

2023 Periodic Review of UK Parliament Constituencies Intended approach to constituency design

Introduction

1. At its meeting of 18 January 2021, the Commission considered Paper 2021/03 and its general approach to constituency design for the 2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies.
2. Paper 2021/03 considered the theoretical entitlement of constituencies for each council area. The Commission considered four options with groupings of council areas and noted Options 2 and 3 offered more flexibility in constituency design because some of the council area groupings proposed a number of constituencies that would be closer to the electorate quota. The Commission asked the the Secretariat to further evaluate Options 2 and 3, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of each option.
3. The Commission is also invited to note the implications of the constituency area rule which applies for the 2023 Review (Rule 4, Schedule 2, Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986).

2023 Review – Scottish constituencies

4. The Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended) requires all four of the UK Commissions to carry out a review of UK Parliament constituencies. The Act requires 650 constituencies across the UK, of which 57 will be in Scotland, two fewer than at present. Two Scottish constituencies are protected in the legislation and not subject to review: Na h-Eileanan an Iar constituency and Orkney and Shetland constituency.
5. The electorate quota for the 2023 Review is 73,393. All non-protected constituencies must have an electorate within 5% of the electorate quota ie between 69,724 and 77,062 electors.
6. NRS have amended the electorate for the existing constituencies of Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock and Kilmarnock and Loudoun. The updated Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock constituency electorate is 72,057 (previously 70,965) the Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency electorate is 74,801 (75,893). Appendix A provides an updated map of the existing constituencies and their electorates.
7. The Secretariat have now updated the electorate for each council area.

Principles for constituency design

8. The draft 2023 Review Policies and Procedures Booklet was considered at the Commission's meeting of 18 January 2021 (BCS Paper 2021/02). The booklet set out the Commission's principles for constituency design and included that the Commission should:
 - design as many constituencies as practicable that do not cross a council area boundary;
 - recognise existing community ties;
 - take into consideration local geography (for example transport links, other electoral boundaries, administrative boundaries and natural features); and
 - consider special geographical considerations where appropriate.

Considerations – constituency area limit rule

9. Rule 4, Schedule 2 of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 sets out that no constituency shall be larger than 13,000 sq km but any constituency whose area is greater than 12,000 sq km can have an electorate which is below the lower limit of 5% less than the electoral quota, provided that the Commission "is satisfied that it is *not reasonably possible* for the constituency to comply with that rule."
10. The distribution of electorate in the UK and the size of individual council areas are such that these exceptions to the normal rules are only likely to apply to constituencies in Highland Council area. Highland is the largest council area in Scotland, covering an area of 26,500 km². The second largest council area in Scotland is Argyll and Bute (7,200 km²).
11. Appendix B provides a map of the Highland North constituency from the Commisison's 2018 Review of UK Parliament constituency boundaries. The Highland North constituency covers an area of 12,984.7 km². Applying the March 2020 electorate, 75,551 electors reside within the Highland North constituency.
12. This demonstrates that it is 'reasonably possible' for the Commission to design a constituency within the electorate quota (69,724 and 77,062) and within the area limit (13,000km²).
13. The Secretariat will consider constituency designs within Highland that adhere to the area rule. See Appendix E "Theoretical entitlement – constituencies for each council area."

Considerations - Council area grouping designs

14. The Secretariat has developed constituency design sketches for Options 2 and 3, from Paper 2021/03, to highlight some of the possible issues of constituency design within the council area groupings.
15. Once the Commisison has agreed an option for groupings, a more detailed consideration of individual constituencies within each grouping will be presented at future Commission meetings.
16. If the Commission is not satisfied with the constituency designs that can be achieved within the agreed option, it can ask the Secretariat to revisit earlier options or consider alternatives. The groupings are intended to support not constrain constituency design.

Option 2 (Appendix C)

Option 2 Council areas	Electorate March 2020	Number of Constituencies	Average electorate per constituency
Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Highland, Moray	668,832	9	74,315
Angus, Clackmannanshire, Dundee City, Falkirk, Fife, Perth and Kinross, Stirling, West Lothian	958,118	13	73,701

City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian	515,990	7	73,713
Ayrshires (North, South, East)	290,225	4	72,556
East Renfrewshire	72,959	1	72,959
Glasgow City, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire	645,131	9	71,681
Dumfries and Galloway, East and West Dunbartonshire, North and South Lanarkshire, Scottish Borders	872,356	12	72,696
		55	

Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Highland, Moray council areas

17. The Commission could propose nine constituencies within this grouping and only split a single ward in Aberdeen City council area.
18. This grouping splits Moray council area between two constituencies. The existing Moray constituency is coterminous with Moray council area and is within the electorate quota, with 71,537 electors.

Angus, Clackmannanshire, Dundee City, Falkirk, Fife, Perth and Kinross, Stirling, West Lothian council areas

19. Within this large grouping it is possible to design constituencies that do not include parts of three different council areas.
20. Within this grouping the Commission could consider retaining the existing Stirling constituency boundary (70,085 electors) which is coterminous with the Stirling council area boundary.
21. In West Lothian it is not possible to use the M8 motorway as a constituency boundary because the Livingston electorate exceeds the electorate quota. However the existing Livingston and Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituencies both cross the M8.
22. The Commission could consider linking Falkirk with Clackmannanshire or Stirling. Historically the Ochil 1997-2005, Clackmannan 1983-1997, Clackmannan and East Stirlingshire 1950-1983 constituencies have all crossed the Forth.
23. Adding the Perth and Kinross, Kinross-shire ward to Fife offers more flexibility for ward design within Fife. Fife ward boundaries follow the M90 and it is possible to use the M90 as a constituency boundary. Communities to the west of the M90 such as Dunfermline and Rosyth may wish to retain local ties.
24. The eastern Perth and Kinross wards could be added to Angus, with the remaining Angus wards linked with Dundee.

City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian council areas

25. Within this grouping it is possible to retain the existing Midlothian constituency boundary, with 71,210 electors.

26. East Lothian council area has 82,479 electors. Musselburgh can be split. The existing Musselburgh ward contains 15,989 electors but the River Esk splits the ward evenly in terms of both area and electorate and could create an identifiable constituency boundary.
27. Constituency design in Edinburgh will likely require many wards to be split, mainly due to the large electorates within each Edinburgh ward.

East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire council areas

28. Four constituencies currently sit within the three Ayrshire council areas. All four constituencies are within the electorate quota for the review and could therefore remain unchanged for the 2023 Review.

East Renfrewshire council area

29. The existing East Renfrewshire constituency boundary is coterminous with East Renfrewshire council area and at this stage there appears to be no benefit in linking East Renfrewshire with neighbouring groupings.

Glasgow City, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire council areas

30. To create constituencies within the electorate quota, a Renfrewshire ward or area of Renfrewshire needs to be added to Inverclyde and Glasgow council areas.
31. Constituency design in Glasgow will require many wards to be split, mainly due to the large electorates within each Glasgow ward.
32. One possible issue discovered is that a constituency may have to cross the River Clyde. Historically two constituencies have crossed the Clyde: Glasgow Shettleston (1997-2005); and Glasgow Central (1983-1997). A possible solution could be to link this grouping with the grouping of Dumfries and Galloway, East and West Dunbartonshire, North and South Lanarkshire and Scottish Borders council areas.

Dumfries and Galloway, East and West Dunbartonshire, North and South Lanarkshire, Scottish Borders council areas

33. During recent UK Parliament boundary reviews the Commisison has merged East Dunbartonshire and West Dunbartonshire council areas together to create two constituencies. This has resulted in opposition from the public and stakeholders due to Bearsden and Milngave being split between two constituencies.
34. In North Lanarkshire it could be possible to use the M8 motorway as a constituency boundary by creating an Airdrie and Coatbridge constituency. However the existing Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill and Airdrie and Shotts constituencies both cross the M8.
35. This grouping would result in a constituency covering three council areas, similar to the existing Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale constituency which partly covers Dumfries and Galloway, South Lanarkshire and Scottish Borders council areas.

Option 3 (Appendix D)

Option 3 Council areas	Electorate	Number of Constituencies	Average electorate per constituency
Ayrshires (North, South, East),	290,225	4	72,556
City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian	651,224	9	72,358
Highland, Argyll and Bute, West Dunbartonshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire	959,994	13	73,846
East Dunbartonshire, North and South Lanarkshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Borders	804,561	11	73,142
Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus	440,194	6	73,366
Clackmannanshire, Falkirk, Fife	440,442	6	73,407
Dundee City, Perth and Kinross	222,390	3	74,130
Moray	71,537	1	71,537
Stirling	70,085	1	70,085
East Renfrewshire	72,959	1	72,959
		55	

36. Option 3 has been amended from the option considered in Paper 2021/03.

37. When verifying the electorate data it was identified that it was not possible to create three constituencies within Dumfries and Galloway and Scottish Borders council areas. Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway council area grouping has therefore been added to the East Dunbartonshire, North and South Lanarkshire council area grouping.

38. Further to this, it proved challenging to sketch constituencies within the Highland, Argyll and Bute, West Dunbartonshire and Stirling council area grouping. Therefore Stirling has been removed from this grouping while Glasgow City, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire council areas have been added.

East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire council areas

39. Four constituencies currently sit within the three Ayrshire council areas. All four constituencies are within the electorate quota for the review and could therefore remain unchanged for the 2023 Review.

East Renfrewshire council area

40. The existing East Renfrewshire constituency boundary is coterminous with East Renfrewshire council area and there appears to be no benefit in linking East Renfrewshire with neighbouring groupings.

Moray council area

41. The existing Moray constituency boundary is coterminous with Moray council area and there appears to be no benefit in linking Moray with neighbouring groupings.

Stirling council area

42. The existing Stirling constituency boundary is coterminous with Stirling council area and there appears to be no benefit in linking Stirling with neighbouring groupings.

Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus council areas

43. This grouping offers some flexibility because the Commission could consider six constituencies covering the whole area or four constituencies within Angus and Aberdeenshire and two constituencies within Aberdeen City council area.

Dundee City, Perth and Kinross council areas

44. Early sketches have shown that the Commission could consider a Dundee constituency and a West Dundee and Perth constituency, linking the two cities along the A90 corridor. A more rural Perthshire constituency could also be created stretching from Kinross to Pitlochry.

City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian council areas

45. Within this grouping it is possible to retain the existing Midlothian constituency boundary, with 71,210 electors.
46. As discussed in Option 2, East Lothian council area now has 82,479 electors. Therefore Musselburgh can be split. The existing Musselburgh ward contains 15,989 electors but the River Esk splits the ward evenly in terms of area and electorate and could create an identifiable constituency boundary.
47. Constituency design in Edinburgh will require many wards to be split, mainly due to the large electorates within each Edinburgh ward. Wards in West Lothian will also have to be split and linked with Edinburgh.

Clackmannanshire, Falkirk, Fife council areas

48. This group links Falkirk with Clackmannanshire, creating a constituency crossing the River Forth. Historically the Ochil 1997-2005, Clackmannan 1983-1997, Clackmannan and East Stirlingshire 1950-1983 constituencies have all crossed the Forth.
49. Fife ward boundaries follow the M90 but this option would likely create a constituency crossing the M90. The Dunfermline East constituency (1983-2005) crossed the M90.
50. Six constituencies could be designed within this grouping with few ward boundaries being split.

East Dunbartonshire, North and South Lanarkshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Borders council areas

- 51. This grouping avoids the division of Bearsden and Milngavie in East Dunbartonshire.
- 52. Although 11 constituencies cover this area, constituency design could be achieved with minimal ward division.
- 53. Further analysis is required but it appears unlikely that the M8 could be used as constituency boundary in North Lanarkshire. As discussed earlier the existing Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill and Airdrie and Shotts constituencies both cross the M8.

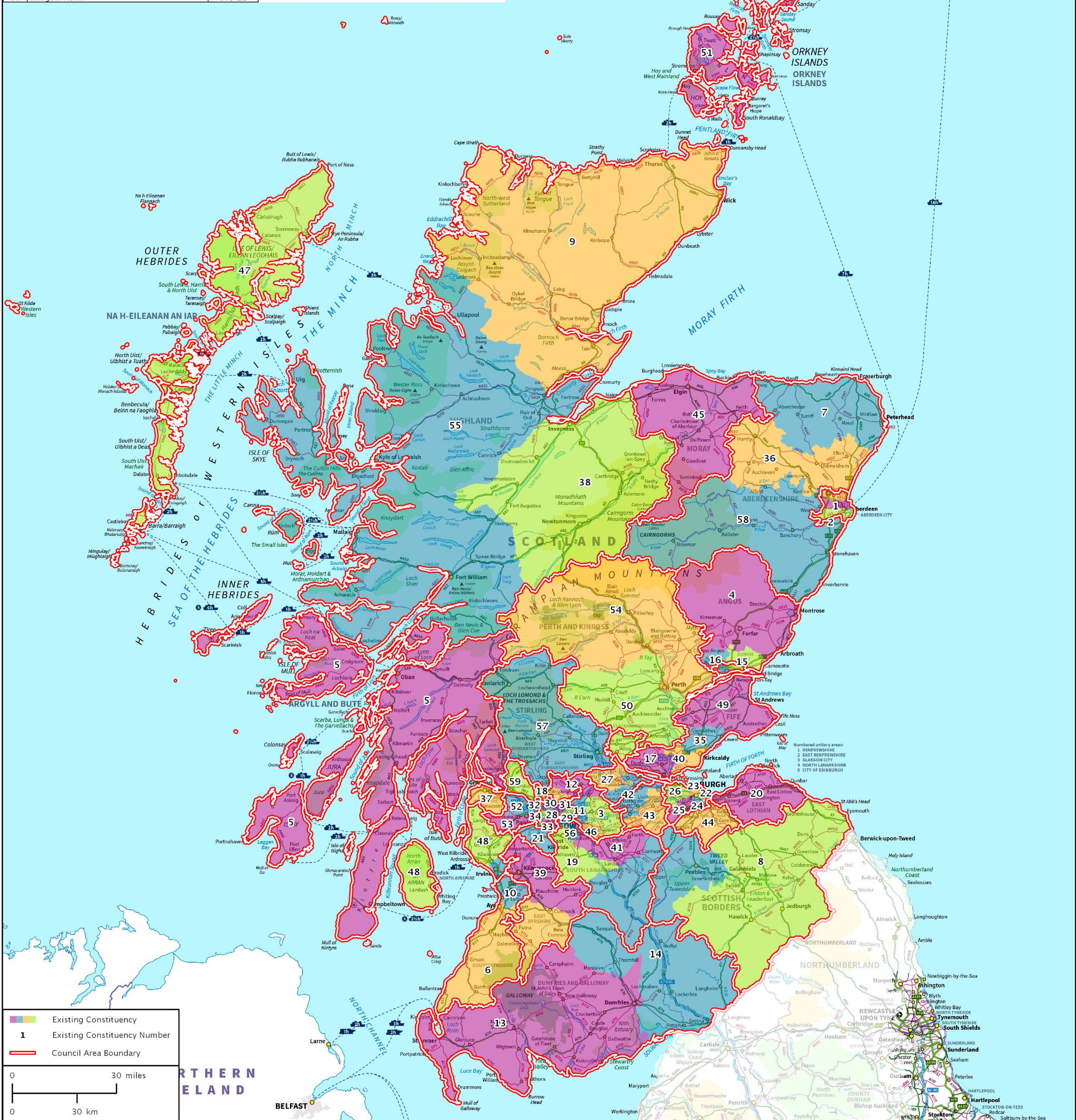
Highland, Argyll and Bute, West Dunbartonshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire council areas

- 54. This grouping offers a solution to the issue raised in Option 2 and could resolve creating a constituency crossing the River Clyde in Glasgow.
- 55. This option would split West Dunbartonshire adding Clydebank to Glasgow and Dumbarton-Alexandria to Argyll and Bute.
- 56. As a consequence Argyll and Bute council area would be linked with Highland and West Dunbartonshire council areas. Similarly Glasgow would be linked with Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire council areas.

Conclusion and recommendations

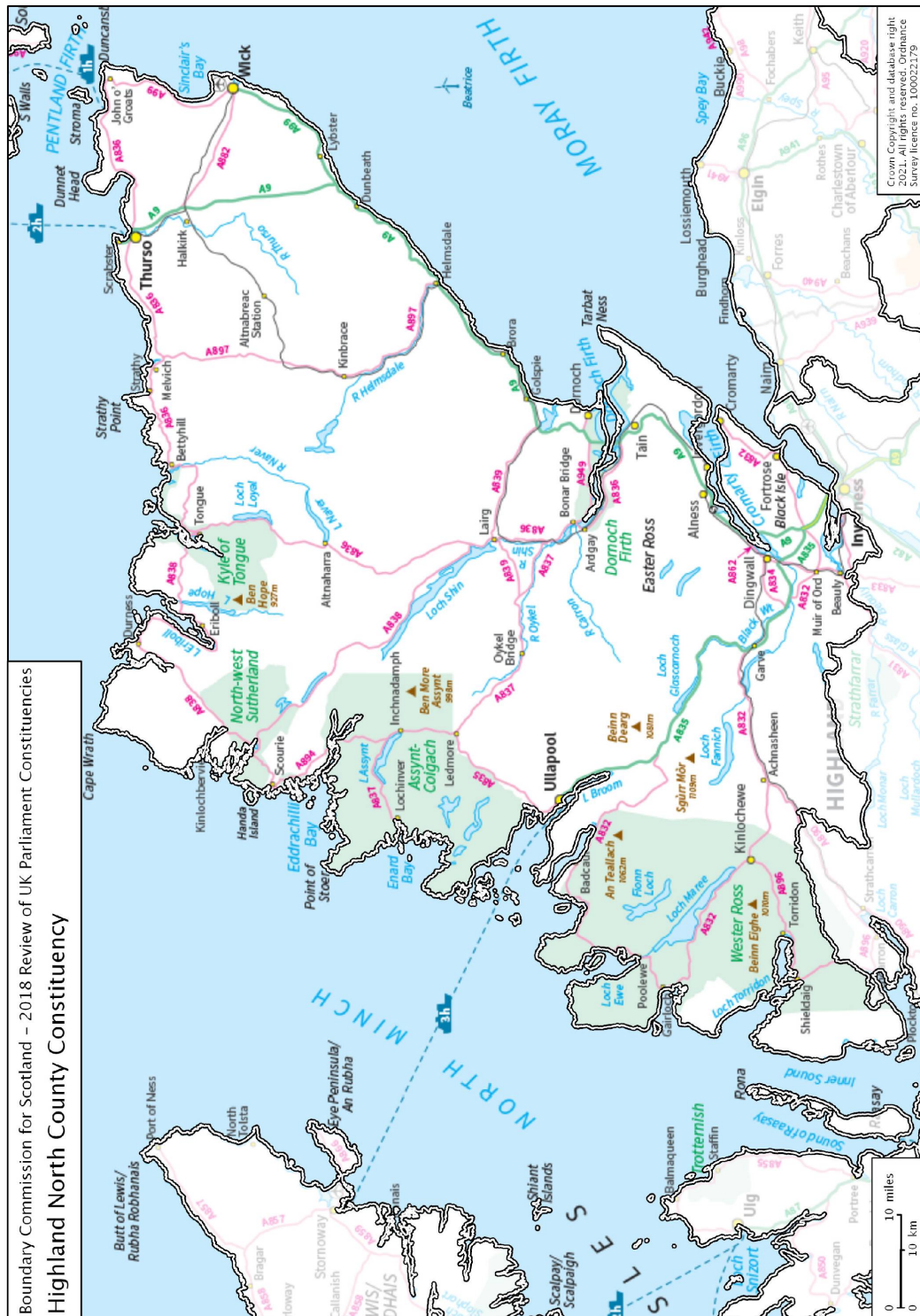
- 57. The Secretariat invites the Commission to consider and agree its approach to constituency design for the 2023 Review.
- 58. If the Commission is not satisfied with an option, it can ask the Secretariat to revisit earlier options or consider alternative designs. An updated table “Theoretical entitlement – constituencies for each council area” is available in Appendix E for that purpose.
- 59. The Commission is invited to agree its approach to the application of the constituency area rule in Highland council areas.

Secretariat
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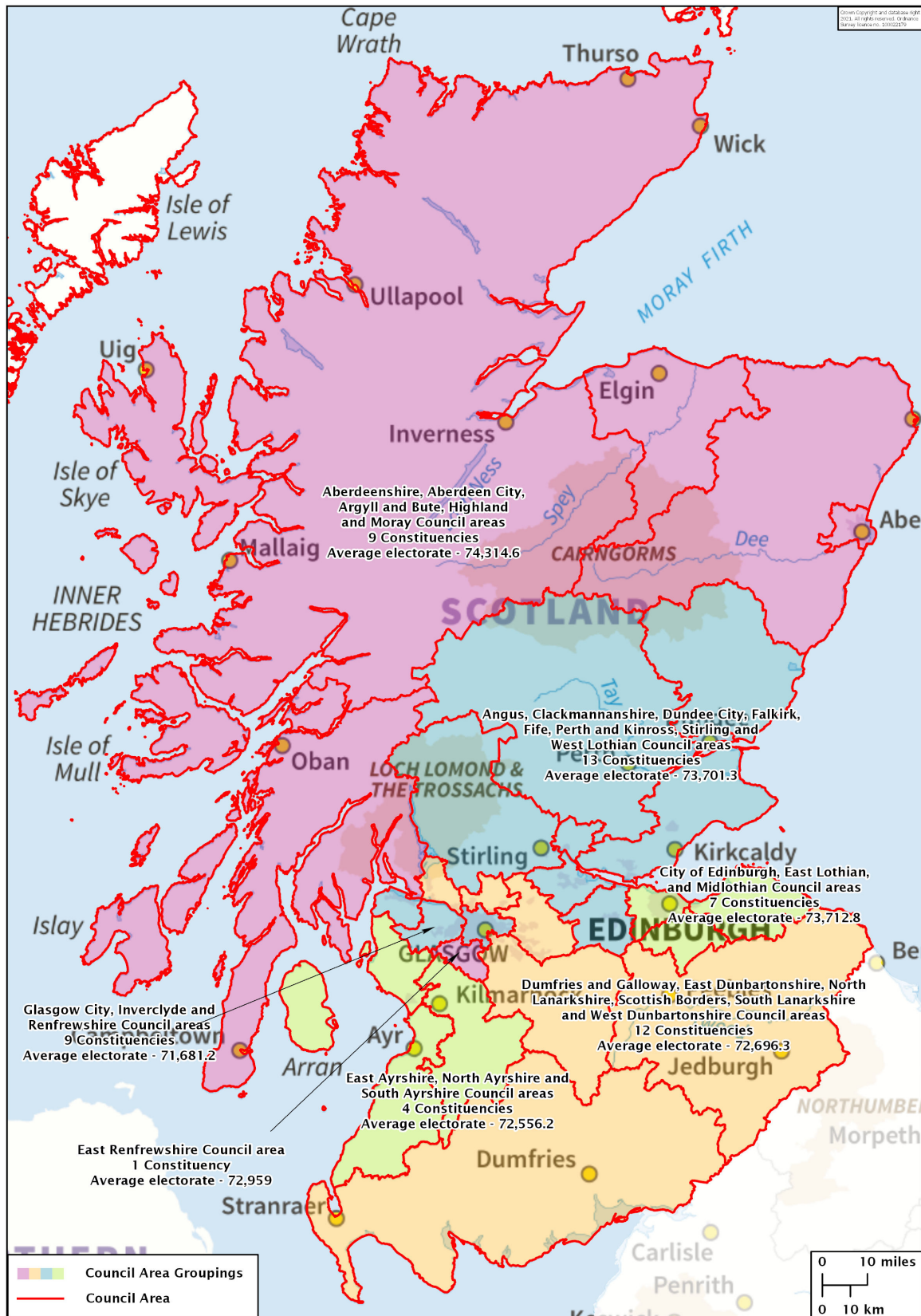
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Appendix B

Constituency area rule

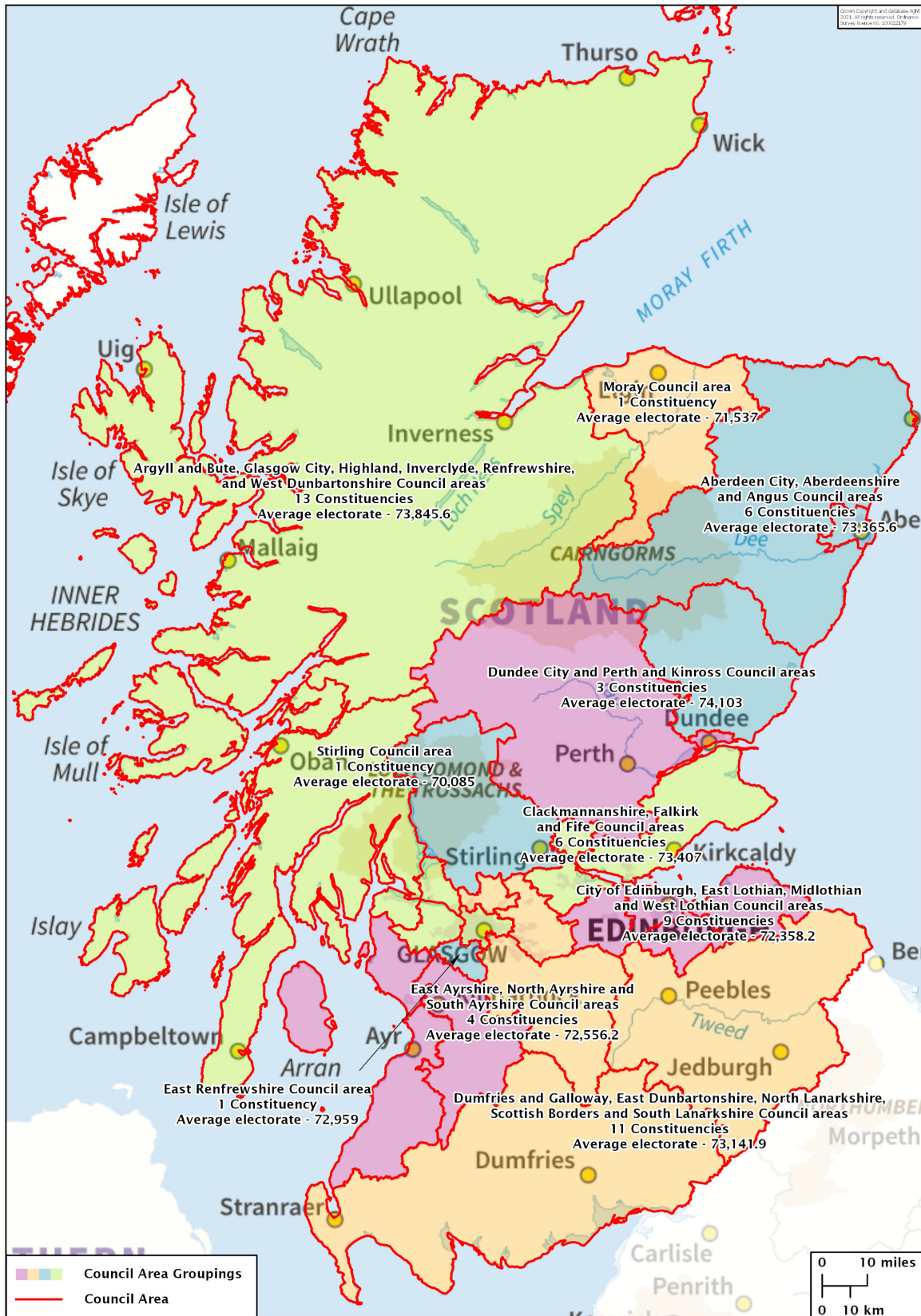
Example Highland North constituency, 12,984.7 km² and 75,551 electors

Option 2



Appendix D

Option 3



Appendix E

Theoretical entitlement – constituencies for each council area

Council Area	Electorate March 2020	Entitlement
Aberdeen City	153,455	2.1
Aberdeenshire	196,772	2.7
Angus	89,967	1.2
Argyll and Bute	67,565	0.9
City of Edinburgh	362,301	4.9
Clackmannanshire	39,464	0.5
Dumfries and Galloway	117,760	1.6
Dundee City	107,950	1.5
East Ayrshire	94,206	1.3
East Dunbartonshire	85,039	1.2
East Lothian	82,479	1.1
East Renfrewshire	72,959	1.0
Falkirk	122,963	1.7
Fife	278,015	3.8
Glasgow City	446,575	6.1
Highland	179,503	2.4
Inverclyde	61,096	0.8
Midlothian	71,210	1.0
Moray	71,537	1.0
North Ayrshire	106,236	1.4
North Lanarkshire	258,240	3.5
Perth and Kinross	114,440	1.6
Renfrewshire	137,460	1.9
Scottish Borders	90,667	1.2
South Ayrshire	89,783	1.2
South Lanarkshire	252,855	3.4
Stirling	70,085	1.0
West Dunbartonshire	67,795	0.9
West Lothian	135,234	1.8