

# SEA Screening Report – Cover Note

## Cover Note – Section 1

To: [SEA.gateway@scotland.gis.gov.uk](mailto:SEA.gateway@scotland.gis.gov.uk)  
Or  
William Carling, SEA Gateway Manager  
SEA Gateway  
Scottish Executive  
Area1 H (bridge)  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

## Cover Note – Section 2

An SEA screening report is attached for the plan/programme entitled:-

South Ayrshire Council Core Path Plan

The Responsible Authority is:-

South Ayrshire Council

## Complete Section 3, 4 or 5

### Cover Note – Section 3

Screening is required because the plan/programme falls under Regulation 9© or Regulation 10 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Scotland) Regulations 2004. Our view is that:-

An SEA is required because the plan/ programme is likely to have significant environmental effects

Or

An SEA is not required because the plan/ programme is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects

### Cover Note – Section 4

The plan/ programme does not require an SEA under the Regulations. However, we wish to carry out an SEA on a voluntary basis. We accept that, because this SEA is voluntary, the statutory 28-day timescale for views from the Consultation Authorities cannot be guaranteed.

### Cover Note – Section 5

None of the above apply. We have prepared this screening report because:-

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# SEA Screening Report – Cover Note (continued)

## Cover Note – Section 6

Contact Name

Fiona Ross

Job Title

Environment Strategy Officer

Contact Address

South Ayrshire Council  
Sustainable Development Team  
Burns House  
Burns Statue Square  
Ayr  
KA7 1UT

Contact Tel. No.

01292 616673

Contact e-mail

fiona.ross@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

## Cover Note – Section 7

Signature

Date

## Screening Report – Section 1, Key Facts

Responsible Authority

South Ayrshire Council

Title of Plan/ Programme

Core Path Plan

Plan purpose

- To provide a framework of routes sufficient for the purposes of giving the public reasonable access throughout South Ayrshire
- To identify links with and support other wider networks e.g. Sustrans, National Cycle Network, neighbouring authorities routes
- To promote access for all, at the same time promoting the lifestyle and health benefits as well as sustainable and environmental issues
- To develop links with landowners & managers to ensure a network of access routes that minimise conflict of interests
- To identify potential new routes

What prompted the plan e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision?

The preparation of a Core Path Plan by each responsible authority is a legislative requirement as detailed in the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 Chapter 5, 17 (1).

The draft Core Path Plan must be completed by 9<sup>th</sup> February 2008

Plan subject e.g. transport

Public Access to Land

Period covered by plan

10 years approx., unless changes to circumstances require an earlier review

Frequency of plan updates

As circumstances dictate

Plan area (e.g. sq. kms.)

1095 sq kms

Summary of nature/ content of plan

NATURE: The Core Path Plan will identify a basic framework of outdoor access routes for all categories of user that will be sufficient for the purpose of giving the public reasonable opportunities for access throughout South Ayrshire. These routes will connect into, and support, wider path networks and will be significant in meeting the defined objectives of the Core Pat Plan (see attached).

CONTENT: The Plan will consist of maps illustrating clearly the Core Paths within their geographical context ; a definitive list of all designated Core Paths, possibly including data on path lengths ; and supporting text providing a reasoned justification for the selection of Core Paths, as well as an explanation of the Council's responsibilities for access and Core Paths, the relationship of the Core Path Plan to the Council's Access Strategy, South Ayrshire Local Plan etc. and criteria for and process of, selecting Core Paths.

The Plan will link to existing policies and strategies e.g. South Ayrshire Local Plan, South Ayrshire Community Plan and the South Ayrshire Sustainable Transport Strategy as well as having the potential to influence new policies and strategies.

Are there any proposed plan Objectives

YES

NO

Copy of objectives Attached

YES

NO

Date

## SEA Screening Report – Section 2 Considering The Likely Significance Of Effects On The Environment

Our determinations regarding the likely significance of effects on the environment of The South Ayrshire Core Path Plan are set out in table 1

**Table 1 – Likely Significance Of Effects On The Environment**

TITLE OF PLAN/ PROGRAMME

South Ayrshire Core Path Plan
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RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY

South Ayrshire Council
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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (para. Numbers refer to Schedule 1 of the regulations)	Likely to have significant environmental effect? YES / NO	Summery of significant environmental effects
1(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	YES	The Core Path Plan sets the framework for the development of a network of outdoor access routes within South Ayrshire. The Plan sets out the proposals in terms of location, number and type of access routes. The creation of which is likely to have significant environmental effects on South Ayrshire
1(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	YES	The Core Path Plan plan will have a significant influence on other plans such as the South Ayrshire Access Strategy, the South Ayrshire Sustainable Transport Strategy, the South Ayrshire Local Plan
1(c ) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	YES	<p>The Core Path Plan has direct links to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Ayrshire and Arran Local Health Plan – specifically encouraging people to increase their weekly exercise</li> <li>• South Ayrshire Council Business Plan (2004) has a key objective to work in partnership with NHS Ayrshire&amp; Arran to help improve the health of people living in South Ayrshire</li> <li>• Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan – Transport Policy T1 is strongly weighted in favour of walking, cycling &amp; public transport</li> <li>• Finalised South Ayrshire Local Plan (2002) – Supports sustainable transport and the commitment in new developments to encouraging a wide range of transport options,</li> </ul>

		<p>especially walking and cycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Ayrshire Council Business Plan 2002/3-5 sets out 6 main priorities, which underpin the work of the Council. These strongly relate to the key elements identified as relating to access within the area. The Business Plan includes priorities relating to a focus on access to services, leisure opportunities and health, which will be supported by the improvement of access in South Ayrshire.</li> </ul>
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	YES	<p>Ensuring that access routes and ancillary furniture are fit for purpose while being sympathetic to the area(s) of location.</p> <p>Construction of routes where access is limited and in isolated areas.</p> <p>Potential impact on built or natural heritage resources e.g. landscape character, flora &amp; fauna</p> <p>The increase of use of areas through the creation and promotion of routes, therefore causing pressure on the surrounding environment and the possible requirement to monitor numbers and damage to the local.</p>
1(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	NO	
2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	YES	<p>Depending on the requirements of the community, the construction type and construction of routes in remote areas there is likely to be a number of short term environmental effects. There is also the likelihood to be some medium and longer term environmental effects e.g. in relation to usage and the need to construct facilities such as car-parking, these are likely to be less readily reversed.</p>
2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	YES	<p>The cumulative effects are two fold (1) the number of access routes created &amp; the potential effect on the landscape &amp; biodiversity (2) the potential increase in the number of people accessing routes &amp; the damage that will occur.</p>
2(c) transboundary nature of the effects (i.e. environmental effects on other EU Member States)	NO	
2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	NO	
2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size)	YES	<p>The Plan refers to the whole of South Ayrshire – however if the total area of access routes were to be calculated it may</p>

of the population likely to be affected)		well be quite small, though due to their location the routes may create a disproportionate number of environmental effects both through the creation of and thereafter use of e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alteration to natural ground drainage</li> <li>• Disturbance / damage / destruction of habitats and or species</li> <li>• Loss of land e.g requirement for car parking.</li> <li>• Potential to affect approx 112,000 people</li> </ul>
2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</li> <li>(ii) exceeds environmental quality standards or limit values; or</li> <li>(iii) intensive land-use</li> </ul>	NO	
2(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	NO	

**Table 2 – Summary**

The production of the Core Path Plan is a requirement of each Responsible Authority under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The Plan is the identification, through wide ranging consultation, of a framework of access routes throughout South Ayrshire. The routes should reflect the needs and wants of local people & visitors alike while taking into consideration the need for access for all categories of user.

Routes both existing and proposed will cover urban and rural areas alike and link to where relevant to existing and proposed routes of other organisations and local authorities e.g. Sustrans, neighbouring local authority(s).

It is anticipated that the Plan will influence a number of existing Policy, Plans & Programmes and link into the delivery of yet others (please see above for details).

The exact environmental impact on South Ayrshire due to the implementation of the framework can only be estimated. The area of influence is large though the actual area of development may only form a small percentage of the whole. Environmental effects will fall into two sectors those caused by construction and those caused by usage. Potential environmental effects include loss of land; impact on landscape character / scenic quality; disturbance of, damage to and / or destruction of flora & fauna together with increased pressure on the environment

# South Ayrshire Core Path Plan

## OBJECTIVES

- To identify paths which will link and support wider path networks
- To contribute to achieving key objectives as identified in the South Ayrshire Outdoor Access Strategy such as health, sustainable transport, tourism and economic development.
- To illustrate a path system, which will be achievable and sustainable
- To identify opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding access for all abilities.
- To include paths, which will be close to where people live with particular emphasis around settlements