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## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

8 September 2020

### Cabinet

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	To seek approval of the Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy for Ayrshire, prepared jointly by North, East and South Ayrshire Councils.
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Approves the Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy for Ayrshire; and</li><li>b) Delegates authority to the Executive Director for Place to make any final changes ahead of submission to the Scottish Government.</li></ul>

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### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In November 2019, Cabinet agreed that the Council would work collaboratively with East and South Ayrshire Councils to prepare an Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 1.2 The purpose of an Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy is, primarily, to inform the Scottish Government in its preparation of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4); highlighting Ayrshire's regional strategic development priorities. This is in addition to North Ayrshire Council's response to the Scottish Government's NPF4 'Call for Ideas' consultation, approved by the Chief Executive under the emergency governance procedures and submitted in April 2020.
- 1.3 The indicative strategy precedes the preparation of a fully-fledged spatial strategy for the region that reflects and develops on existing partnerships and the spatial themes and issues identified as important for Ayrshire. The indicative strategy proposes a future vision; outcomes related to five main themes: people, place, connectivity, economy and climate change; and strategic development priorities that will help deliver these outcomes.
- 1.4 The Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy is not a strategy in its own right and will have no status in decision making, beyond informing NPF4. Once the relevant section of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 comes into force (expected to be summer 2022), we must adopt a Regional Spatial Strategy "as soon as reasonably practicable". Scottish Ministers and the planning authority subsequently must have regard to the adopted Regional Spatial Strategy when preparing, revising or amending the National Planning Framework and Local Development Plan respectively.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, establishes a new duty for a planning authority, or authorities acting jointly, to prepare and adopt a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). RSS replace Strategic Development Plans, which were prepared for city regions only. RSS are to be long-term spatial strategies which specify the area(s) to which they relate and identify:
- the need for strategic development;
  - the outcomes to which strategic development will contribute;
  - priorities for the delivery of strategic development;
  - proposed locations for strategic development, shown in the form of a map or diagram.
- 2.2 Strategic development is defined in the Act as “development that is likely to have a significant impact on future development within the area of more than one planning authority”.
- 2.3 The statutory duty to produce RSS will not be enacted until spring/summer 2022 and it is recognised that it may take some time after this for fully finalised RSS to emerge. The Scottish Government has, however, identified the current review of National Planning Framework (NPF) - a long term plan for Scotland to 2050 that sets out where development and infrastructure is needed to support sustainable and inclusive growth – as an opportunity for early thinking on RSS to be developed and to help inform NPF4. Accordingly, planning authorities were invited to prepare Indicative Regional Spatial Strategies (iRSS) to inform the regional priorities to be built into NPF4 and to make early progress ahead of the statutory duty to prepare RSS coming into force. In November 2019, Cabinet agreed that officers will work collaboratively with colleagues in East and South Ayrshire Councils to prepare an iRSS.
- 2.4 Authorities have been given considerable leeway to decide for themselves the form, content and how best to develop their iRSS to allow them to ensure their regional priorities can be reflected in NPF4.
- 2.5 Several meetings with officers from the three Councils; an internal workshop with selected NAC service leads and a meeting with the Scottish Government Chief Planner were held prior to ‘lockdown’ in mid-March. During the COVID-19 crisis, the lead officers from the three authorities have been working to develop the draft iRSS now presented for approval in Appendix 1 to this report. Opportunities for further engagement have been limited by the pandemic.
- 2.6 The iRSS that has been prepared proposes a future vision; outcomes related to five main themes: people, place, connectivity, economy and climate change; and strategic development priorities that will help deliver these outcomes. The iRSS reflects the aspirations and projects of the Ayrshire Growth Deal and the workstreams under development by the Ayrshire Regional Economic Partnership. It also reflects the physical planning priorities as set out in the recently approved LDP2 and similarly for respective Local Development Plans in East and South Ayrshire. Consideration has also been given to the impact of COVID-19 on the regional economy, already the least resilient economy in Scotland and how new approaches to building back better, addressing the challenges of climate change, inequality, the importance of health and

well-being and how we channel Community Wealth Building approaches into the development of the RSS.

### **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the iRSS and its submission to the Scottish Government ahead of the mid-September deadline. Delegated authority for the Executive Director is also sought to make any changes required ahead of submission of iRSS to the Scottish Government once approval has been given by all three authorities.

### **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

#### **Financial**

- 4.1 Scottish Government provided £5000 of funding support to assist with the preparation of NPF4 and iRSS.

#### **Human Resources**

- 4.2 There are no implications from this report.

#### **Legal**

- 4.3 The legal duty to prepare RSS is expected to come into force in summer 2022.

#### **Equality/Socio-economic**

- 4.4 The iRSS proposes that a regional spatial strategy for Ayrshire should put its communities and people, at its heart. The RSS will be developed in accordance with the Council's inclusive economic approaches and seek Scottish Government support for proposals that address regional inequality.

#### **Environmental and Sustainability**

- 4.5 RSS will support regional policy and projects that address climate change to create a low-carbon, resilient region.

#### **Key Priorities**

- 4.6 The RSS will align with wider national priorities, programmes and strategies and the Council's key priorities, including a sustainable environment; affordable, modern and well-designed homes; and effective infrastructure.

#### **Community Wealth Building**

- 4.7 The iRSS highlights that community wealth building lies at the heart of a shared ambition to tackle inequalities and enhance the wellbeing of our people and our communities. As the RSS (and next Local Development Plan) are developed, we will explore spatial planning's role in community wealth building.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 As this is an indicative strategy, there are no external consultation requirements or expectations from Scottish Government. NHS Ayrshire & Arran have been consulted regarding the 'Caring for Ayrshire' Programme and it is proposed that the report will be presented at the Regional Economic Partnership for information and comment.

RUSSELL McCUTCHEON  
Executive Director (Place)

For further information please contact **Alistair Gemmell, Strategic Planning Manager**, on **01294 324021**.

### **Background Papers**

Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy

# INDICATIVE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR AYRSHIRE

AUGUST 2020



# PREFACE AND CONTEXT

- The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, establishes a duty for a planning authority, or authorities acting jointly, to prepare and adopt a regional spatial strategy. Regional Spatial Strategies are long-term spatial strategies which specify the area(s) to which they relate and identify:
  - the need for strategic development
  - the outcomes to which strategic development will contribute
  - priorities for the delivery of strategic development
  - proposed locations for strategic development, shown in the form of a map or diagram
- Strategic development is “development that is likely to have a significant impact on future development within the area of more than one planning authority”.
- This document is an indicative Regional Spatial Strategy (iRSS) for Ayrshire, the first step in preparing a fully-fledged spatial strategy for the region that reflects and develops on existing partnerships and the spatial themes and issues identified as important for Ayrshire.

- The Scottish Government are undertaking a review of the National Planning Framework (NPF); this represents an opportunity for early thinking on regional spatial strategies which in-turn will help inform NPF4.
- This indicative RSS for Ayrshire will contribute to the discussion about Ayrshire’s future over the next 10 to 30 years and beyond. It examines the need for major development, where it can be best located and how it can be delivered to support Ayrshire's aspirations and those of its communities.
- It offers the opportunity for the three Ayrshire Councils to have their strategic development priorities recognised as embedded in NPF4, thereby giving them enhanced status in planning and investment decision-making.
- Reflecting the geography of the Ayrshire Growth Deal, the Ayrshire Regional Economic Partnership and East, North and South Ayrshire Councils’ previous experience of working together on strategic, land-use planning matters, the preparation of an RSS for Ayrshire provides a unique opportunity for Ayrshire to set out in one, concise document a clear spatial strategy for its future development.

# AYRSHIRE

Ayrshire has a population of 370,000.

A region in its own right, strong cultural and economic links with the Glasgow city region make Ayrshire part of Scotland’s largest economy and a larger region of Scotland which is home to over 2 million people.

While Scotland has experienced consistent population growth over the last 10 years, Ayrshire’s population has remained largely unchanged.

60% of the population lives in our largest urban areas (settlements with a population over 10,000) while around 7% live in rural areas or places where less than 1,000 people live, including the islands of Arran and Great Cumbrae.

This indicative spatial strategy comes at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic is predicted to give rise to one of the deepest recessions of modern times with profound effects on the local, regional, national and global economy.

Evidence is already emerging that the impact of the pandemic will not be equal across Scotland; but is likely to have a disproportionately negative impact on regions, like Ayrshire, with lower economic resilience and stubborn levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality.



# VISION

Ayrshire is a well-connected, low carbon place, with a thriving, inclusive economy, founded on the area’s high quality built and natural environment and vibrant, inclusive, just and healthy communities.

A regional spatial strategy should put Ayrshire’s communities, its **people**, at its heart.

It should be about **place**, acknowledging that successful places are those that are built, first and foremost, around people.

The **connectivity** between people, places and services, physical and digital, will be vital to our strategy.

Recent events underline the need for a more inclusive **economy**; we must build back better, fairer and greener.

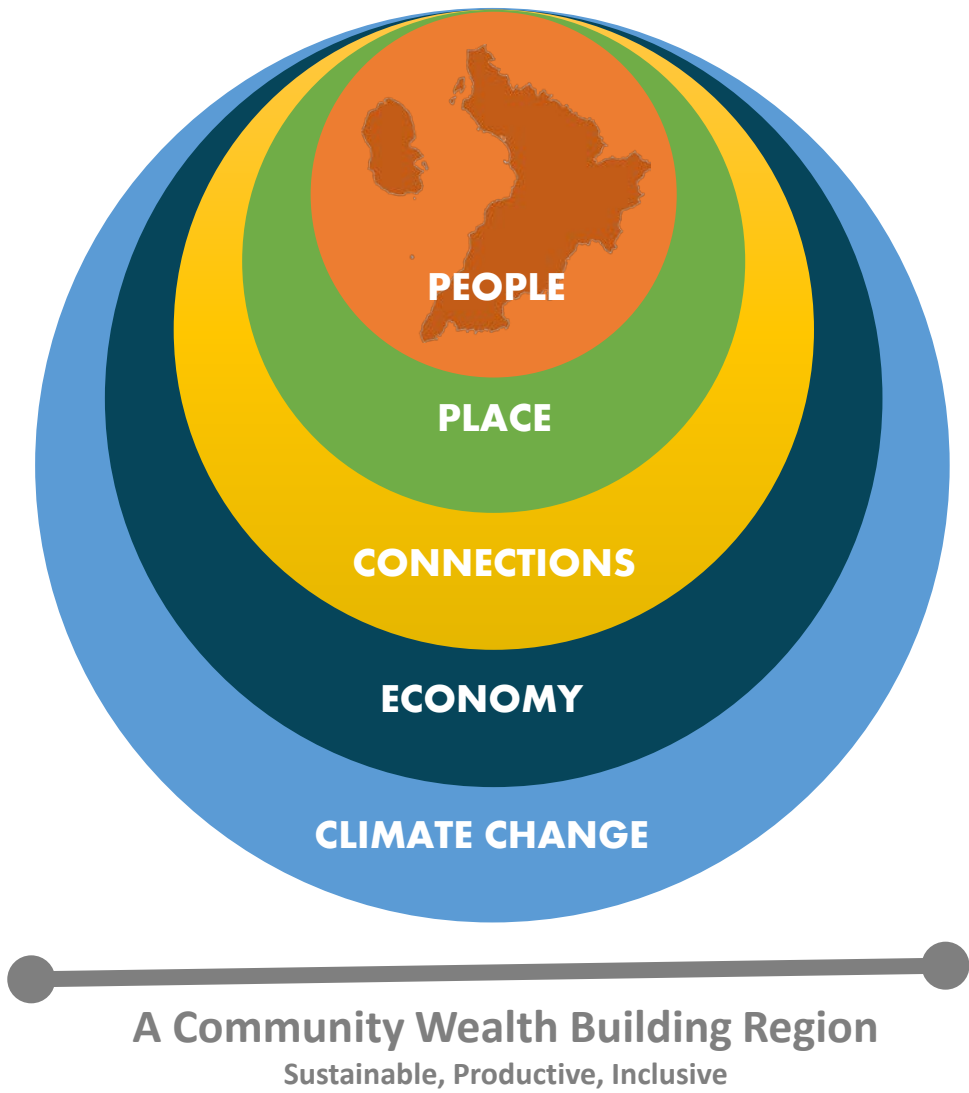
Economic challenges and opportunities are matched in their magnitude by **climate change** and the immediate need to respond to a climate emergency.

These five themes are all inextricably linked together.

**This Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy identifies 17 spatial development priorities that are complementary and will help deliver on the vision and outcomes for Ayrshire.**



OUTCOMES



**PEOPLE**

A healthier, happier, more active Ayrshire

**PLACE**

A thriving network of high-quality places

**CONNECTIONS**

An Ayrshire with enhanced accessibility

**ECONOMY**

A transformed, inclusive economy

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

A low-carbon, resilient region

# PEOPLE

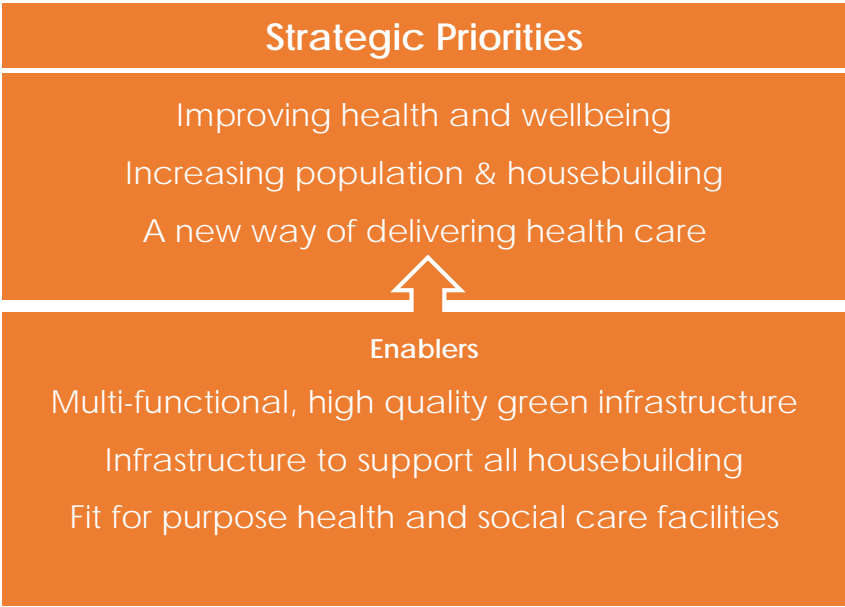
**We are placing people at the heart of regional planning in Ayrshire.** Planning has a key role to play in improving the health and wellbeing of our residents, in terms of both physical and mental health.

**Well located and designed places, with access to good quality green space** are essential to improving health and wellbeing and will be the core principles in developing new places and supporting new housing. The Central Scotland Green Network will be consolidated and expanded. Focus will be on those areas that suffer the most from health inequalities.

**Health and social care provision in Ayrshire is changing** and we will, in collaboration with others, support the ‘Caring for Ayrshire’ programme by ensuring that new services are in the right locations to serve those that need them.

**Good quality housing, in the right location** is a key contributor to health and wellbeing. The housing market in Ayrshire is characterised by its contrasts; high demand areas with considerable pressure for developments, sit close to areas where rates of house building are extremely limited.

The Regional Spatial Strategy will support a proactive approach to stimulating growth in low demand areas, to increase Ayrshire’s population but on a national scale, rebalancing the housing market is required. This can be supported through the distribution of infrastructure spending to increase the attractiveness and de-risking sites in the west and enabling the benefits of the delivery of new homes, for example through regeneration, to be shared more equitably.



# PLACE

Ayrshire is a unique region with special places. The RSS, in full, will support **a place based approach to development, regeneration and service delivery**, with focus on collaborative working across sectors to support and enhance places.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have starkly re-emphasised the need to focus on **planning and service delivery at the local level**. People should be able to access goods and services, walk and cycle and enjoy green spaces, all within their own communities. Whilst the RSS will set out Ayrshire’s spatial priorities for strategic development and supports the regeneration of Ayrshire’s three biggest towns, this is in parallel to supporting local development in smaller communities to increase local self sufficiency.

**Town centres will continue to be at the heart of our communities.** The economic impact of the pandemic will hit our town centres hard; imaginative, bold interventions will be explored to aid the recovery of town centres.

**Vacant and derelict land** blights many of our communities and its redevelopment will contribute hugely to achieving better places.

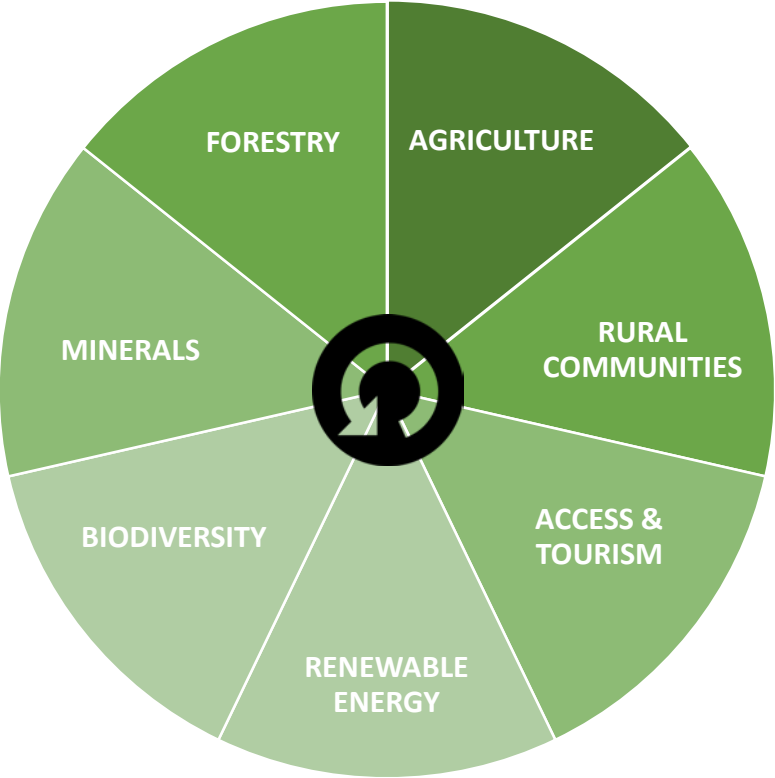
Our **rural area and natural landscape** is intrinsic to Ayrshire’s sense of place and economy.



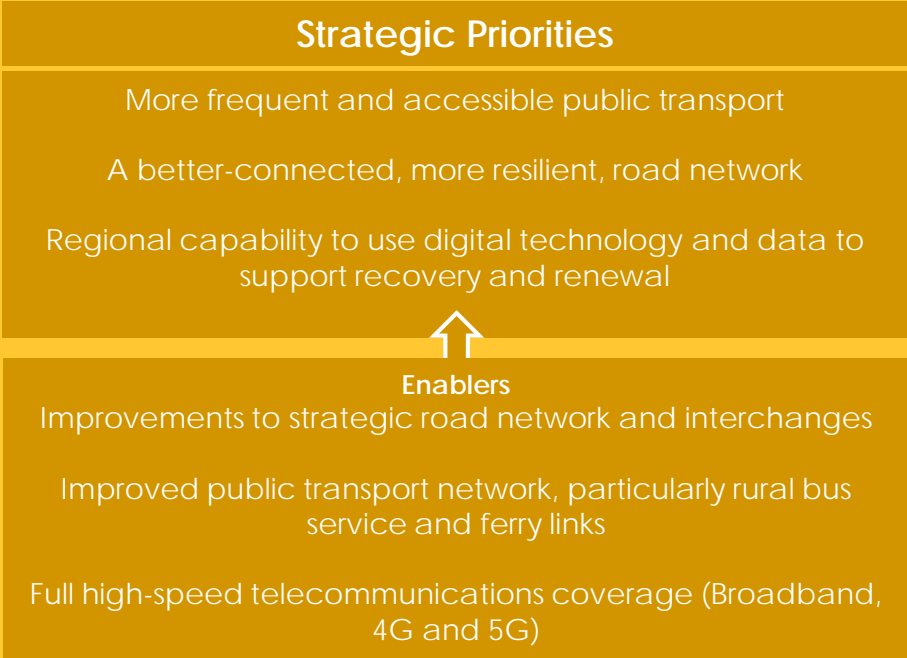
RURAL AYRSHIRE and the ISLANDS

Ayrshire’s rural areas, including its islands, are places of huge value and potential. They can be home to a number of competing demands and the social and economic challenges faced by communities are sometimes exacerbated by geographic remoteness.

Protecting and regenerating our important landscapes; encouraging economic activity and housebuilding in sustainable locations are critical to ensuring a sustainable future for rural Ayrshire. Economic growth in the region should be truly inclusive and extend to all areas and communities. Improved connectivity, such as enhanced public transport services, is vital for our rural areas and islands.



CONNECTIONS



Transport and connectivity are both vital to Ayrshire’s communities and economy. Key transport routes are critical to social and economic inclusion: getting people to services, training and employment opportunities and getting goods to market. There is a need for investment in terms of rail and road infrastructure and public transport connectivity to support the Ayrshire Growth Deal and we are working with Transport Scotland on Strategic Transport Appraisal to assess and prioritise investment. Six key projects are shown in the strategic development priorities map and described in more detail later in the document.

The need for a robust and reliable **digital infrastructure** has never been clearer in light of the impact of COVID-19 on everyday work and life in Scotland. Developing Ayrshire’s digital infrastructure is essential to ensure resilience and to embracing emerging data heavy technologies that will form part of a progressive and outward facing digital economy

# ECONOMY

A shared ambition to tackle inequalities and enhance the wellbeing of our people and our communities lies at the heart of Ayrshire’s economic vision. Taking an approach that is based on community wealth building, we will make the most of our assets, land and employment opportunities, future investment plans and partnerships to reposition our new economy as more sustainable, more inclusive and more productive.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the economic baseline and for the foreseeable future the Ayrshire economy will be operating within a global scale recession, predicted to hit Ayrshire, and sectors important to the Ayrshire economy, disproportionately.

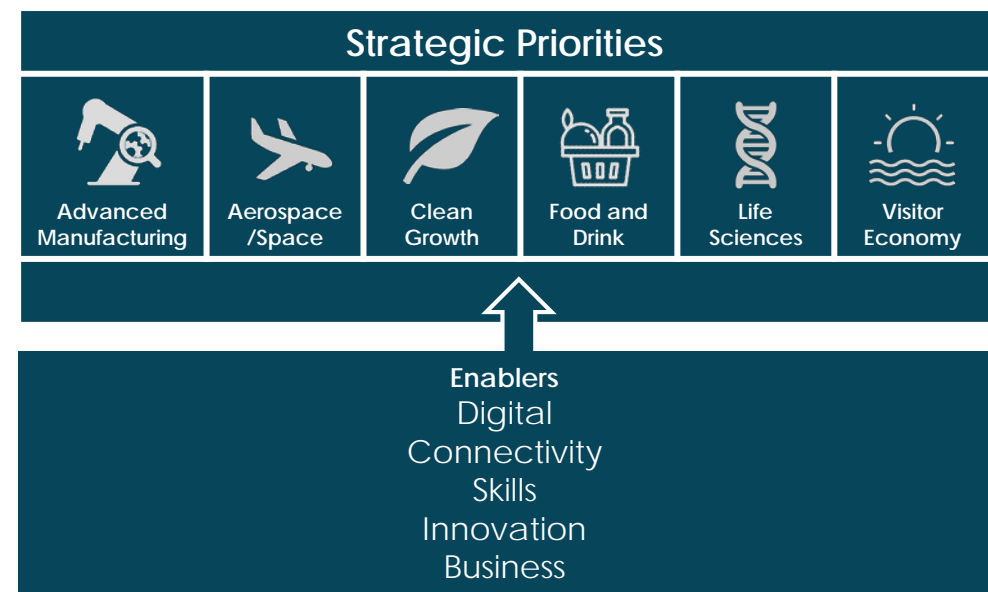
Catalysts and enablers initially identified as having the greatest potential to support inclusive and transformational growth remain vital to the fortunes of the Ayrshire economy. We will prioritise regional collaboration and resources being directed towards supporting the recovery of sectors that are either in crisis, could be critically damaged during the economic fallout from the pandemic or which provide greatest leverage to support the recovery process to move into renewal.

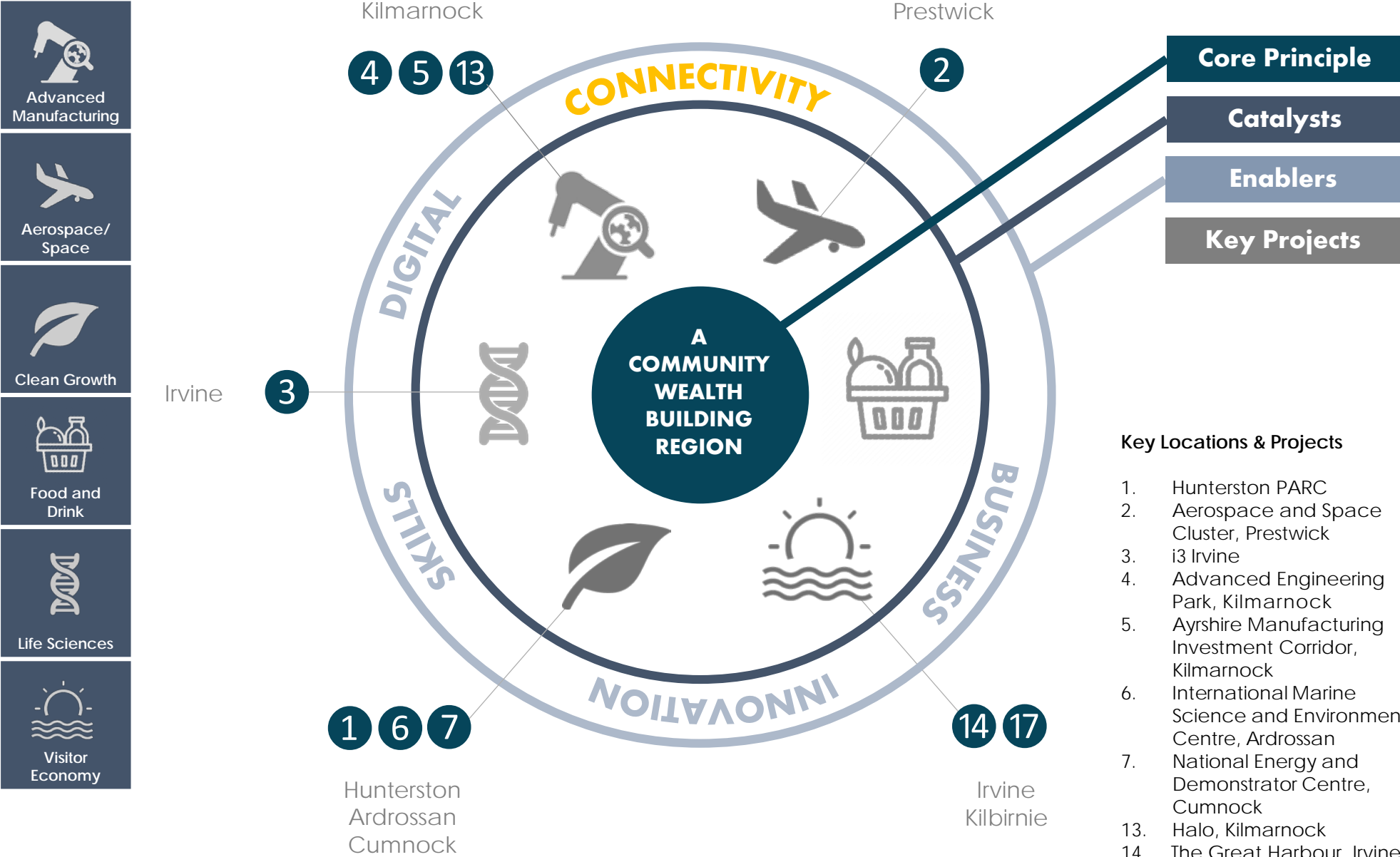
The following page indicates the relationship between these catalysts, enablers and our strategic development priorities.



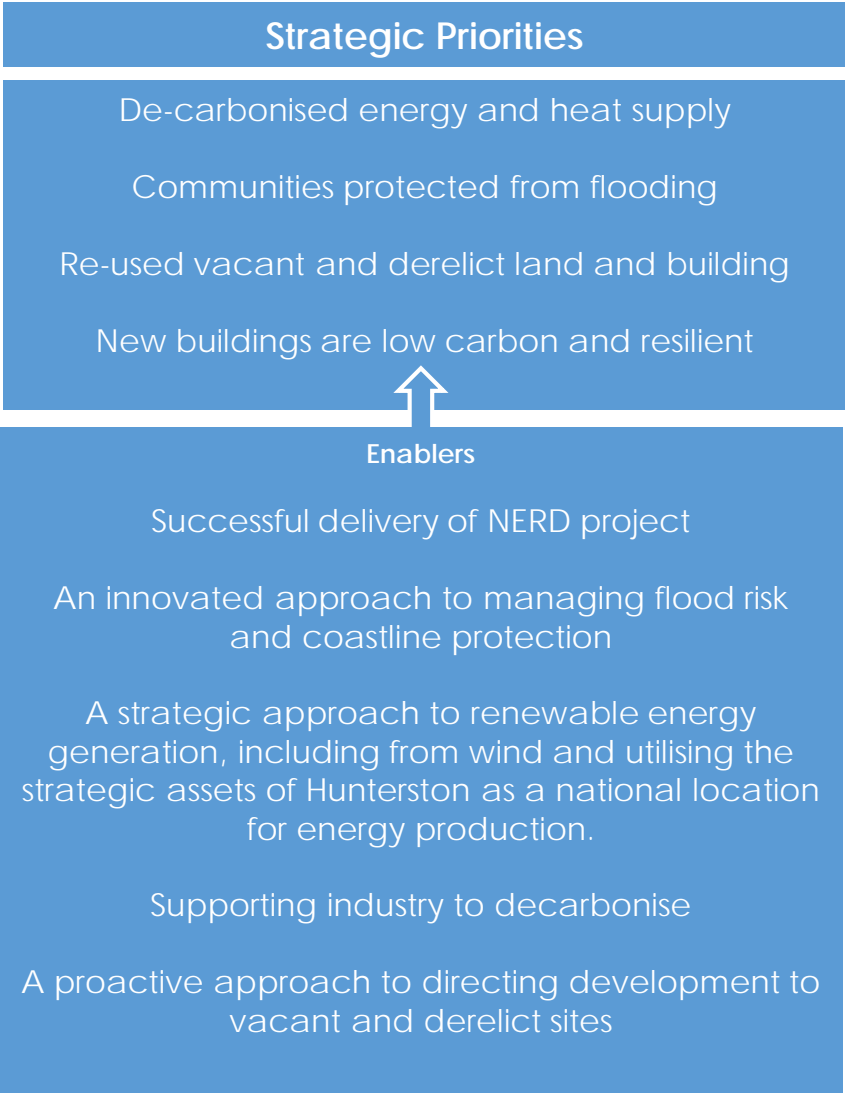
The **AYRSHIRE GROWTH DEAL** will target coordinated investment across Ayrshire, acting as a powerful catalyst to stimulate growth, increase job opportunities and prosperity for Ayrshire, Scotland and the UK as a whole.

The AGD investment, to be delivered over the next 15 years, will unlock around £300m of private investment and 7,000 new jobs across a wide range of sectors, and, in doing so, transforming the local economy for the benefit of all our people and places. The Regional Spatial Strategy, alongside the work of the Regional Economic Partnership, will form a framework to maximise the impact of that investment.





# CLIMATE CHANGE



Action to **mitigate against** and **adapt to Climate change** is embedded in all aspects of what the RSS will aim to achieve. Each strategic priority must be taken forward with the need to tackle the climate emergency as a fundamental requirement.

The **energy market is changing** and will continue to change over the lifetime of the RSS. Ayrshire will be at the forefront of this transition, with Growth Deal projects that focus on decarbonising energy and moving to a locally based energy system.

The preparation of an Ayrshire Energy Masterplan is being explored, with the purpose of ensuring a joined up approach to energy generation and usage across the region.

**Flood risk is one of the most visible effects of climate change**, with huge implications for communities and the economy across Ayrshire. The RSS will support a proactive approach to tackling flood risk, which will require collaborative working with a range of partners to explore ways of developing sites and mitigating flood risk.

Investment in clean, green **renewable energy generation**, in particular wind energy, is a key means by which Ayrshire is contributing to national carbon reduction goals. Supporting renewable energy development, in a managed, proportionate and balanced manner, is a critical part of Ayrshire’s response to climate change.

The climate emergency calls for a renewed focus on the way we develop and build. **Brownfield land** must be prioritised and bold and more ambitious approaches to developing **zero carbon buildings** will be sought.

To deliver our outcomes for Ayrshire, 17 strategic development priorities have been identified.

The delivery of these inter-linked developments will be key to meeting the vision and outcome proposed by this indicative strategy, to be developed through the Regional Spatial Strategy

Essential to the delivery of the 16 strategic development priorities will be 6 connectivity improvements identified.

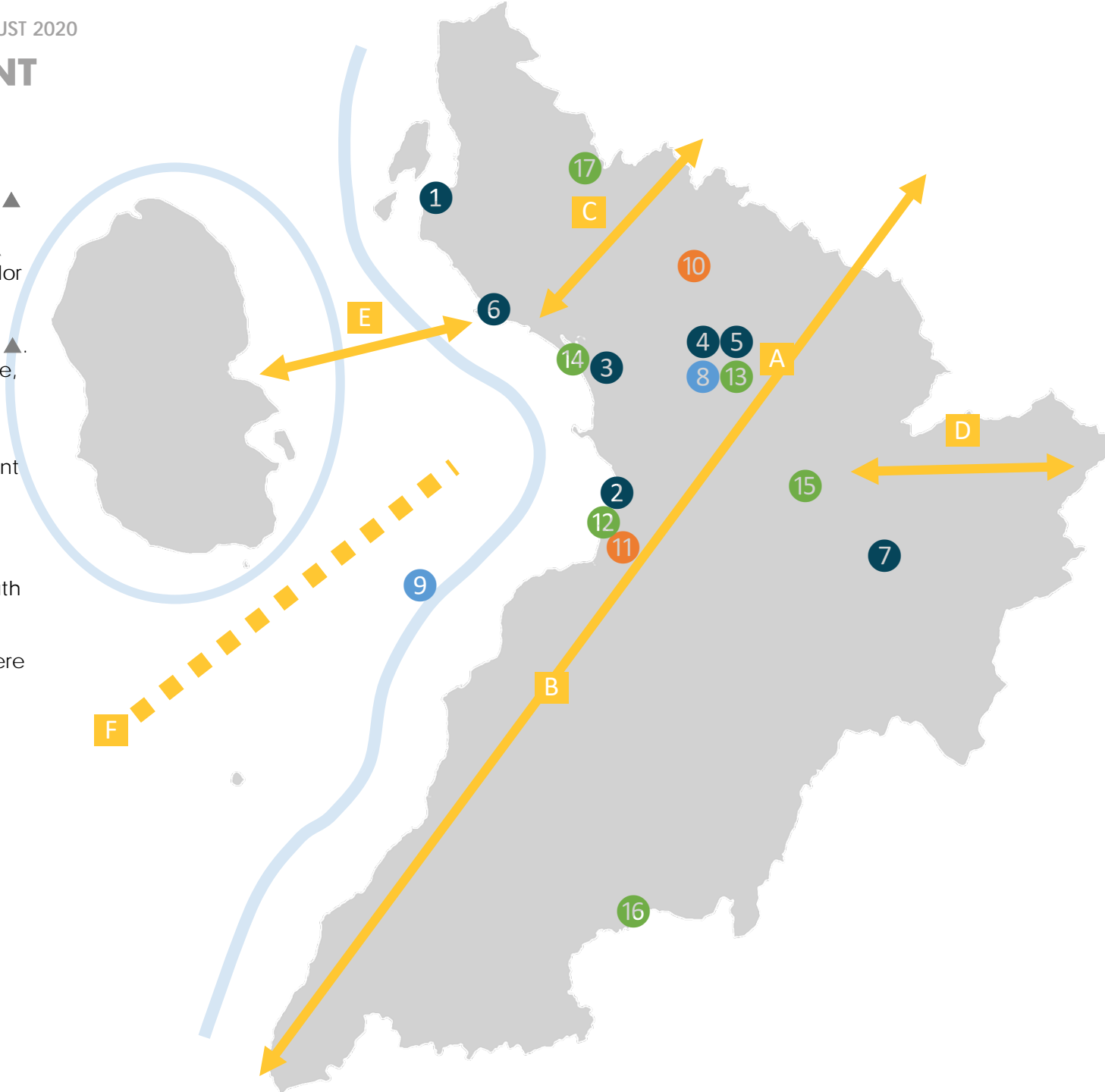
These are shown spatially on the strategic development priorities map and are each described in more detail below.





- A. Bellfield Interchange
- B. A77/M77 Corridor
- C. A737 Corridor
- D. Connections to M74
- E. Ferry Services
- F. Digital Subsea Connectivity▲
- G. Central Scotland Green Network

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## 1 HUNTERSTON PARC

### What?

A deep-water port and innovation, energy and blue economy hub and a national asset which is part of Scotland’s infrastructure to create a modal shift in decarbonising our economy and support Ayrshire’s clean growth aspirations.

The complete redevelopment of the 130ha deep-water port and marine yard offers a number of opportunities to support advances in renewable energy, the blue economy and the circular economy, including as a focal point for research and innovation. New power generation from renewable and transitional technologies will provide load stabilisation solutions and the potential to create an eco-system of power generators with new energy-intensive industry.

**Why?** Hunterston’s scale, deep water access, dry dock facility and logistic support make it a unique proposition within Scotland to support our response to climate change.

## 2 PRESTWICK AEROSPACE & SPACE CLUSTER

### What?

Establish Prestwick as the Centre of Excellence for Aerospace and Space Development in Scotland and the UK. The proposed interventions encompass improvements to enabling infrastructure, provision of new commercial and industrial build, hangars, the establishment of a Spaceport, including launch operation facilities, Aerospace and Space Innovation Centre (ASIC) and National Flight Centre (NFC), encompassing innovation in design and development and skills development across Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO), aerospace, flight, launch and in-space capability.

### Why?

This will build on the established aerospace cluster around Prestwick Airport and facilitate investment in a new aerospace lifecycle, as well consolidating and facilitating the growth of the commercial space sector, providing growth in gross value add (GVA) and the creation and safeguarding of high value add jobs.

## 3 i3 CAMPUS

### What?

Digital Manufacturing and Demonstrator Hub that will provide a centre of excellence in digital automation in process industries, in partnership with the National Manufacturing Institute of Scotland and University of Strathclyde. It will position Ayrshire as a leader in digital technology application. In addition, flexible advanced manufacturing space will be provided in phases at the Campus to complement the Hub. These developments will facilitate start up, spin out, and growth of Life Science businesses and other advanced manufacturing opportunities.

### Why?

The Campus is at the heart of proposals – to be delivered by the Ayrshire Growth Deal at i3 – aimed at creating a more innovative, productive and inclusive economy by developing Ayrshire’s core strengths and providing opportunities for companies and communities to thrive and prosper. The Hub will provide expert guidance and access to Industry 4.0 digital manufacturing technologies for process industry businesses to help them improve their productivity and be more innovative and competitive. The provision of modern, flexible advanced manufacturing space has been identified as a key demand for businesses in an area where market failure is affecting its development.

**4 ADVANCED ENGINEERING  
PARK, MOORFIELD, KILMARNOCK**

**What?**

The project will provide the expansion of Moorfield Industrial Park in Kilmarnock. It will create up to 11,000 sqm of serviced and high quality business space, with a range of units and sizes

The current Moorfield Park has been developed by East Ayrshire council for industrial use and is now nearing capacity.

**Why?**

Within Ayrshire there is a lack of high quality sites and premises that support the growth ambitions of companies in Ayrshire and beyond. The provision of high quality business space at a strategically accessible location will meet a clear need and enable investment in Ayrshire that will bring new economic activity and high quality jobs contributing to the overall vision of the iRSS.

**5 AYRSHIRE MANUFACTURING  
INVESTMENT CORRIDOR (AMIC)**

**What?**

The AMIC project will establish a food and drink centre of excellence which, combined with on-site support and start-up units, will allow Advanced Manufacturing sector businesses to start-up and grow, as well as enabling the growth of existing businesses.

The centre will provide opportunities for product development innovation, production pilot plant facilities as well as technical and business support.

**Why?**

Food and Drink, including agriculture, is an important sector across Ayrshire and is a key workstream of the Regional Economic Partnership. AMIC will enable further growth and expansion of this sector and support agriculture, helping to transform the Ayrshire economy as set out in the iRSS outcomes.

**6 ARDROSSAN REGENERATION &  
INTERNATIONAL MARINE SCIENCE &  
ENVIRONMENT CENTRE (IMSE)**

**What?**

The regeneration of Ardrossan over the next 10 years is a national-scale project which will deliver the redevelopment of Ardrossan Harbour and transport hub, the reuse of a major brownfield site and bring wider benefits to the town. A new Education and Community Campus, housing, expanded marina facility and Centre for International Marine Science & Environment (IMSE) will be delivered as part of the plans.

IMSE will allow industry and academia to develop and capture innovation in marine sciences; marine technology; and marine education and training, ensuring that the Firth of Clyde is recognised as an exemplar in the Blue Economy and marine sustainability.

**Why?**

Ardrossan is one of Scotland’s largest and busiest ferry terminals and benefits communities and businesses across Ayrshire. This regeneration will transform a brownfield site, enhance the harbour and improve opportunities for active travel. Links with the town and wider community will support wider town centre improvements. A community wealth building approach will maximise the benefit the investment delivers to local people and organisations.

## 7 NATIONAL ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEMONSTRATOR (NERD)

### What?

The aim of the NERD is to act as a catalyst for the Cumnock area and beyond to transition to a low carbon society, transforming energy production, distribution and storage. A centre of excellence for energy research will be built and a suite of demonstrator projects undertaken to find ways to transform the local energy system, with the community at its heart.

NERD will act as an important stimulus to the local economy and jobs market, attracting inward investment and supporting existing local businesses

### Why?

Through its focus on climate change, the iRSS recognises that a major shift is required in the way we produce, distribute and store energy. This project will put the Cumnock area and Ayrshire as a whole, with its long history of energy generation, at the forefront of this transition and will establish the area as an exemplar for energy research and demonstrator.

## 8 IRVINE VALLEY & KILMARNOCK FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME

### What?

The Irvine Valley flood study responds to severe flood events in Kilmarnock. The study sets out proposals to reduce the risk of existing property flooding in the Irvine Valley, while further work will address how to enable new, resilient development in tandem with flood defense work and will explore opportunities for natural flood management techniques.

### Why?

Flood risk is having a significant impact on the development potential of large parts of Kilmarnock and the wider Irvine Valley, both upstream and downstream. In particular, flood risk is proving a barrier to the redevelopment of long term vacant and derelict land, a key outcome prioritised in this iRSS. To contribute to a sustainable approach to development and to enable other iRSS outcomes, solutions to developing such sites need to be found.

## 9 AYRSHIRE COAST AND SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

### What?

Implementation of the long term plan to manage the shoreline of Ayrshire to mitigate the impacts of climate change, coastal erosion and rising sea levels. Specific, discrete projects affecting the coastlines of North and South Ayrshire will be identified through a number of specialist studies. The Ayrshire Growth Deal will support the development of our coastal and island economies through new marine tourism infrastructure supporting growth in sailing, marine leisure and recreation.

### Why?

Scientific evidence has demonstrated that, worldwide, climatic events are becoming more extreme and sea water levels are rising and will continue to rise in the long term. The approved Ayrshire Local Flood Risk Management Plan identified the need to prepare a Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) covering the full extent of the coastlines of North and South Ayrshire, to help manage the risks to people, as well as the built and natural environment, arising from coastal processes. The Ayrshire coast, islands and surrounding waters provide opportunities to develop the blue economy within a sustainable framework that will protect environmental and ecological priorities.

**10 A DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR STEWARTON**

**What?**

A long term development framework is required to manage the growth of Stewarton. Based on collaborate working, it will map out the long term development priorities and timescales, to allow the town to grow in a sustainable manner with the needs of the existing community at its heart.

**Why?**

Stewarton has seen accelerated growth and high rates of house building over the last 10 years, based on its proximity to the Glasgow conurbation and good commuting links. Investment in infrastructure has not kept pace; the roads network, sewage and water infrastructure, education provision and health and social care facilities need upgraded and need to be planned for in a fully comprehensive approach. The need for a development framework for Stewarton is linked to a wider regional priority, set out in this iRSS, to balance the housing market, by stimulating growth in low demand areas and managing development in high demand areas.

**11 SOUTH EAST AYR**

**What?**

A phased, masterplanned, urban expansion area, occupying 224 hectares of land, on the south-east side of the settlement of Ayr, to the east of the A77(T), enclosed by it, the A713 Ayr -Dalmellington Road and the C39 Doonfoot to Sessionfield Road. The development will comprise 2700 houses, forming a sustainable community, with a new primary school, neighbourhood shopping centre, community facilities, business units and consequential improvements to the A77(T), including a new roundabout and sustainable travel overbridge.

**Why?**

The proposal is identified in the adopted South Ayrshire Local Development Plan (LDP1) and the proposed replacement South Ayrshire Local Development Plan (PLDP2), originally to meet a need for housing. The Corton phase of the development has the benefit of planning permission. The scale of the development is such that it will have a significant impact on the trunk road network.

**12 AYR TOWN CENTRE**

**What?**

Implementation of various projects to restore to beneficial use vacant buildings and land in Ayr Town Centre, improve its appearance, vibrancy and vitality, re-purpose it and render it more accessible by active travel.

**Why?**

Changes in retail trends towards out of town and on-line shopping have eroded Ayr's previous role as a prime retail destination, resulting in a number of large, vacant and derelict buildings and sites within, or close to, the Town Centre, which are exerting an adverse impact on its character and appearance, particularly within the Central Conservation Area. Together with the rationalization of South Ayrshire Council's office estate and the closure of Ayr Station Hotel, these buildings and sites provide an opportunity to re-purpose the Town Centre as both a focus for events. Heritage and leisure and a place in which to live, with an integrated transport hub and sustainable travel linkages to north Ayr and the University of West of Scotland and Ayr College.



## 13 HALO, KILMARNOCK TOWN CENTRE AND SOUTH

### What?

Kilmarnock is a growing town with continual demand for new house building; a sustainable approach to development requires a thriving, accessible and multi-functional town centre to serve the growing population. A community-led approach to the regeneration of Kilmarnock town centre is being taken forward, which will deliver physical interventions to the fabric of the town. At the same time, the area south of the town centre, which has long been blighted by areas of vacant and derelict land is a priority for redevelopment, whilst the HALO project will be a driver to regenerate the area to the north of the town.

### Why?

A contracting retail sector, leaving behind significant vacancies and voids means the need to bring new life, uses and activity into the town centre is critical to ensuring the town retains its role as a strategic centre for Ayrshire, able to meet the needs of its surrounding communities and bring new investment to the region.

## 14 IRVINE AND THE GREAT HARBOUR

### What

The long term plan to maximise the development potential of Irvine will continue to progress with plans to develop new housing and support infrastructure at Montgomerie Park and other sites, continued improvements to the fabric of the town centre and the transformation of Irvine Harbourside and the Ardeer peninsula into a major Scottish visitor destination.

A 'Maritime Mile', from Irvine train station to the beach will re-invigorate the area by creating a unique coastal experience for visitors and opening up access to the waterfront setting and revitalised harbour. Opportunities for leisure, tourism and housing development will be part of those plans.

### Why?

Supporting new housing growth, investing in our town centres and creating opportunities for economic development will support ambitions to grow our population and ensure that we create great places for people to live, work, shop and visit.

The bold and imaginative plans for Irvine Harbourside will attract new visitors to Ayrshire, making it a destination of choice for leisure activities, businesses and families to live, to work and bring economic, social and cultural benefits to both the harbour area, Irvine and Ayrshire as a whole.

## 15 THE COALFIELD COMMUNITIES

### What?

The regeneration and renewal of the communities and landscape of the former coalfields, around Cumnock and the Doon Valley requires a joined up, place based approach. The delivery of the coalfield communities landscape partnership, implementation of the Minerals Plan and continued development and delivery of community-led action plans, requires collaboration from communities, public organisations and the development industry.

### Why?

The long term demise of the coal industry has taken away the economic driver of the coalfields and has left a legacy of damaged landscapes and disconnected communities. A path to a sustainable, post-coal future is needed to allow this part of Ayrshire to achieve the iRSS vision of a region with healthy and inclusive communities, supported by a high quality environment.

**16 THE GALLOWAY & SOUTHERN  
AYRSHIRE BIOSPHERE and  
PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK**

**What?**

The Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere is a unique and valuable designation, which aims to promote the area as an exemplar for achieving a sustainable approach to the economy and environment. There is an ambition to expand the work of the Biosphere and increase its role and prominence within Ayrshire.

Alongside this, there is a movement to establish a Galloway National Park, which could include the southern part of Ayrshire.

**Why?**

These are significant cross-boundary projects that are supported to help advance economic activity and tourism, whilst safeguarding the environmental qualities of the area. They are clearly linked to the vision of the iRSS, which strives for an inclusive economy in tandem with a high quality environment.

**17 LOCHSHORE, KILBIRNIE**

**What?**

A region-wide tourism and leisure destination centred around Kilbirnie Loch. A community and leisure hub will support a range of opportunities for activity and recreation within Lochshore, including watersports, outdoor play and active travel alongside woodland creation and biodiversity enhancements.

Further to the placemaking investment, housing development at Lochshore is a long-term aspiration.

**Why?**

The development of Lochshore as a regional destination will deliver economic, health, community and placemaking benefits to the Garnock Valley and beyond.

**A. BELLFIELD INTERCHANGE**

**What?**

The Bellfield interchange to the east of Kilmarnock is a strategic road interchange, where the M77, A76 and A71 meet. The capacity of the interchange needs expanded and a series of interventions of varying scales are being explored.

**Why?**

The interchange is operating at capacity and represents both a congestion hotspot and safety risk. More so, it is limiting new development on a regional scale, with implication for the delivery of the Ayrshire Growth Deal, the allocation of new industrial and business sites and the identification of new housing land releases. The upgrading of the interchange is critical to achieving some key outcomes of the iRSS and its vision in relation to delivering a thriving and inclusive economy.

**B. A77/M77 CORRIDOR**

**What?**

The M77/A77 is a strategic route connecting Ayrshire to the Glasgow conurbation and beyond. There is potential to release further development sites within the corridor for a variety of uses, including business and industrial use to stimulate economic activity and to advance some of the objectives of the Ayrshire economic strategy. This will require, however, actions to address some of the limitations of the road network itself; in particular the am peak time traffic congestion travelling north into Glasgow and the barriers to public transport.

**Why?**

This key route linking Ayrshire to Glasgow is of regional importance to economic investment and stimulating the development industry in Ayrshire. It also gives an opportunity to think strategically about modes of travel and supporting a shift away from car use, linking to both the economic and climate change priorities of the iRSS.

**C. A737 CORRIDOR**

**What?**

Further upgrades to the A737 corridor, including between Beith and Johnstone, the Beith bypass and the B714, linking the Dalry bypass to the A78 to improve connections to and from Glasgow and the Central Belt.

**Why?** Upgrading the A737 would bring major social and economic benefits to Ayrshire, promoting the regeneration of Hunterston and the Three Towns; reducing the impact of traffic in Kilwinning; improving accessibility to and from Ayrshire, including Arran and enhancing the resilience of the network for both public and private transport.

**D. CONNECTIONS TO M74**

**What?**

As the main trunk route connecting Scotland to England, the M74 is a significant route for business, haulage and tourism. The strengthening of links between the M74 and Ayrshire would make Ayrshire a more accessible location to do business and to visit and would see Ayrshire communities benefit from greater accessibility.

**Why?**

One of the greatest economic challenges for parts of Ayrshire is relative isolation from markets. Improved road networks would help to address this and bring Ayrshire closer to the major areas of population and transport hubs.



**E. FERRY CONNECTIONS TO OUR ISLANDS**

**What?**

Improvements to the accessibility, quality and reliability of ferry services supported by excellent multi-modal transport interchanges that offer travel choice for all users.

**Why?**

The people and economies of Ayshire’s island communities of Arran and Cumbrae rely on these services. It is important that we improve the resilience of the ferry and transport services to and from these islands so that they remain well connected and that the islands sustainability as a place to live and work is assured.

**F. DIGITAL SUBSEA CONNECTIVITY**

**What?**

A new sub-sea fibre optic cable, linking Ayrshire with Ireland and, ultimately, North America.

**Why?**

Part of a wider, Ayrshire Growth Deal project to provide Ayrshire with world class, agile, digital infrastructure, which also includes Key Sites Upgrade, 4G Infill, Business Uptake, Digital Skills Plan, Regional Digital Hubs and Centres of Digital Excellence. The project aims to reduce digital connectivity disadvantage, in rural areas particularly, and enhance the competitiveness of the Ayrshire economy.

**G. CENTRAL SCOTLAND GREEN CORRIDOR**

**What?**

The CSGN is a national development within the National Planning Framework which aims to make a significant contribution to Scotland's sustainable economic development. It aims that by 2050, Central Scotland has been transformed into a place where the environment adds value to the economy and where people’s lives are enriched by its quality. The Ayrshire Councils as partners are committed to embedding the CSGN in all relevant policies, strategies and plans and developing and enhancing their partnership work to realise the CSGN.

**Why?**

Green infrastructure can provide a host of benefits including building healthier communities. Working together will allow cross-boundary needs and opportunities to be identified which will help with climate resilience, habitats and in promoting active, healthy behaviours across the region.