

# Background

## Context for the Helensburgh Strategic Development Framework - HSDF

Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) was adopted on 28th February 2024 and now forms part of the Statutory Development Plan along with NPF4 (National Planning Framework 4).

- LDP2 identifies Helensburgh and Lomond as a growth area in its spatial strategy (Proposal B).
- It requires that a 20 – 40 year time period be explored in order to allow infrastructure to be planned.
- This consultation will feed into the Helensburgh Strategic Development Framework.

## Outputs required from the HSDF

- Provide key evidence which will inform the preparation of LDP3 for the 10 year period.
- Provide a Strategic Framework to inform longer term planning (e.g. NPF5 in 2033) and future LDPs.

The HSDF will not formally allocate land for development (this will be done through future Local Development Plans) and you will be invited to engage in the formal LDP preparation process in due course.

Argyll & Bute Council commissioned Stantec as lead consultants on the HSDF in 2025, the work is due to be completed by spring/summer 2026.

## Other key factors to be considered as part of the HSDF

### Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) - by A&BC

- Assessed how much housing would be needed and in what types, tenures, and locations. It looked at need and demand over the next 10–20 years.
- The housing land audit for the 5-year period 2019/20 to 2023/24 gave a target of an average completion rate of 91 homes per annum.
- When extrapolated over 20-40 years this results in c. 4,000 homes.

### Green Belt Review (2010) commissioned by A&BC (Ironsides Farrar)

- Assessed the strength and function of current Green Belt boundaries
- Identified areas that should be kept, removed, or added:
- Provided an evidence base for updating the Local Development Plan.

### Faslane (HMNB)

- HM Naval Base Clyde (Faslane) is one of the most significant military installations in the UK, and it is due to expand significantly over the next 25 years. This will have a significant impact on housing demand in the area.

## Wider studies to support the HSDF process

### Urban Capacity Study UCS (Stantec)

- Identifies how much new development (such as housing or employment land) can realistically be delivered within the existing built-up area of Helensburgh and Cardross.
- Looks at undeveloped allocated sites, vacant or derelict land, and any constraints, to measure how much growth can be accommodated before expanding into new areas such as the Green Belt.

### Landscape Sensitivity & Capacity Assessment LSCA (Stantec)

- Assesses how capable an area’s landscape is of accommodating new development without harming its character, visual quality, or key features.
- Identifies which areas are highly sensitive and should be protected, and which areas have capacity for development with minimal impact

### Transport Baseline Assessment (TBA)

- Provides an understanding of existing transport conditions, including road networks, public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure, and key junctions.
- Looks at current capacity, connectivity, travel patterns, and constraints to determine capacity for future growth and where improvements may be targeted.

## Presentations and Workshops held so far:

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| • A&BC Steering Group    | 21 <sup>st</sup> March |
| • A&BC Exec Leadership   | 27 <sup>th</sup> March |
| • A&BC Int. Stakeholders | 27 <sup>th</sup> May   |
| • A&BC Int. Stakeholders | 10 <sup>th</sup> June  |
| • A&BC Elected Members   | 10 <sup>th</sup> June  |
| • Community Councils     | 24 <sup>th</sup> June  |
| • Hermitage Academy      | 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct   |
| • Public Exhibition      | 26 <sup>th</sup> Nov   |

During the Community Council Steering Group meeting on 24th June, three high level search area were established:

- Helensburgh East
- Colgrain
- Cardross

These are shown on the boards here today. These three search areas identify all the land we need to meet the **target of c. 4,000 homes** over the next 20-40 years.

In fact, we have an excess. Therefore we have choices as to where and how we develop to achieve our target.

## Scenario testing

We now have x4 scenarios that illustrate how these three sites might be taken forward.



# Constraints and areas of research

The three initial **General Areas of Research** were identified using information from the Urban Capacity Study (UCS), the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (LSCA), and the Transport Baseline Assessment.

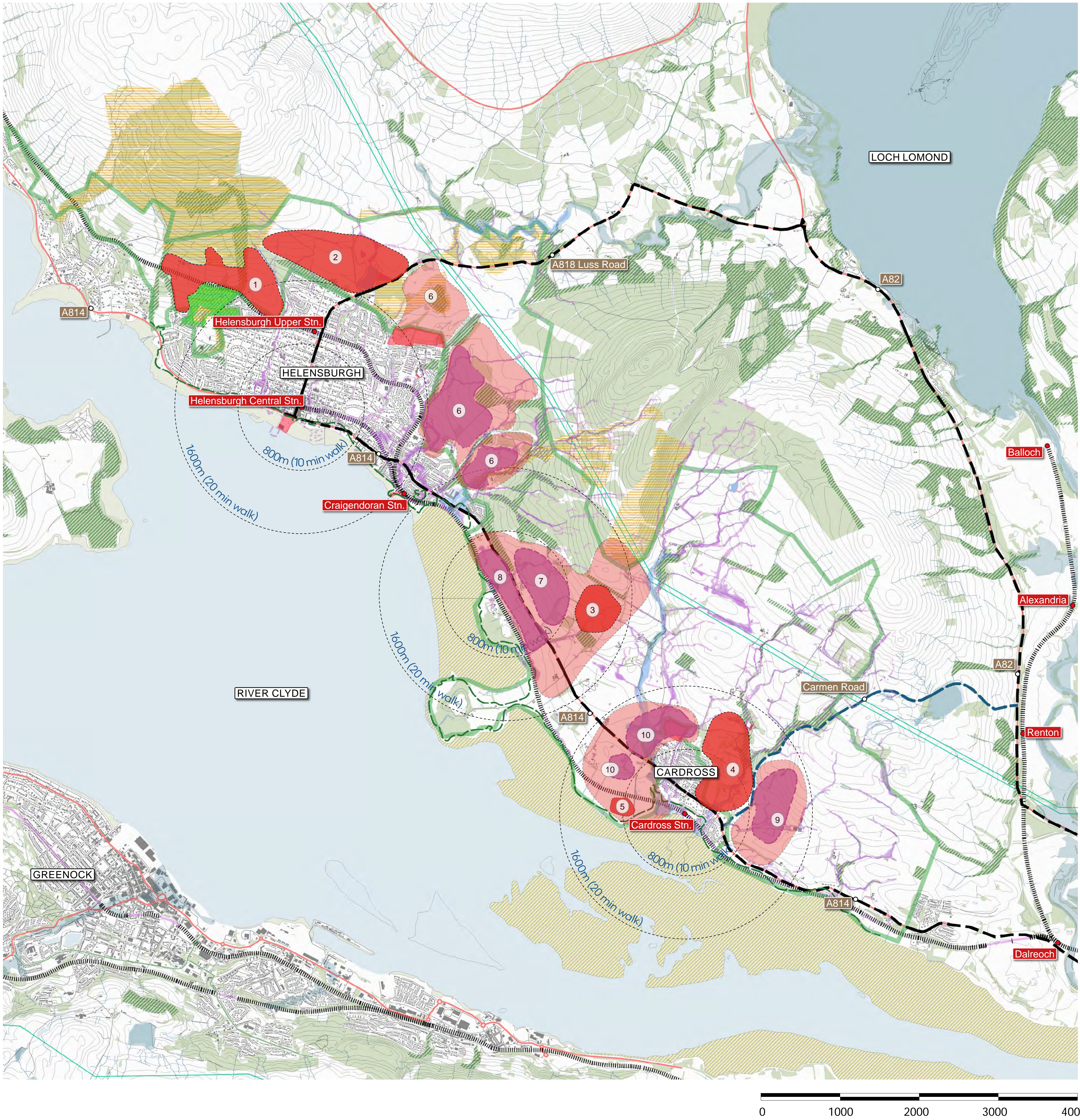
The Urban Capacity Study showed that the land already identified in the current LDP is not enough to meet future housing needs. Access considerations and the need for additional transport provisions and connections, outlined in the Transport Baseline Assessment, further limited the number of suitable locations.

The General Areas of Research were then narrowed further to **Refined Areas of Research** by a range of environmental constraints, including topography, woodland cover, flood risk areas, and proximity to designated landscapes.

This plan highlights these key constraints, demonstrating where development should be avoided or carefully managed.

The assessment indicated that, while there are localised sensitivities, these can be addressed through future masterplanning design, landscape integration, and phased infrastructure delivery.

These early stage assessments concluded that the Refined Areas of Research, Helensburgh east, Colgrain east and west, and Cardross east and west, are well-placed to accommodate long-term growth, provided that development is guided by a comprehensive strategy that balances housing delivery with infrastructure capacity and environmental stewardship.



- General Areas of Research
  - Rejected Areas of Research
    - Helensburgh West <sup>1</sup>
    - Helensburgh North <sup>2</sup>
    - Colgrain North <sup>3</sup>
    - Cardross North <sup>4</sup> and South <sup>5</sup>
  - Refined Areas of Research
    - Helensburgh East <sup>6</sup>
    - Colgrain East <sup>7</sup> and West <sup>8</sup>
    - Cardross East <sup>9</sup> and West <sup>10</sup>
  - Railway station
  - Railway line
  - Main traffic route
  - A Roads
  - Electricity transmission lines
  - Buildings
  - Woodland
  - Ancient woodland
  - Greenbelt
  - \*Surface water flood risk
  - \*River flood risk - high (SEPA)
  - \*Coastal flooding line
  - Open space protection area
  - Local nature reserve
  - SSSi
  - Housing allocation sites
- \* data taken from SEPA online floodmaps, 16th Oct 2025



# Strategic considerations - physical infrastructure

To support future growth across Helensburgh, Colgrain and Cardross, alongside expansion at Faslane, transport upgrades will be essential.

Further detailed work is required but it is likely that there are priority projects that will need to be considered for delivery to support the development and to minimise existing network pressures. Without these improvements, key junctions and routes already under strain, such as the Sinclair Street/Clyde Street junction in Helensburgh, could experience further congestion.

Providing an upgraded alternative route over the top of Helensburgh towards Faslane and upgraded roundabouts at Arden and Stoneymollan on the A82, could also help relieve pressure.

To improve the deliverability of Colgrain and Cardross, upgrades to the A814, such as traffic-calming measures, safer junctions, and continuous walking and cycling infrastructure, are encouraged. Delivery of such measures could make the transport corridor between them safer, strengthen links between communities, and improve access to nearby rail stations.

As part of the wider transport movement considerations, the potential for new/ relocated rail stations at Colgrain and Faslane for example has been considered. At this stage it would be difficult to deliver these due to passenger demand (both existing and future based on increased develop) being unlikely to offset the cost of delivery without government funding. At this stage, the approach is to provide safe, direct walking routes to Craigendoran



Station from both Helensburgh East and Colgrain, supporting sustainable travel without major infrastructure relocation.



KEY BUS ROUTES

**KEY**

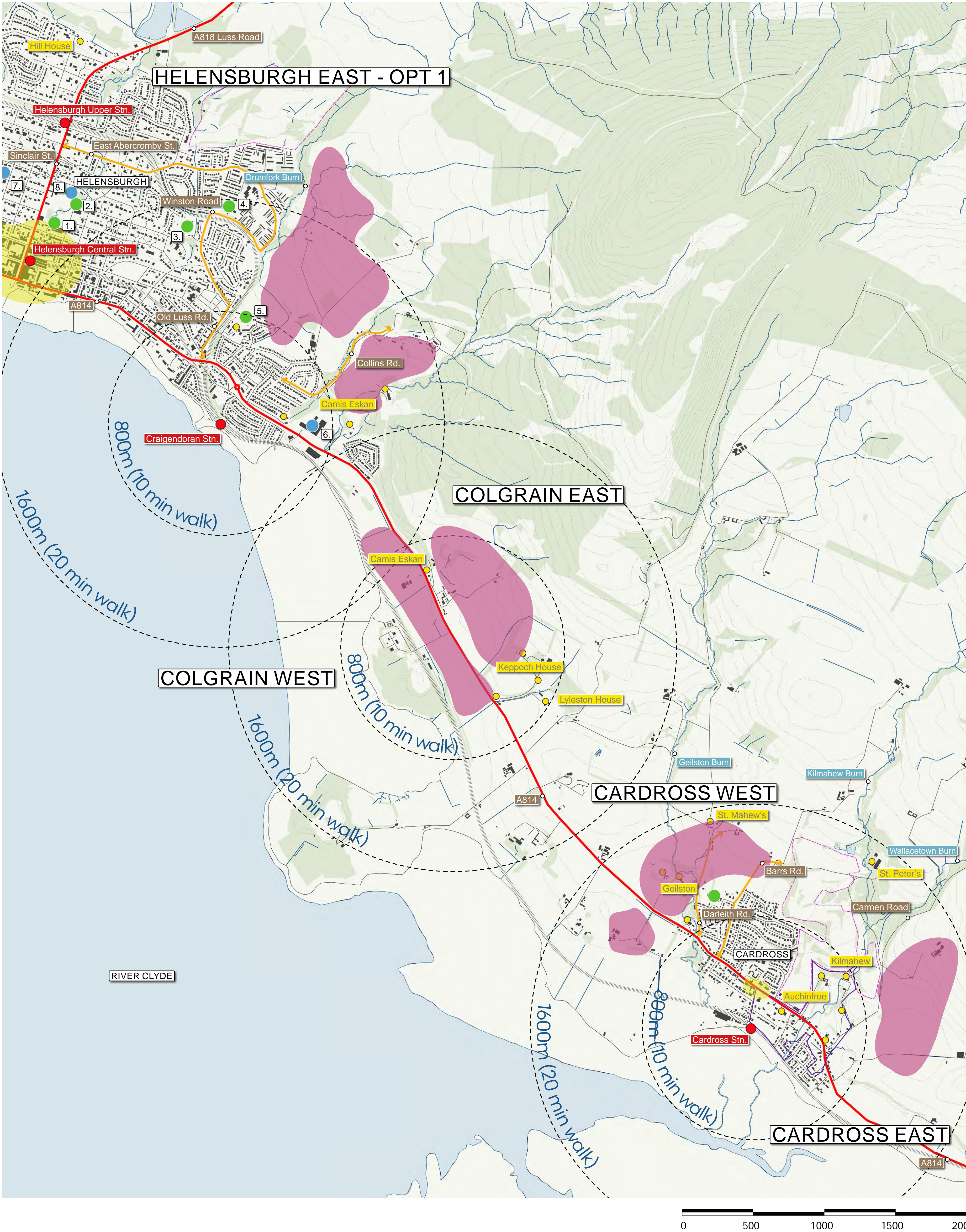
- Settlement boundary
- A road
- B road
- Strategic road improvements req'd
- Active travel route req'd
- rail and station (exist'g)
- rail and station (considered)
- bus 316
- bus 206
- bus 302
- Key traffic flow to serve Faslane

**KEY INFRASTRUCTURE INTERVENTIONS**

- Stoneymollan roundabout upgrade
- Upgrade to back roads; Carmen Road and Glenfruin Road B832
- Upgrade road access to Faslane
- Proposed Helensburgh strategic routes
- Arden Roundabout upgrade
- Safe pedestrian and cycle infrastructure between Cardross and Helensburgh on the A814
- Enhanced bus routes and services



# Community infrastructure & the 20 minute neighbourhood



- Railway station
  - Railway line
  - A roads
  - Key roads/routes
  - Water courses
  - Existing buildings
  - Golf club
- 
- Primary schools
  - Hermitage Primary <sup>1</sup>
  - Parklands Primary (SN) <sup>2</sup>
  - St Joseph's Primary <sup>3</sup>
  - John Logie Baird Primary <sup>4</sup>
  - Colgrain <sup>5</sup>
- 
- Secondary schools
  - Hermitage Academy <sup>6</sup>
  - Lomond (boarding) <sup>7</sup>
  - Parklands Secondary (SN) <sup>8</sup>
- 
- Commercial centre/shops
  - Heritage assets

**This area of research considers how well each site aligns with the 20-minute neighbourhood concept, where most daily needs can be met locally by walking, cycling, or using public transport.**

It reviewed access to essential services, active travel routes, schools, public transport, and opportunities for recreation, helping assess how each site supports sustainable, well-connected communities.

**Transport and Accessibility**  
The wider area benefits from strong regional connections, including direct rail links to Glasgow and Dumbarton and a network of local bus services.

However, much of the potential development land lies beyond a ten-minute walk of rail stations, and vehicle access points are limited. In Cardross and Colgrain, steep slopes, burns, and heavily trafficked sections of the A814 are barriers for safe movement for pedestrians and cyclists.

All locations therefore would benefit from investment in improved active-travel routes, safer junctions, and better public transport access to support sustainable travel.

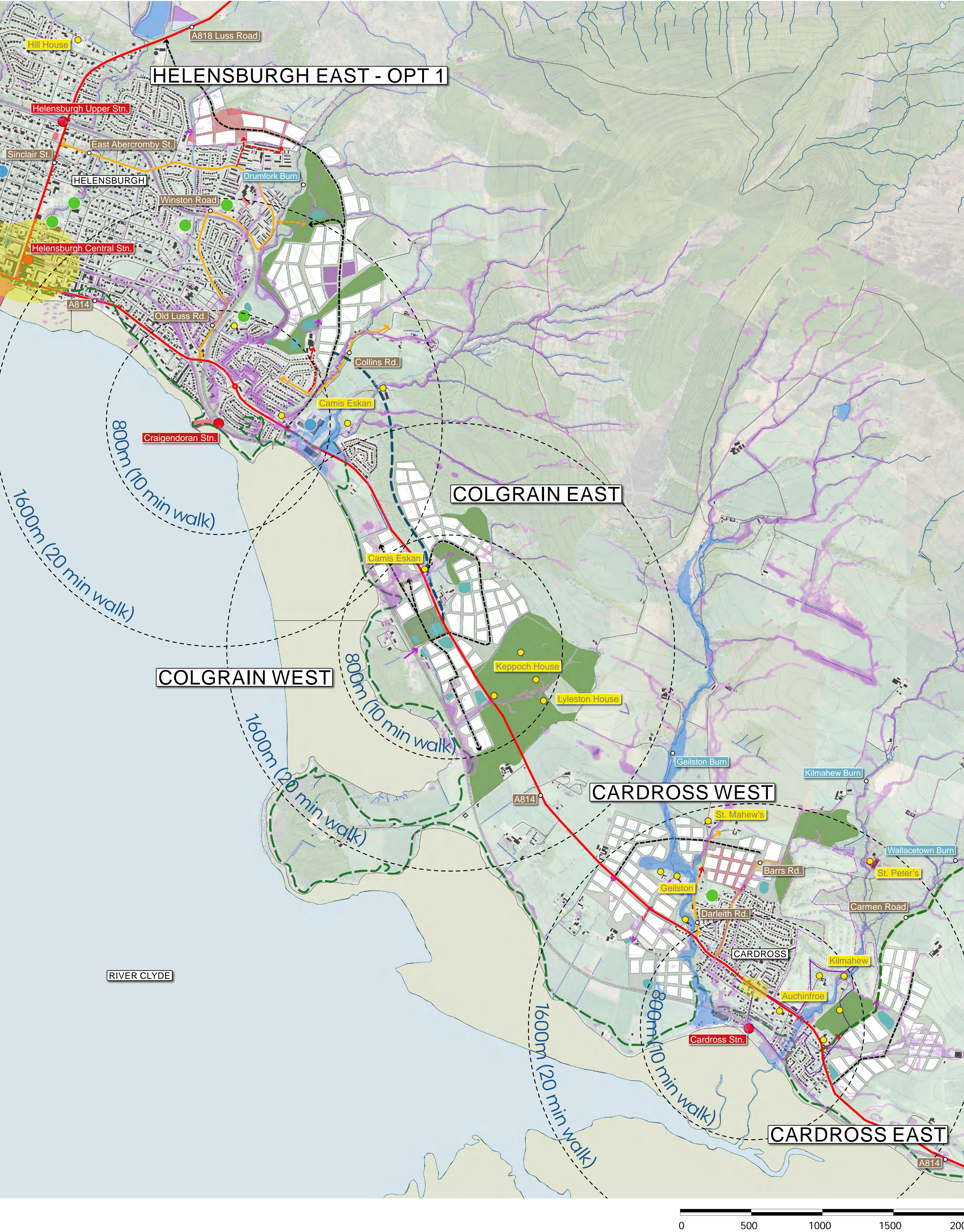
**Community infrastructure**  
Community services and facilities vary significantly between the three locations.

Helensburgh acts as the regional service hub, with multiple schools, GP practices, leisure facilities and a strong town centre. Cardross has more limited provision, with one primary school and small local shops, and Colgrain currently has no community facilities and relies entirely on neighbouring towns.

For any of the areas to support long-term growth, coordinated investment will be required to expand school capacity, healthcare provision, community spaces and local services. **Phasing development alongside infrastructure delivery will be essential to ensure growth is sustainable and minimises additional pressure on existing facilities.**



# Proposed areas of development



## Helensburgh East Option 1

This option could deliver a strategic link road connecting the A814 in the south to the A818 Luss Rd to the north, relieving pressure on Sinclair Street/Clyde Street junctions in the town centre.

## Helensburgh East Option 2

This option stops the strategic link road part way and connects it back into the existing road network via a bridge close to Winston Road.

## Colgrain East and West

The western portion of Colgrain sits on the flat coastal lowlands; the eastern portion on the hills with a potential strategic link road connecting to Helensburgh East.

- Railway station
- ▬ Railway line
- A roads
- Key roads/routes
- Existing buildings
- \*Surface water flood risk
- \*River flood risk - high (SEPA)
- \*Coastal flooding line
- Allocated housing sites
- Golf club
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Commercial centre/shops
- Water courses
- Heritage assets
- Proposed - main routes
- Proposed - optional route
- Proposed - secondary access route
- Proposed - bridge connection
- Proposed - pedestrian access points
- Proposed - open green space
- Proposed - development blocks
- Proposed - potential higher density areas
- Proposed - SUDS

\* data taken from SEPA online flood maps, 16th Oct 2025

## Cardross East and West

The western portion of the proposals wrap around the grounds of Geilston house and crosses the Geilston Burn. The eastern portion is located on the east side of the golf course and Carmen Road. The proposed main routes provide access to the development. Connecting these routes was rejected due to the potential damage to the ancient woodlands around St Peter's.



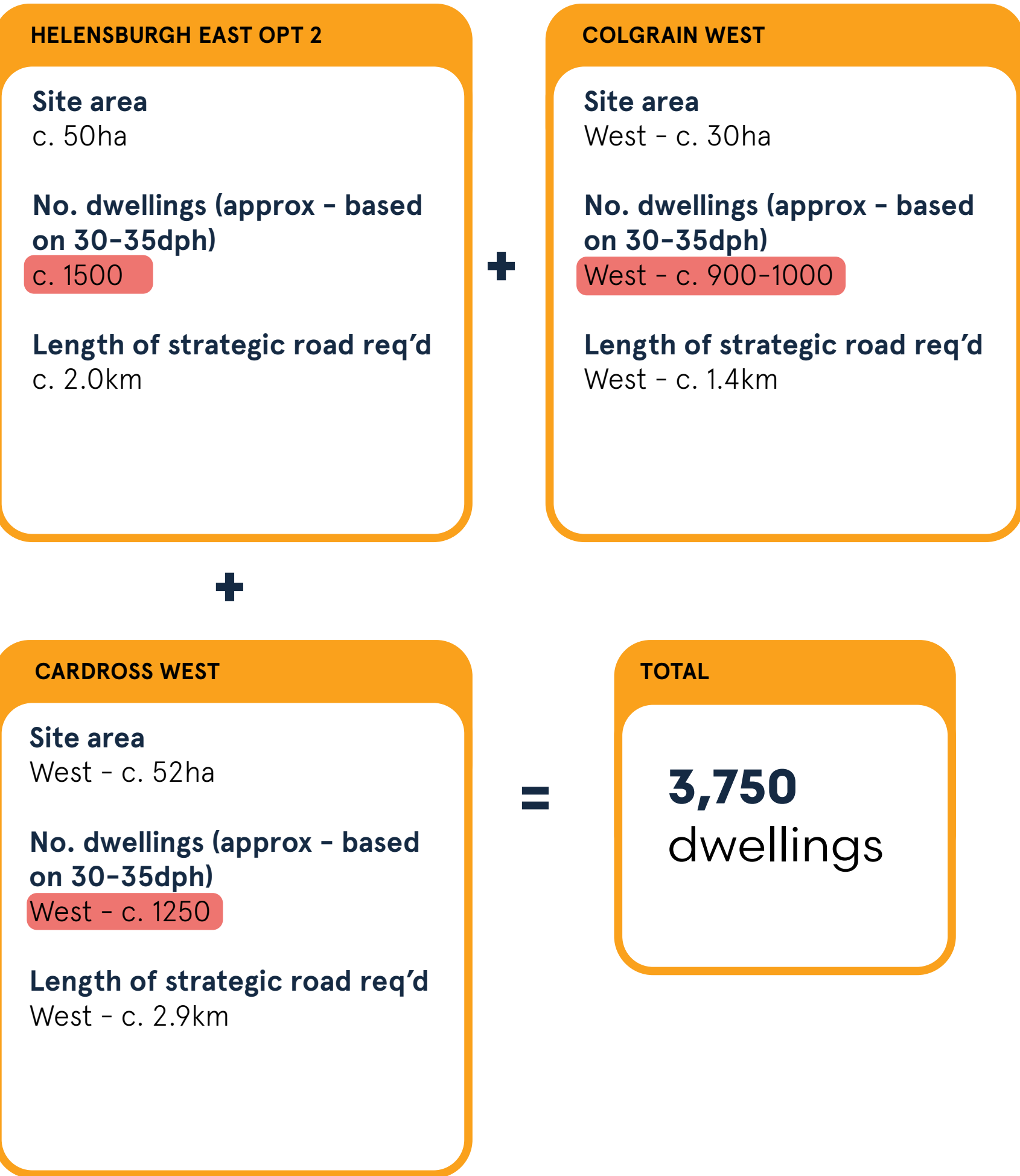
# x4 Scenarios



- Helensburgh opt 1 (max)
- Colgrain east and west
- Cardross (no major release of land)



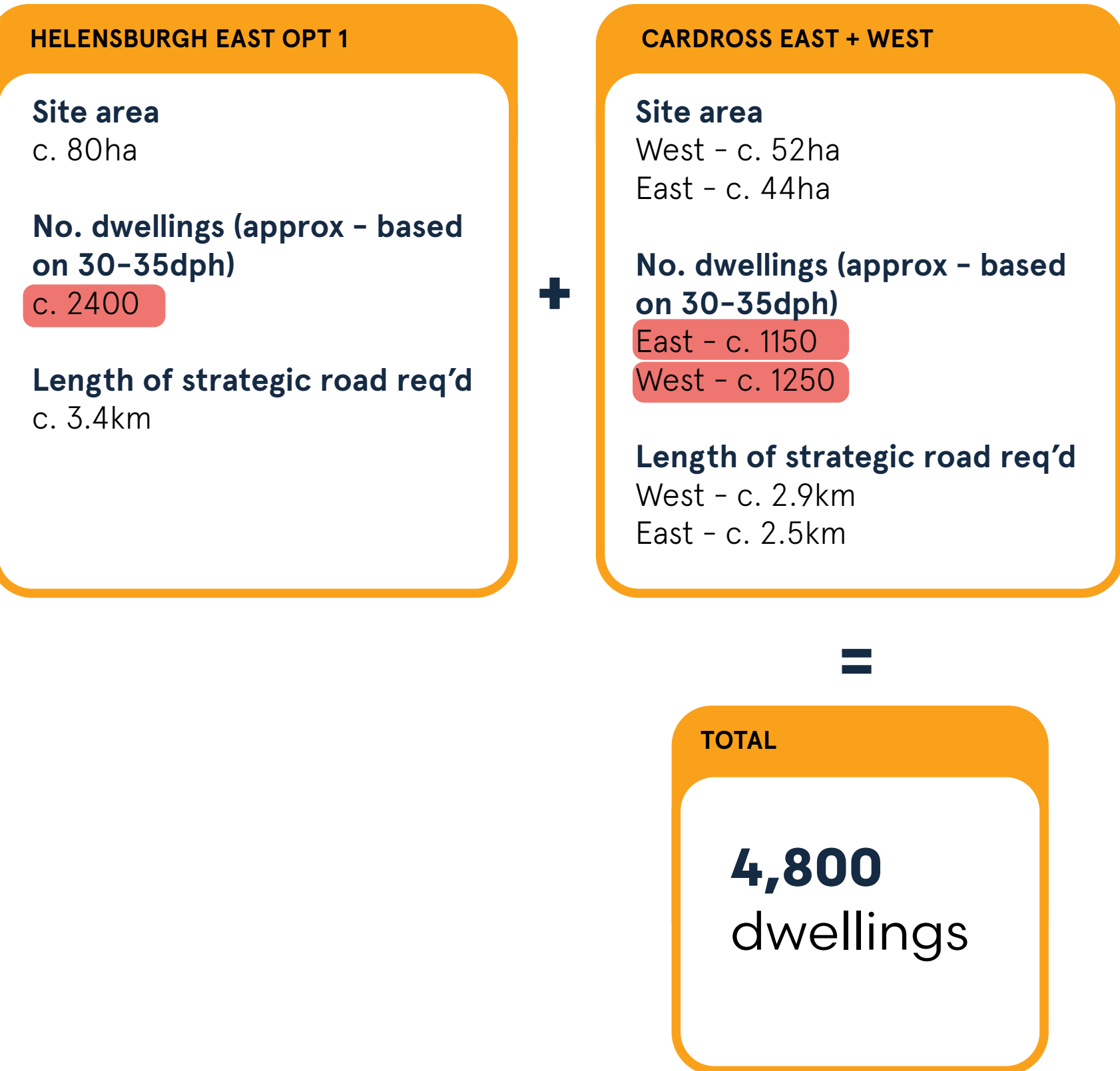
- Helensburgh opt 2 (min)
- Colgrain west only
- Cardross west only



- Helensburgh - (no major release of land)
- Colgrain east and west
- Cardross east and west

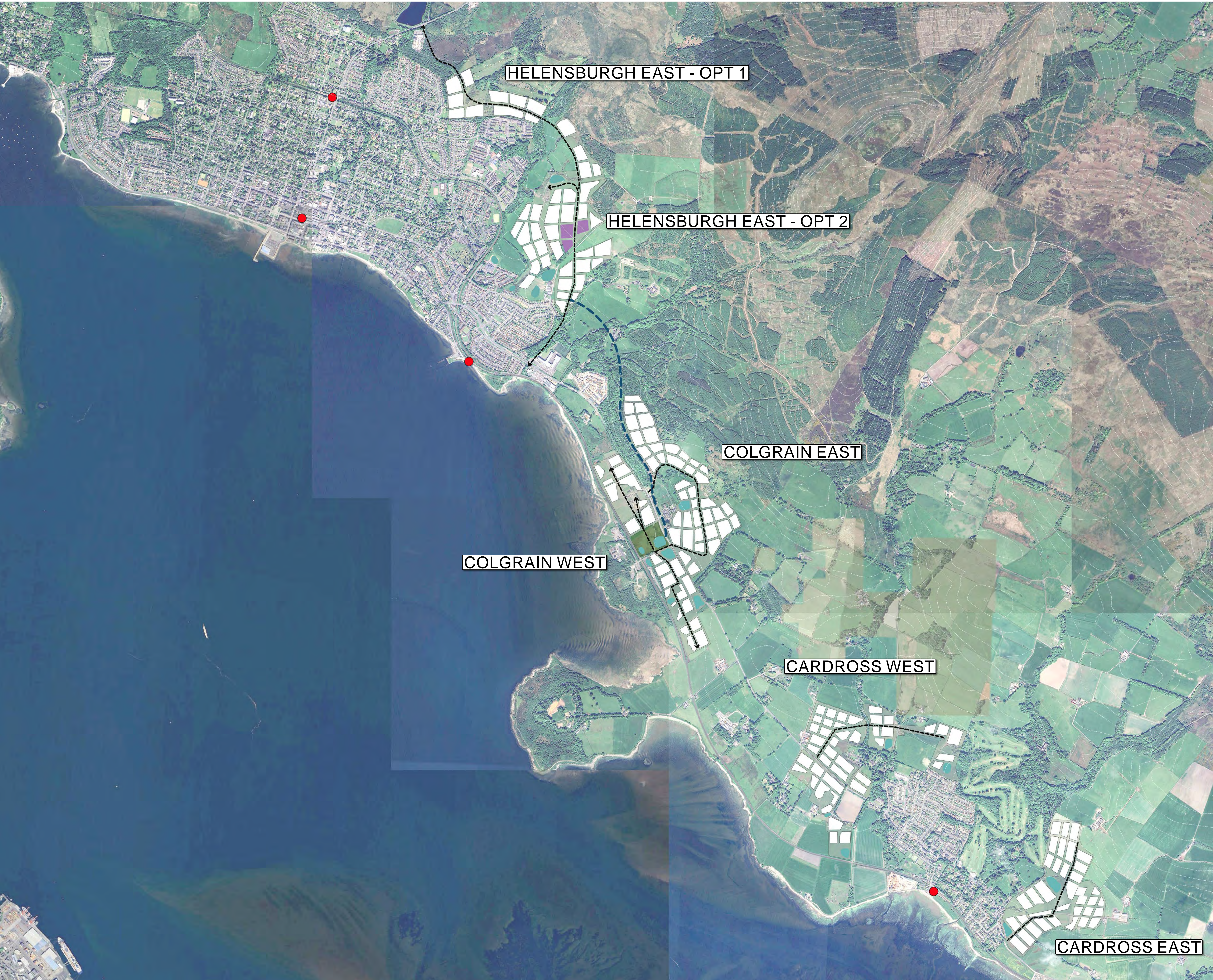


- Helensburgh opt 1 (max)
- Colgrain - (no major release of land)
- Cardross - east and west





# Next steps...



## What Next?

Following today's community engagement session, your feedback will be reviewed and considered as part of the next stage of appraising and refining the different development options. This will take place over the coming weeks.

Early next year a Transport Appraisal and Infrastructure Report (alongside the HSDF) will be prepared (which will provide further insight, evidence, and recommendations). We expect these to be finalised by Spring / Summer 2026.

Whilst the HSDF will not formally allocate land for development, you will be invited to engage in the statutory LDP process by Argyll & Bute Council in due course.