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| Report to: | Planning Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 25 August 2009 |
| Report by: | Executive Director (Enterprise Resources) Executive Director (Community Resources) |

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| Subject: | Local Nature Reserve – Morgan Glen, Larkhall |
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1 A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is a place with special local natural interest, set up to protect nature, and for people to enjoy and appreciate. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Seek approval for the declaration of Morgan Glen, Larkhall to be designated as a Local Nature Reserve under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

2 Recommendation(s)

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that Committee agree to declare, under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the area indicated in the plan in Appendix 1 to this report as the Morgan Glen Local Nature Reserve.

3 Background

3.1 A meeting of the Council as landowner together with various stakeholders was held in January 2009. The outcome of this meeting was to establish a Working Group consisting of representatives from South Lanarkshire Council, Friends of Morgan Glen and Scottish Natural Heritage.

3.2 A map of the area which is proposed to be designated as the LNR is appended. The area itself is wholly owned by South Lanarkshire Council. The area containing the viaduct has been excluded from the proposed LNR due to the difficulties of including it in the LNR designation. Scottish Natural Heritage have declared their support for this designation.

3.3 A Management Statement has been drawn up. Many of the actions in the Management Statement are consistent with the Council's statutory biodiversity duty and complements other strategies and plans such as the Core Paths Plan, Green Space Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan.

4 Policy History

4.1 The adopted South Lanarkshire Local Plan contains policies in connection with environmental priorities and objectives. Of relevance is Policy ENV5 – Morgan Glen Local Nature Reserve Proposal which states that the Council will propose the

designation of a new Local Nature Reserve at Morgan Glen. Therefore the proposed designation is consistent with local plan policy.

5 Grounds for Designating the Local Nature Reserve

- 5.1 LNRs are for both people and wildlife and are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy the area. The designation would help facilitate improvements to the site for local people, visitors and the biodiversity of the area – linking with existing actions in several current and partner strategies.
- 5.2 If the Council approves this declaration, then a Local Nature Reserve declaration will be drafted and published. The declaration provides the public with formal notification of the existence of a local nature reserve. Once declared, the area will be managed as a nature reserve as outlined in the Management Statement (copy attached).

6 Employee Implications

- 6.1 There are no personnel implications.

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 At present there are no resource implications for the Council arising from the proposed declaration. However the Reserve Management Plan, when completed, will highlight key areas requiring investment. These will link with responsibilities under Core Path Network, the Council's Green Space Strategy as well as the Council's fulfilment of its Biodiversity Duty.

8 Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 8.1 This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore, no impact assessment is required. Consultation has been undertaken with Friends of Morgan Glen and Scottish Natural Heritage.

Colin McDowall
Executive Director
(Enterprise Resources)

Norrie Anderson
Executive Director
(Community Resources)

12 August 2009

Link(s) to Council Objectives

- Improve the Quality of the Physical Environment (Source:Connect)

Previous References

None

List of Background Papers

- Map of proposed Local Nature Reserve
- Management Statement

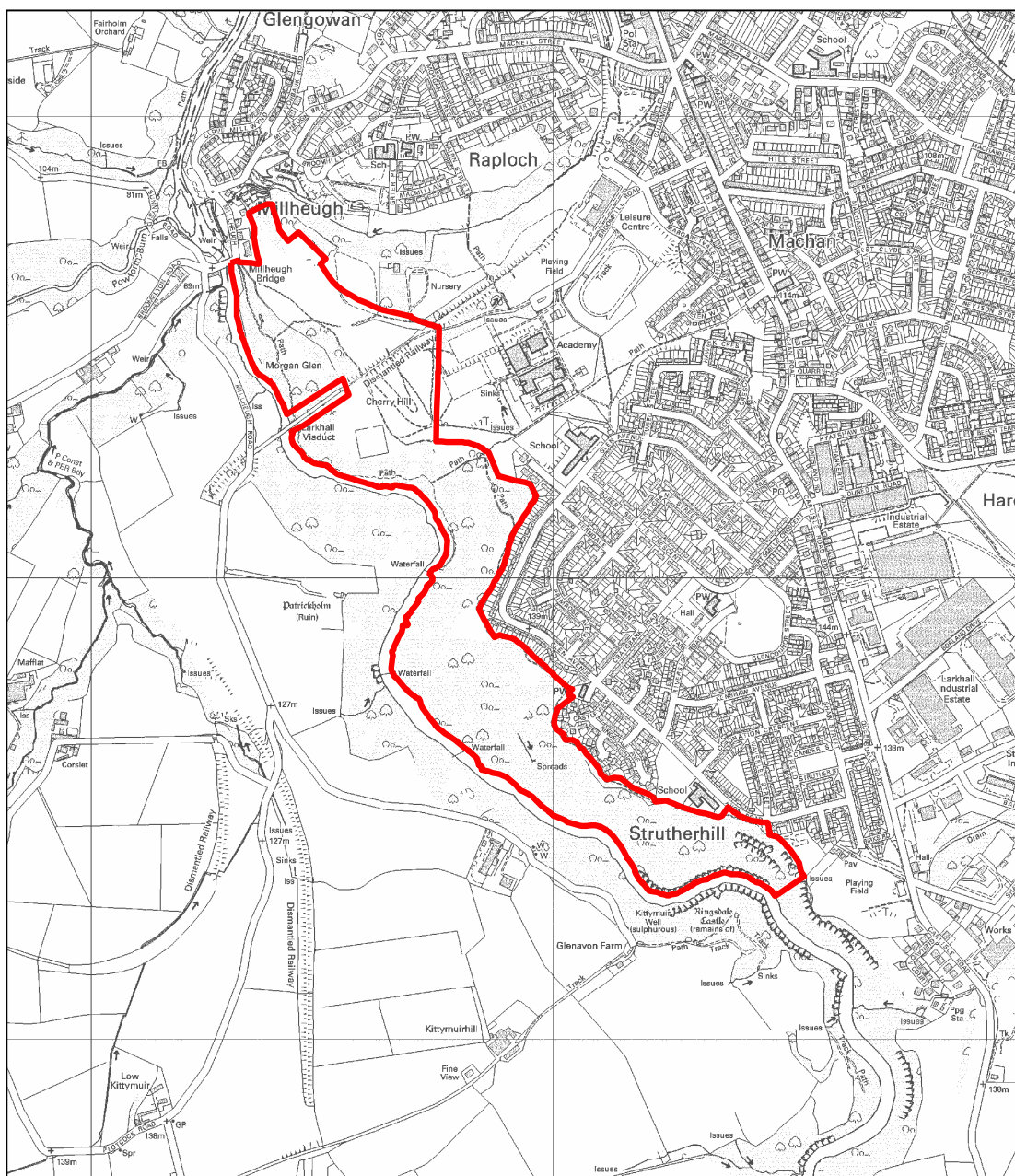
Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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Appendix 1 Morgan Glen

Planning and Building Standards Services



Enterprise Resources Planning & Building Control

Date:

Scale: 1:12,458



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Statement of Intent

Management of the Local Nature Reserve will take account of the following principles and drivers.

Woodland

The site contains high quality ancient semi-natural gorge woodland. Most has been designated as SAC and SSSI. This will be largely managed as minimal intervention, consistent with its Natura status. This component is formally assessed on a regular cycle by SNH through their Site Condition Monitoring programme. Measures required to achieve *favourable conservation status* will direct management action.

Woodland downstream from the viaduct, although not Natura designated, will be managed in a similar way to the Natura woodland.

River

The Avon is a high quality river. Water quality is regularly monitored by SEPA. The river and banks require to be monitored for invasive species. Measures required to maintain water quality, and to control invasive species will direct management action.

Wetland basin

There is a small basin on the slope to the north of the old rail-bed that contains a wetland. The future management of this component is likely to be influenced by future SUDS requirements of development to the east of the LNR.

Grassland

The grassland area will be managed as multi-functional Greenspace, in keeping with the Council's Greenspace Strategy, and as a contribution to the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network. The balance between open grassland and developing scrub needs to be determined.

Access routes/Access points

Access through the reserve will be utilising existing tracks, and will be in line with the South Lanarkshire Core Path Plan. A route through the site, from Millheugh bridge to Larkhall station, will be upgraded as part of the Connect 2 project, for National Cycle Route 74 (Glasgow-Carlisle).

A detailed Management Plan will be prepared as early action for the Morgan Glen Local Nature Reserve Management Group. This group has recently been formed.