



Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Non Technical Summary Environmental Report 2019



Renfrewshire
Council

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment contained in the Updated Environmental Report that has been carried out in tandem with the preparation of the Renfrewshire Proposed Local Development Plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Process

The overall aim of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process is to ensure that the environment is given the same level of consideration as social and economic factors when preparing a Local Development Plan. The key stages of this Strategic Environmental Assessment are:

- Scoping;
- Preparation of an Environmental Report; and,
- Production of a post- adoption statement.

The Environmental Report illustrates how Renfrewshire Council has assessed the potential effects of the Renfrewshire Proposed Local Development Plan on the environment; how the environmental assessment has influenced the development of policies and proposals; and, how these policies and proposals ensure that any effects can be mitigated.

Throughout this Strategic Environmental Assessment process the Council have taken the views of key stakeholders into consideration.



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Scope of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan

The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan was adopted on 28 August 2014. The process of preparing a new Renfrewshire Local Development Plan commenced in 2016. The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Main Issues Report was published in 2017 and concentrated on the main changes that had taken place since 2014 and the key opportunities for future development.

Following consultation on the Main Issues Report and Environmental Report, preparation of the Proposed Plan began. Environmental assessment of the emerging policies was carried out simultaneously with development of the policies and has informed the Proposed Plan which is being consulted upon alongside the updated Environmental Report.

Baseline Environmental Data

The collation of baseline environmental data is an important part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process as it provides a snapshot of the environment at that point in time; highlights existing environmental issues; and can be used to predict potential future impacts that the implementation of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan will have on the environment. It also directly informs the development of Strategic Environmental Assessment objectives which the Proposed Plan is assessed against.

The Environmental Report contains a summary of environmental baseline information.

Environmental Considerations

The Environmental Report provides an evaluation of the baseline data and the associated environmental considerations. The environmental considerations outlined in the Environmental Report help facilitate the development of the Environmental Objectives for the Strategic Environmental Assessment and frame appropriate questions for the Policy and Site Assessments used within the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of the Main Issues Report

The Strategic Environmental Assessment process is required to assess the likely impact on the environment if the Local Development Plan were not implemented. As the review of the Local Development Plan is a legislative requirement, the non implementation of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan is unlikely.

Scoping of the Issues to be considered in the Strategic Environmental Assessment

The Proposed Plan is a land use planning document; therefore, it is likely to have an impact on all of the following environmental receptors, biodiversity, flora and fauna, historic Scotland environment, material assets, air, water, climatic factors, landscape, population and human health and soil. These impacts and potential mitigation are considered through an assessment of Spatial Strategy and Policy framework.

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Assessment Methodology

The figure below illustrates the methodology used in the Environmental Assessment. The Environmental Assessment considers the findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the existing 2014 Local Development Plan and the Main Issues Report alongside assessing the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan. In addition, to assessing the Spatial Strategy and policy framework contained in the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan, an environmental assessment was undertaken on all proposed sites and policy designations. The findings of these assessments are presented in addendums to the main Environmental report: Addendum 3 – Housing Assessment, Addendum 4 – Economic Investment Locations and Strategic Freight Hubs, Addendum 5 – Transition Areas and Addendum 6 – Network of Centres.



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Environmental Assessment

The Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Plan considers the impact that the Spatial Strategy and the Policy Framework will have on biodiversity, flora and fauna, historic Scotland environment, material assets, air, water, climatic factors, landscape, population and human health and soil. The assessment of the policies considers the locational impact of site specific policies and whether the effects described are likely to be, short, medium or long term. Mitigation is also identified. All proposed sites and policy designations sites have been assessed.

The main conclusions that have been reached through undertaking the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Plan are as follows:

Spatial Strategy

The environmental assessment confirmed that the environment was central to the overall aims of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan. The policies within the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan provide the balance between the need to protect and enhance the environment and the quality of life within Renfrewshire as well as promoting development activity and investment. The policies and proposals aim to direct development to previously developed sites, concentrating on existing built up areas which are sustainable, therefore protecting the environmental assets and resources.

Economy

The key aim when developing the policies for the Economy section of the Proposed Plan was to create a framework that would deliver inclusive economic growth sustainably.

Delivering development within Renfrewshire's Economic Investment Locations ensures that developments are in locations served by public transport thus helping reduce emissions and the reliance on private vehicles.

The City Deal Investment Framework Policy recognises the significant regeneration and economic benefits that the City Deal Investment will deliver. The City Deal Projects are designed to enhance and increase connectivity in and around Glasgow Airport and Renfrewshire's Economic Investment Locations. Cumulatively, this is likely to assist movement and access around the region helping to develop land which is vacant, derelict or under used directing development to sustainable locations. The Environmental Assessments undertaken at project level have identified required mitigation to ensure that there are no significant adverse effects and the benefits of City Deal investment help balance any possible negative impacts associated with the infrastructure developments.

Centres

The Local Development Plan places Centres at the heart of the communities. The Centre Policies ensure that Renfrewshire Centres offer a range and choice of uses, activities and functions and are vibrant, well designed and accessible places. Utilising a town centres first approach supports uses which contribute positively to the economic, social and cultural life of centres and which improve the quality of offer, create sustainable mixed communities and reduce the need to travel. The Town Centre first approach ensures that the right development is directed to the right locations within Renfrewshire.

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Infrastructure

The Infrastructure policies ensure people and places are well connected and investment in infrastructure is made in the right place and at the right time to enable and support development opportunities and sustainable inclusive economic growth. The implementation of new infrastructure to support development can have a significant negative impact on the environment, therefore the emphasis of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan is to locate new development in areas where there is existing infrastructure. The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan also recognises the importance of City Deal investment to the future economic growth of Renfrewshire and Scotland and provides a flexible and ambitious framework to maximise the potential economic and regenerative opportunities resulting from this investment.

Places

The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan promotes the delivery of sustainable mixed communities with a focus on available brownfield land and previously used land to meet the majority of Renfrewshire's Housing Land Requirements. In particular there is an emphasis on the continued delivery of Renfrewshire's Community Growth Areas at Dargavel Village, Bishopton and Johnstone South West. Ensuring place making plays an important role by providing a mix of physical, economic, social and environmental enhancements within existing and new residential areas enables the creation of good places to live.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment has demonstrated that identifying further housing sites at Dargavel Village will help reduce the need to allocate additional housing sites in the greenbelt across Renfrewshire which are likely to be in less sustainable locations and reduce the likelihood of potential cumulative effects. New housing development through a master planned approach at Paisley South provides an opportunity to integrate mitigation including sensitive design and offers the opportunity to enhance access to pedestrian, cycle and public transport networks, incorporate low carbon technologies and promotes an integrated approach to the protection of the water environment.

Environment

The Environment section of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan reflects the importance Renfrewshire's built and natural environment. The environmental policies protect habitats and species of local, national and international importance and a Habitats Regulations Appraisal of the Plan has also been carried out. Where policies could affect biodiversity, special requirements are included to ensure that proper assessment is made of the environmental consequences of development.

The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan built and cultural heritage policy seeks to protect and promote Renfrewshire's distinctive historic environment and cultural heritage. The policy will assist in the retention and creation of quality places without compromising the integrity of cultural assets.

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Under the Water Framework Directive, the Council have a duty to protect and, where possible, improve Renfrewshire's water environment. The water environment policy safeguards the water environment and ensures that there is no deterioration in the current ecological status. The policy scores positively ensuring the enhancement of biodiversity, flora and fauna surrounding blue corridors.

Enhancement and Mitigation

Where negative impacts have been identified in the Environmental Assessment, the need for mitigatory measures has been indicated along with suggestions of what could be undertaken where this is possible. An indication of where cumulative or synergistic effects may occur has also been considered and possible mitigatory measures outlined.

Monitoring

Following the adoption of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan, the Council is required to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan. The monitoring should enable the identification of significant environmental effects arising from the implementation of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan and any unforeseen effects, in order to allow remedial action to be taken where required.

Consultation

The updated Environmental Report is published for public and statutory consultation at the same time as the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan. The consultation period commences on the 18th March and runs for a period of 12 weeks until the 10th June to allow for representations to be made in respect of the updated Environmental Report

How to respond

By email to: localplanconsultation@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Or in writing to: Strategy and Plan Team
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