relating to economic viability, physical condition, provision of services and ease of access through a programme of measures which have included improvement and maintenance of the environment, promotion of development and services, and improvement of transport infrastructure. In spite of major improvements which have taken place in Paisley Town Centre, the centre requires to attract new development to improve its vitality and viability. Therefore, the Council supports the retention of Paisley Town Centre in Schedule 6 (c) (iv) which recognises an opportunity for further comparison floorspace in Paisley Town Centre to improve its viability and vitality.

Recommendation - Quality of Town Centres

- 6.7 **The Council supports the Structure plan policy to encourage and promote the renewal of town centres through redevelopment and development of vacant and under-utilised sites in town centres. It also supports the retention of Paisley Town centre in Schedule 6(c)(iv) which recognises an opportunity for comparison floorspace in Paisley Town Centre to improve its viability and vitality.**

Braehead and out-of-centre retailing

- 6.8 Braehead retail centre was granted consent on appeal. It was considered to be contrary to development plan policy and is not distinguished in Structure Plan policy from other out-of-centre retail developments such as Blythswood and Abbotsinch retail parks. Clearly the Braehead centre plays an important role in the pattern of retailing in the conurbation. The centre has also played, and continues to play, a key role in the regeneration of the North Renfrew / Braehead area and through this makes an important contribution to the regeneration of the Clyde Waterfront. In view of this it is considered that the centre merits an appropriate form of recognition in the Structure Plan.

- 6.9 Policy for Braehead was considered extensively at the Public Local Inquiry into the Renfrewshire Local Plan and the Reporter recommended a number of major changes to the Local Plan policy on Braehead. On consideration of the Reporter's recommendations, the Council took the view that the nature of the change which he proposed was premature pending the outcome of the current alteration of the Structure Plan. At the meeting of 24 May 2005 the Board agreed to modify the Local Plan policy which applies to the area of the Braehead shopping mall and indoor sports area, making it more positive in support of retail proposals which accord with Structure Plan policy. The Braehead retail warehouse park will be covered by the policy relating to out-of-centre retail parks.
- 6.10 The Council is aware of the impact of out-of-centre retailing on town centres. It generally supports the policy approach of the Structure Plan 2000 regarding out-of-centre retailing and is keen to ensure that development at Braehead does not have an unacceptable impact on existing town centres. However, in view of the important role it plays in the pattern of shopping and in the regeneration of the area it is considered that the Structure Plan should provide a degree of recognition to the Braehead Retail and Leisure Centre, through the sequential approach to retailing and other Town Centre uses, and also in the assessment of the impact of new retail developments. The Retail Park at Braehead is identified in the Local Plan as an out-of-centre retail warehouse park, and designated under the same policy as other retail parks at Blythswood, Abbotsinch and Phoenix. It is important that any change to the status of the Braehead Retail and Leisure Centre is not extended to include the retail park area.

Recommendation - Braehead

- 6.11 **It is recommended that the Structure Plan should give recognition to the Braehead Retail and Leisure Centre appropriate to its role in the retail pattern in Renfrewshire and the conurbation and their role in the regeneration of the Clyde Waterfront. It is suggested that consideration should be given to adding a reference to these in the sequential approach to retailing and other Town Centre uses and also in the assessment of the impact of new developments. Specifically, it is suggested that if no suitable sites or buildings suitable for conversion for a Class 1 retail development proposal are available in town centres or on edge-of-centre sites, the sequential approach, as set out in Schedule 6(c)(ii), should consider the Braehead shopping mall and indoor sports area in preference to other out-of-centre locations. Also, the impact on the Braehead shopping mall and indoor sports area should be taken into account when assessing the acceptability of major retail proposals as set out in the second bullet of Schedule 6(c)(i).**

7 Green Network

- 7.1 The approach to the promotion of the Green Network at the strategic level is set out in technical report TR 5/05 which has been issued as part of the consultation exercise. This includes an appropriate emphasis on local planning and greening initiatives for the promotion of action. The Council will wish to endorse the approach suggested in the Consultative Daft. As a point

of detail, the Consultative Draft introduces the Bishopton forest park paragraph 3.3 (iii) bullet point 4. This potential is also identified in the BAE Systems proposals for the regeneration of the Royal Ordnance Bishopton (ROB) site (see report by BAE Consultants Cass, BR 4/05). It is acknowledged that the proposals are at an early stage and will require to be considered by the Council as part of the overall proposals for the regeneration of the ROB site. However, there is a need to make more clear the area to which the forest park initiative relates. Within the Consultative Draft, Diagram 6 - the Green Network- appears to indicate an area extending south from the River Clyde, west of Erskine to the northern part of Royal Ordnance. The reference made in the background report on the ROB is within the southern part of the ROB site. There is a need ensure that Diagram 6 provides an accurate representation of the proposals for the proposed forest park.

Green Network - Recommendation

7.2 It is recommended that the reference to the Bishopton Forest Park and its relation to Bishopton and the Green Network is clarified in the Finalised Plan

8 Flooding

8.1 Since the preparation of the approved Structure Plan 2000 a good deal of progress has been made both in understanding the problems of flooding and in the development of policy and action. In particular Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 7, Planning and Flooding, has been issued by the Scottish Executive and the Structure Plan is required to conform to this policy document. The Consultative Draft proposes alterations to Policy 9 B (viii) which aim explicitly to avoid the risk of flooding from all sources and safeguard the functional flood plain. This accords with SPP 7 and the Council will wish to endorse this proposed alteration. However there will be a requirement to alter the supporting text in the Finalised Plan. In particular the following matters should be addressed in the text:

- the application of the Flood Risk Framework,
- the approach to the protection of the flood plain
- climate change
- drainage related flooding matters and,
- the relationship between the Structure Plan and emerging River Basin Management Plan and responsibility for sustainable flood management.

Flooding - Recommendation

8.2 In respect of flooding, it is recommended that the Council endorse the proposed alteration to Policy, and suggest that the matters listed above be included in the Finalised Plan

9 Water Service Infrastructure

9.1 The Board will be aware of the problems which exist in respect of constraints from Scottish Water infrastructure. The Council is actively engaged in trying to resolve these issues and has worked directly with Scottish Water and

through COSLA to pursue these matters. In particular the Council has contributed to the preparation of Scottish Water's investment programme, Quality and Standards (Q&S) III. The Council should welcome the emphasis made in the Consultative Draft on the need to remove constraints upon water service infrastructure and endorse the proposal to use the Finalised 2005 Plan to give more explicit guidance on the roll out of Q&S III in the post 2010 period and that the Finalised 2005 Plan will identify any necessary action to deliver the strategic development priorities.

- 9.2 In relation to the identification of priorities for investment, the Council will wish to emphasise the critical importance of preparing strategic area drainage plans which will provide a detailed understanding of strategic drainage issues and will form the basis for investment by public and private bodies. The Council will wish to highlight the Johnstone and Paisley catchments within Renfrewshire as particular priorities for action in this regard. Significant infrastructure constraints are prevalent in both areas affecting the delivery of strategic development priorities. The Council's Interreg project and Scottish Water's Drainage Area Plans have increased understanding of the drainage network and of possible sustainable solutions to interrelated problems of under capacity in the sewer network, watercourse flooding and pollution. These preliminary investigations could be positively taken forward by Strategic Area Drainage Plans and by the identification of opportunities for integrated action.

Recommendation - Water Service Infrastructure

- 9.3 **It is recommended that the Council welcomes the emphasis made in the Consultative Draft on the need to remove constraints upon water service infrastructure and endorse the proposal to use the Finalised 2005 Plan to give more explicit guidance on the roll out of Q&S III. It also advises that priority should be given to the preparation of strategic area drainage plans and highlights the Johnstone and Paisley catchments as priorities for the preparation of such plans.**

10 Area Waste Plan

- 10.1 The Consultative Draft proposes to adjust the Structure Plan by adding the need to implement the Area Waste Plan. This should be supported by the Council, but any substantial progress in terms of identifying strategic waste requirements will be dependent on the outcome of the current strategic options exercise being co-ordinated by SEPA. This is unlikely to reach a conclusion in the immediate future. The Structure Plan therefore recognises the need for a possible future alteration to deal with the matter. The Head of Consumer Services has advised that the sustained growth strategy embodied in the Consultative Draft which will involve business and population growth will bring with them the need for infrastructure to handle waste management and disposal and resource recovery and recycling. What needs to be done in relation to waste should not be viewed separately but rather as a complementary and component requirement of the growth strategy.
- 10.2 For clarification it is noted that although the body of the text of the Consultative Draft refers to implementing the "Area Waste Plan", the change

to Strategic Plan policy 9(C)(viii) refers to the need to implement the “waste hierarchy as defined in the National Waste Plan.” For consistency, reference should be made to the “Area Waste Plan.”

Recommendation - Area Waste Plan

10.3 **It is recommended that the Council supports the approach proposed in respect of the Area Waste Plan and advises the Joint Committee that the growth in business and population arising from the sustained growth strategy should be incorporated in the assessment of requirements in the Area Waste Plan.**

11 Renewable Energy from Wind Sources

11.1 The Consultative Draft identifies potential search areas for windfarms which are all outwith Renfrewshire. The Council will wish to note this.

Recommendation - Renewable Energy from Wind Sources

11.2 **It is recommended that the Council notes that a number of search areas for windfarms have been identified, none of which are within Renfrewshire.**

12 **Transport**

Glasgow Airport

12.1 The Consultative Draft covers a number of transport matters of importance to Renfrewshire. It highlights the need for improved transport facilities to help in the delivery of the agenda for sustained growth including easier access through Glasgow City Centre and to Glasgow Airport. Measures to assist in this include the established priorities of the Glasgow Airport rail link, the CrossRail project, and the upgrade of the M8 (Junctions 26 -29 in particular.). The Council should bring to the attention of the Joint Structure Plan Committee that BAA will be issuing a Draft Masterplan which will cover the development of the airport to 2015 with a longer term view to 2030. An alteration has been made to the Approved Structure Plan 2000 by the Joint Structure Plan committee to accord with government policy on the future development of airports as set out in the White paper, “The Future of Air Transport.” It is anticipated that this will be incorporated into the Structure Plan through the alteration procedure. The Joint Committee should take account of the Draft Airport Masterplan during the preparation of the Finalised Structure Plan. In addition to the improvement of the M8 particular attention should be given to the need for improved surface access to the airport especially from the M8.

Recommendation - Glasgow Airport

12.2 **It is recommended that the Joint Structure Plan Committee takes account of the Draft Masterplan for Glasgow Airport in the preparation**

of the plan and that particular attention is given to the need for improved surface access to the airport especially from the M8.

Parking

- 12.3 The Consultative Draft advises that a joint parking strategy is being developed by the WESTRANS / SPT partnership. The Council has supported this in its involvement in WESTRANS and it is suggested that the Committee will wish to note this.

Recommendation - Parking

- 12.4 **It is recommended that the Council note the development of a joint parking strategy by the WESTRANS / SPT partnership**

Mass Transit

- 12.5 The Consultative Draft states that the development of a new mass transit network across the conurbation is to be assessed by Strathclyde Passenger Transport. The Council will wish to ensure that Renfrewshire is included in this assessment and that, in particular, in the implementation of a mass transit system Renfrew and Renfrew Riverside / Braehead are linked at an early stage.

Recommendation - Mass Transit

- 12.6 **It is recommended that Renfrewshire should be included in the assessment of a mass transit network and, in particular, the Council will seek to ensure that, in the implementation of a mass transit system, Renfrew and Renfrew Riverside / Braehead are linked at an early stage.**

Implications of this Report

- 1 **Financial Implications** - There are no immediate financial implications of this report however comments made by the Director of Finance & I.T. noted in paragraph 4.16 are relevant.
- 2 **Personnel Implications** - None
- 3 **Community Plan Implications**

Social inclusion - None

Modernising government - None

Sustainable development - The Structure plan provides the framework for strategic planning in Renfrewshire and across the Glasgow and Clyde Valley area. It is a key document in the promotion and achievement of sustainable development. It is therefore essential that it is kept up-to-date and relevant. The alteration to the Plan will secure this.

- 4 **Legal Implications** - None
- 5 **Property Implications** - None
- 6 **Information Technology Implications** - None
- 7 **Equal Opportunities Implications** - None