

Sutherland Futures

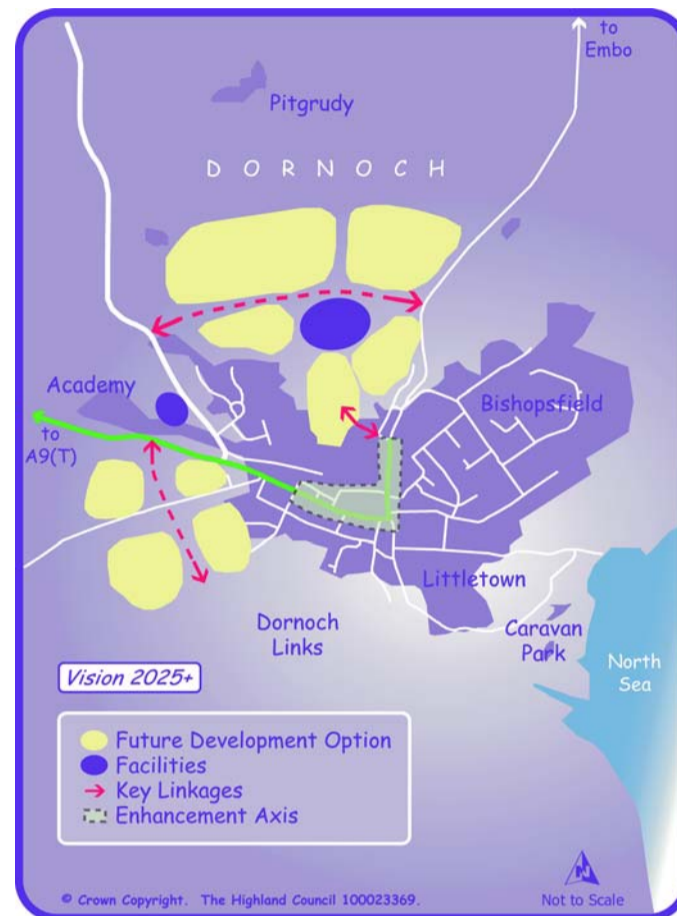
south & east sutherland



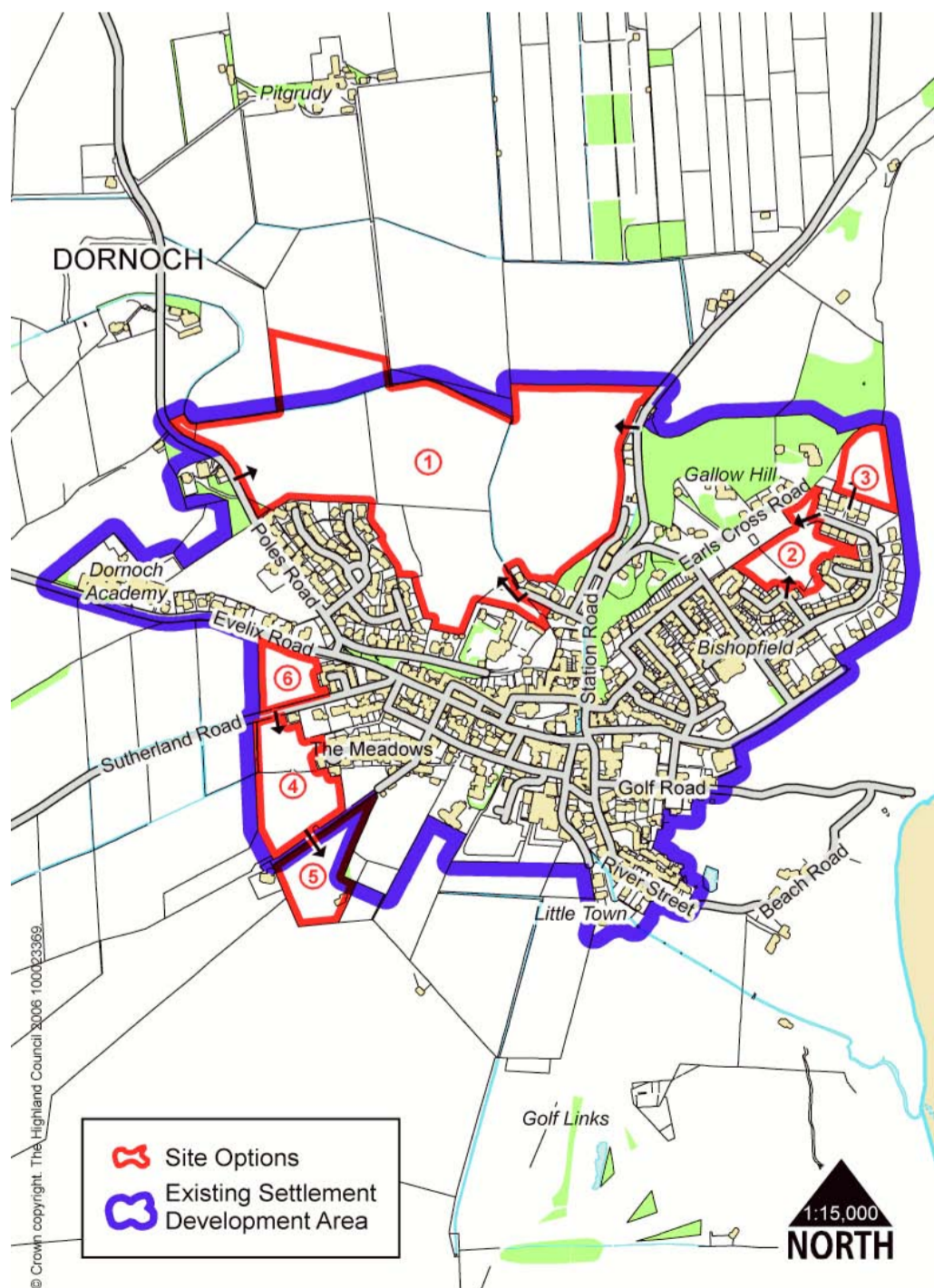
DORNOCH

The Royal Burgh is situated at the edge of the Dornoch Firth some 5 km from the A9. Dornoch is one of the County's principal service and tourist centres, renowned for its exceptional character and historic core with origins in the 6th Century - designated an Outstanding Conservation Area; its visitor resort attractions including recreational links and outstanding golf facilities; a favourable climate and outstanding views. These qualities, combined with shorter journey times south continually increase the attractiveness of Dornoch as a place to live; and demonstrate the potential locally for extending services and promoting the Burgh as a prestigious business location. The highest design expectations in development/redevelopment will be essential to sustaining the quality and character.

The exceptional coastal frontage, links and low-lying areas are unsuitable for development. Landward areas adjoining Dornoch to the north and west offer substantial scope for long-term expansion, "infilling" between local radial routes. Undeveloped land allocations offer capacity for some 380 additional homes and proposals for some 160 houses have been lodged in relation to land at Meadows Park Road and Sutherland Road. Priority must be given to opening-up designated expansion areas, ensuring their orderly development phased with the capacity of infrastructure and the availability/release of land. A comprehensive masterplan/design brief - based upon the approved Framework Plan for the Dornoch North expansion area - is needed to fit development with the urban structure; accommodate a range of uses including business, commercial - possibly including a supermarket - and community facilities; together with treed, open space and new distributor road corridors. With the desirability of pedestrian access to key services, the northern edge of Dornoch should not be further than 1 km from the town centre. The extent of expansion to the north must also balance topography, ground conditions and "containment" in the landscape. Waste water treatment is subject to European Directives and a requirement to improve the quality of effluent discharged, although the Waste Water Treatment Works has significant capacity. Water supply deficiencies are programmed for upgrading between 2006-2010.



Recreation Assets (Dornoch Links)

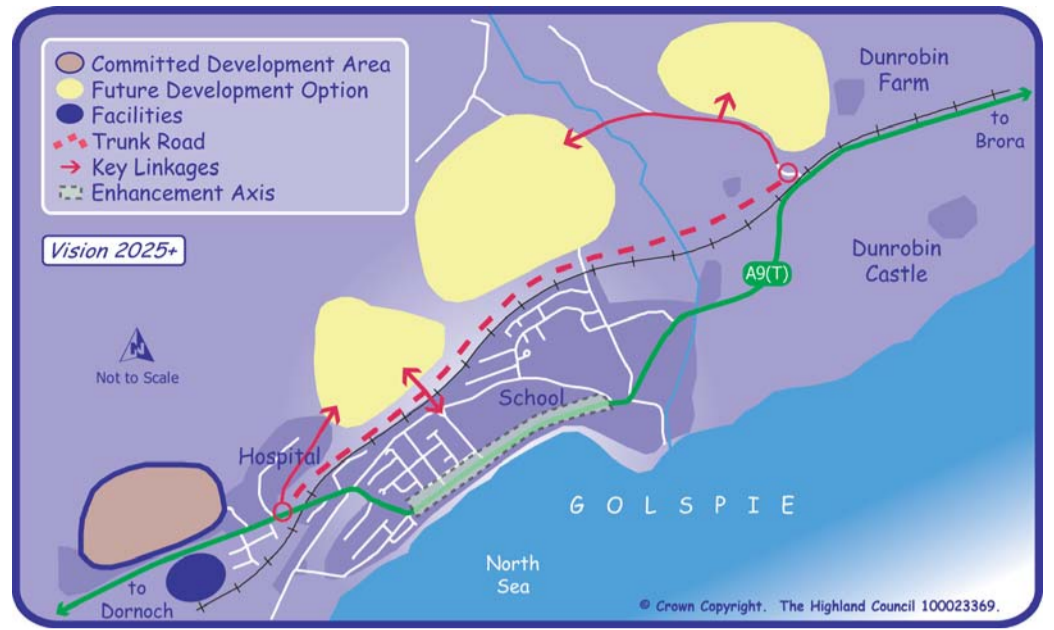


KEY SITES - Dornoch

1. Dornoch North	29.0 ha. - housing / commercial / community	Framework Plan, incorporating commercial/ community and business sites and governed by comprehensive road network, phased servicing and facilities and developer contributions
2. Bishopsfield	3.3 ha. - housing	Council Ownership
3. Earl's Cross	1.5 ha. - housing	Planning Permission, development started
4. Meadows Park Road	3.5 ha. - housing	allocated; subject to a suitable surface water drainage system. Access from Sutherland Road; application pending for c. 100 houses
5. Meadows Park Road (south)	3.0 ha. - housing	pending planning application
6. Sutherland Road	1.8 ha. - housing	application pending, suitable for sheltered or amenity accommodation

GOLSPIE

Golspie is pressed largely between the shore and railway, butted by important heritage and recreational areas, notably the historic policies of Dunrobin Castle to the north, the golf course to the south and Ben Braggie woodland and trails which occupy higher ground to the west. Following a period in which development has been restrained - some 20 houses only have been added in the last 10 years - major expansion to the south-west has been unlocked by the Council's acquisition of a substantial housing land bank at Drummuie and servicing of the adjoining business park by Caithness & Sutherland Enterprise. The Highland Housing Alliance proposes to build 70 homes as a first phase development at Drummuie. Further opportunities to consolidate the village lie principally to the west of the commercial thoroughfare, the A9.

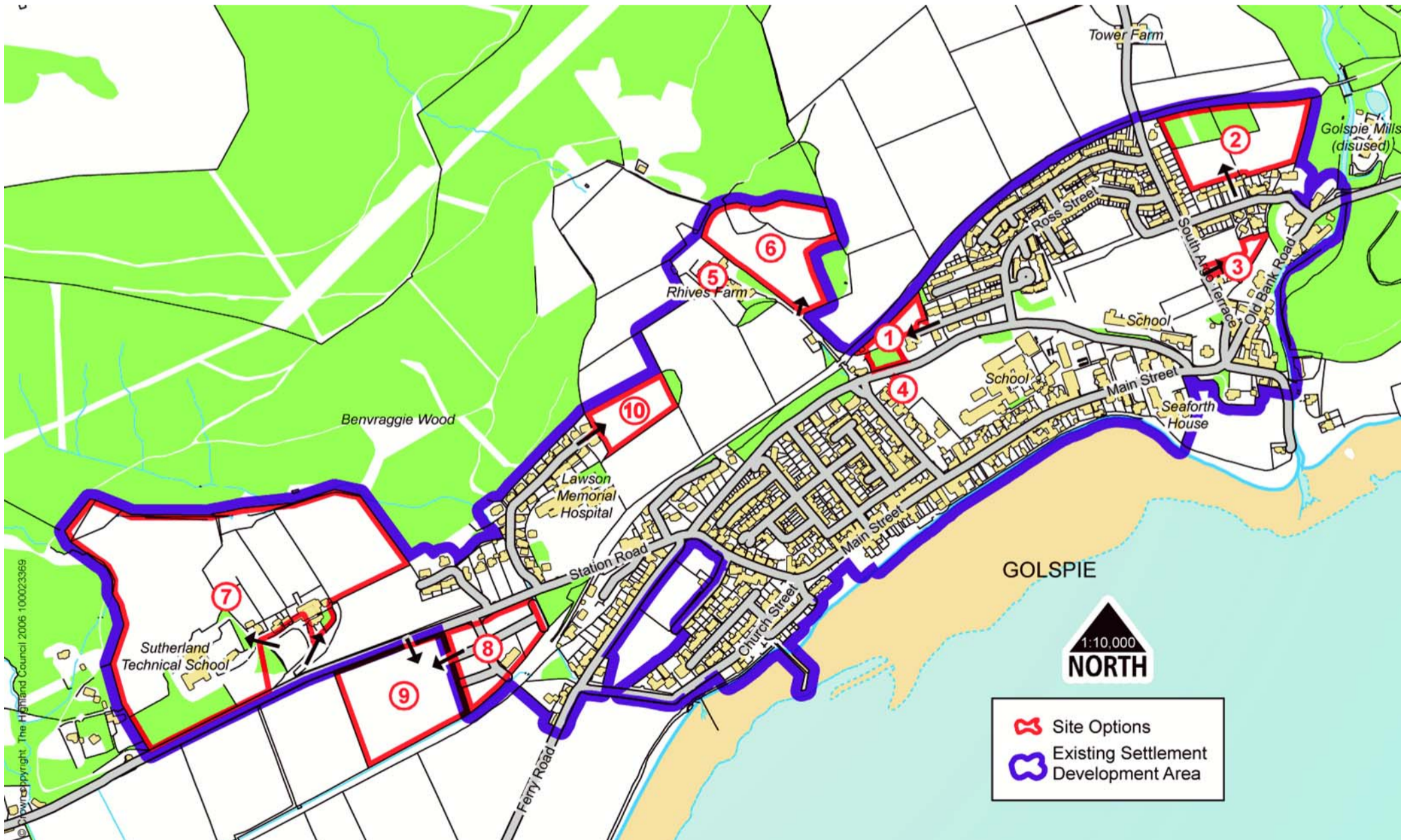


KEY SITES - Golspie		
1. Woodland Way	0.5 ha. - housing	remaining plots
2. Sibell Road	3.8 ha. - housing	access threshold 15 houses; current proposal for 40 units includes access improvement
3. Adjoining Macleod House	1.1 ha. - housing	safeguard Listed Building setting
4. MacKay House Hostel	0.3 ha. - housing /	recently demolished, brownfield site
5. Rhives Farm	0.2 ha. - redevelopment / housing	allocated for re-use of redundant farm buildings, access constraint. Current proposal for 12 homes
6. Rhives Farm	3.6 ha. - caravan / camping site	access from Fountain Road
7. Drummuie	40.0 ha. - housing / business / open space	major expansion, subject to approved Development Brief. Mixed uses including refurbishment of Sutherland Tech. School Annexe, a Listed Building
8. Golspie Business Park	2.6 ha. - business	serviced business park
9. Drummuie (South)	4.3 ha. - commercial / community	Supermarket, leisure centre, beyond Business
10. Ben Bhraggie Drive	1.25 ha. - housing	

The *vision* of Golspie as a growing, balanced community should take account of the potential of any future A9 alignment to open-up areas west of the railway and enable any development in this direction ultimately, to integrate with the village, including via the important east-west links, Fountain Road and Argo Terrace. Well-placed in terms of accessibility to the County generally, Golspie presents a suitable location for meeting deficiencies in major community facilities, most notably a modern leisure centre and supermarket. The framework of committed sites and growth options gives scope for local consideration of a choice of locations and timescales for such development. Land west of the Business Park may offer an early opportunity; land north/east of Golspie would be dependent on the by-pass; a location close to the High Street would require substantial land assembly/redevelopment, but could contribute to the commercial infrastructure. Priority investment is needed to lift the current brake on development as a result of deficiencies in the water supply.

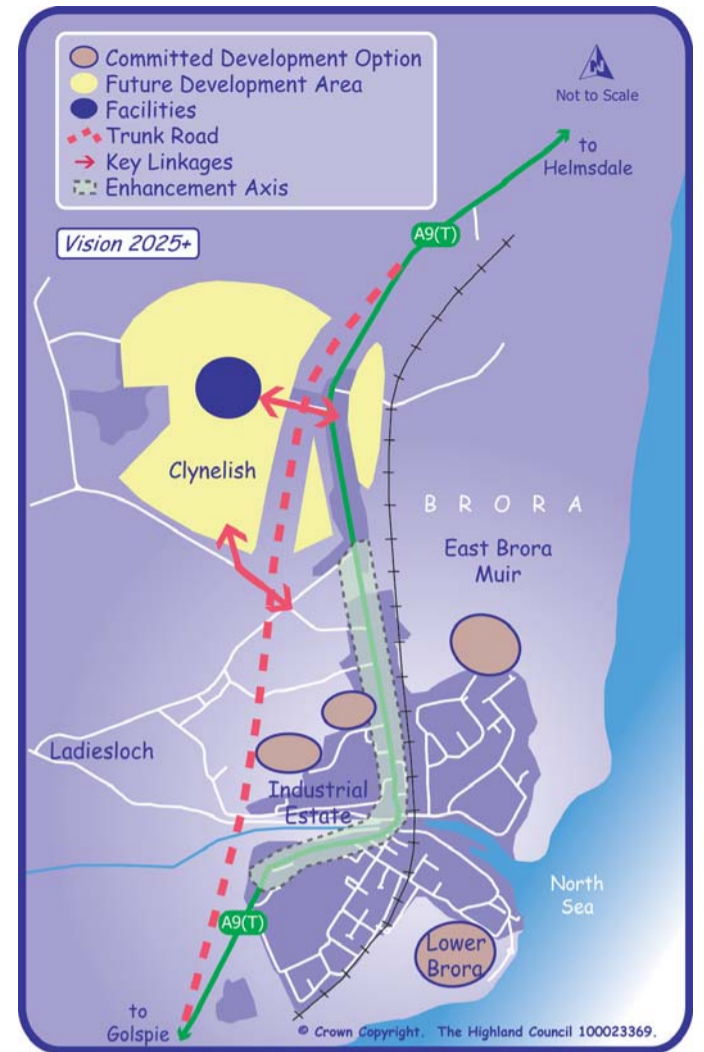


Natural Assets (Left: Waterfall at Backies, Golspie)



BRORA

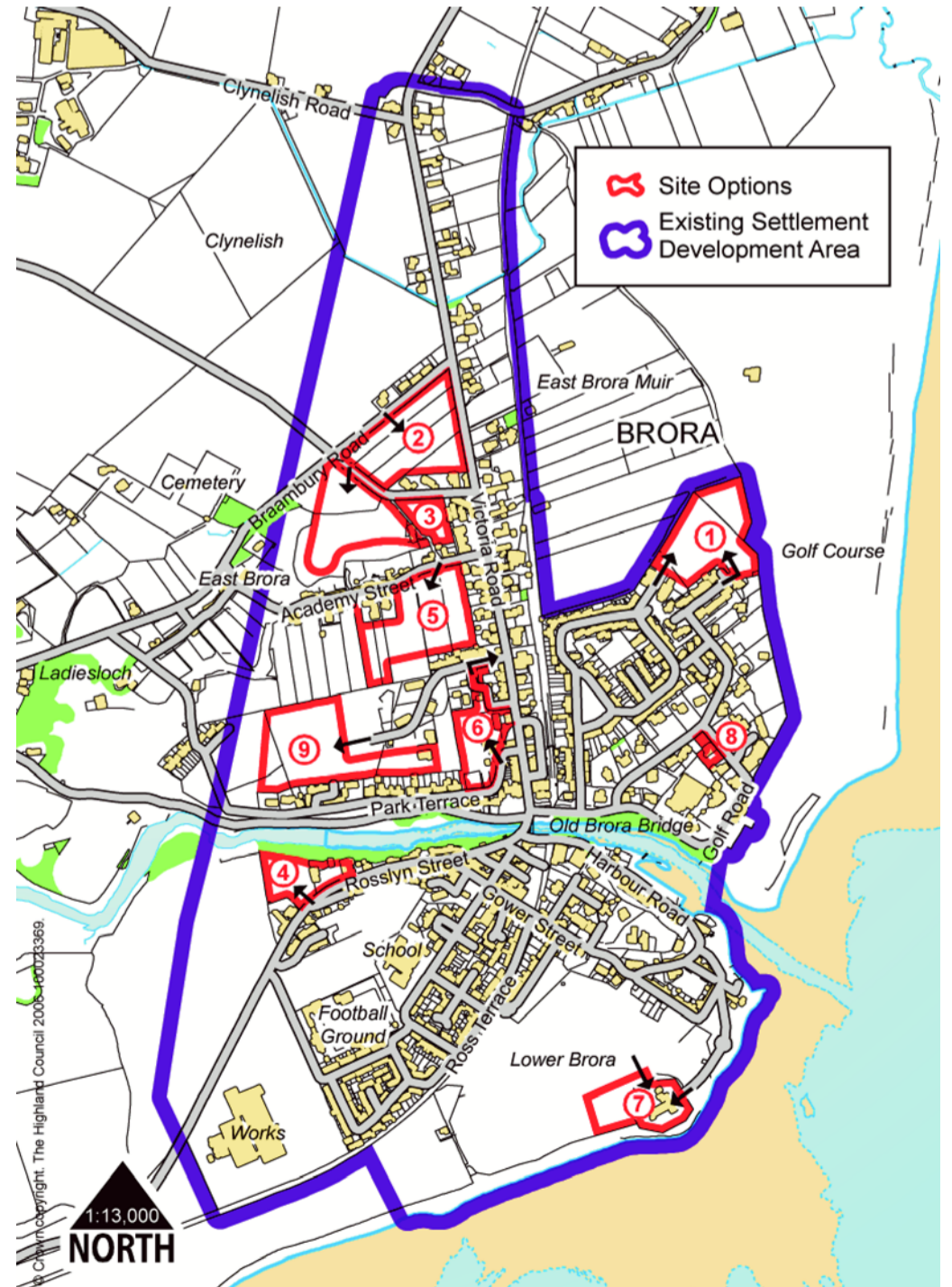
Shaped by the A9 and railway; the compact, urban form at Brora extends north and south of the river, integrating community facilities, open spaces and industrial sites. With the exception of longstanding opportunities at North Brora Muir, the capacity of the road network - including the existing trunk road - largely restricts the scope for consolidation to selected redevelopment/brownfield sites. These include the former Woolen Mill site; Carrol House, the former Radio Station; and the urban focal points Fountain Square, Station Square and the Harbour where property might be assembled for refurbishment/renewal in due course. Set against allocated land with capacity for 125 homes, a local housing needs survey by the Highland Small Communities Trust has identified more than 55 households requiring a mix of low-cost home ownership and rented homes. Major employment uses (Tulloch-MacKay's Engineering) have extended Brora to the south and land remains to build-out the industrial estate westwards. Limits are being reached in the capacity of the water supply and the Waste Water Treatment Works distribution pipe-work is suspect in places.



The immediate hinterland - straddling the protected A9 by-pass line - comprises a fragmented mix of croft land, raised beach features, scattered development, the Clynelish Distillery, community/recreation facilities and minor roads; and embraces several small, undeveloped housing land allocations which could be reinstated. However, given that the extensive flatter land towards the north-east could present the most favorable direction for expansion any incremental development should be compatible with this locality as a new neighbourhood of Brora, in the event that land might be released in the longer term. Scope may exist for a supermarket in this locality. The arrangement of "rigs", the availability of land for development, and sporadic building in the immediate hinterland is placing stress on the restricted road network and accumulating septic tank discharges.



KEY SITES - Brora		
1. East Brora Muir	2.4 ha. - housing	possible public / private sector joint venture scheme, shared access points
2. Tordale - Braambury Road	3.0 ha. - housing	Several ownerships, comprehensive framework / land assembly, depending on availability of land, redevelopment opportunities
3. West of Masonic Hall	0.7 ha. - housing	widen service road / improve access
4. Rosslyn Street / former Mackay's Yard	0.9 ha. - housing / business	subject to satisfactory access and drainage, screen planting on east side; redevelopment / land renewal
5. south of Academy Street / north of Industrial Estate	3.0 ha. - housing	land assembly, access
6. former Woollen Mill	1.5 ha. - housing	current proposal for 43 houses
7. former Radio Station	1.9 ha. - housing / mixed use	fututre use / reinstatement will require assessment of flood risk
8. Carrol House	0.3 ha. - housing	current redevelopment proposal, apartments
9. adjoining Industrial Estate	2.5 ha. - business	extension, access from Stafford Street



Some sites have scope for refurbishment / renewal (above left: Brora Harbour)

Streetscapes (above right: Station Cottages)

HELMSDALE

The planned grid-iron layout, traditional buildings and the harbour are distinctive features at Helmsdale. Realignment of the A9 is protected to the north-east. Community facilities have developed east of the river, health and emergency services further east. Although pressures for housing development have been modest over the past decade, the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust has identified almost 30 households in unsuitable accommodation; and a need for rented and low-cost home ownership accommodation. Flat land above the shore and outwith the Waste Water Treatment Works “cordon sanitaire” offers scope to build onto the established residential areas, including Council owned sites at Rockview Place/Simpson Crescent. Further ground out towards Old Helmsdale gives potential for development closer to the primary school provided land/access can be assembled. Carefully spaced infill sites might be identified within the crofting townships at West Helmsdale and East Helmsdale. Although the Timespan Heritage Centre has helped to regenerate the village, long-held derelict land renewal priorities along Shore Street and around the harbour remain unfulfilled. The former police station and St John’s Church are earmarked for conversion. The provision of water locally is restricted by pressure and treatment deficiencies. The Waste Water Treatment Works has capacity to treat effluent from some 70 houses.

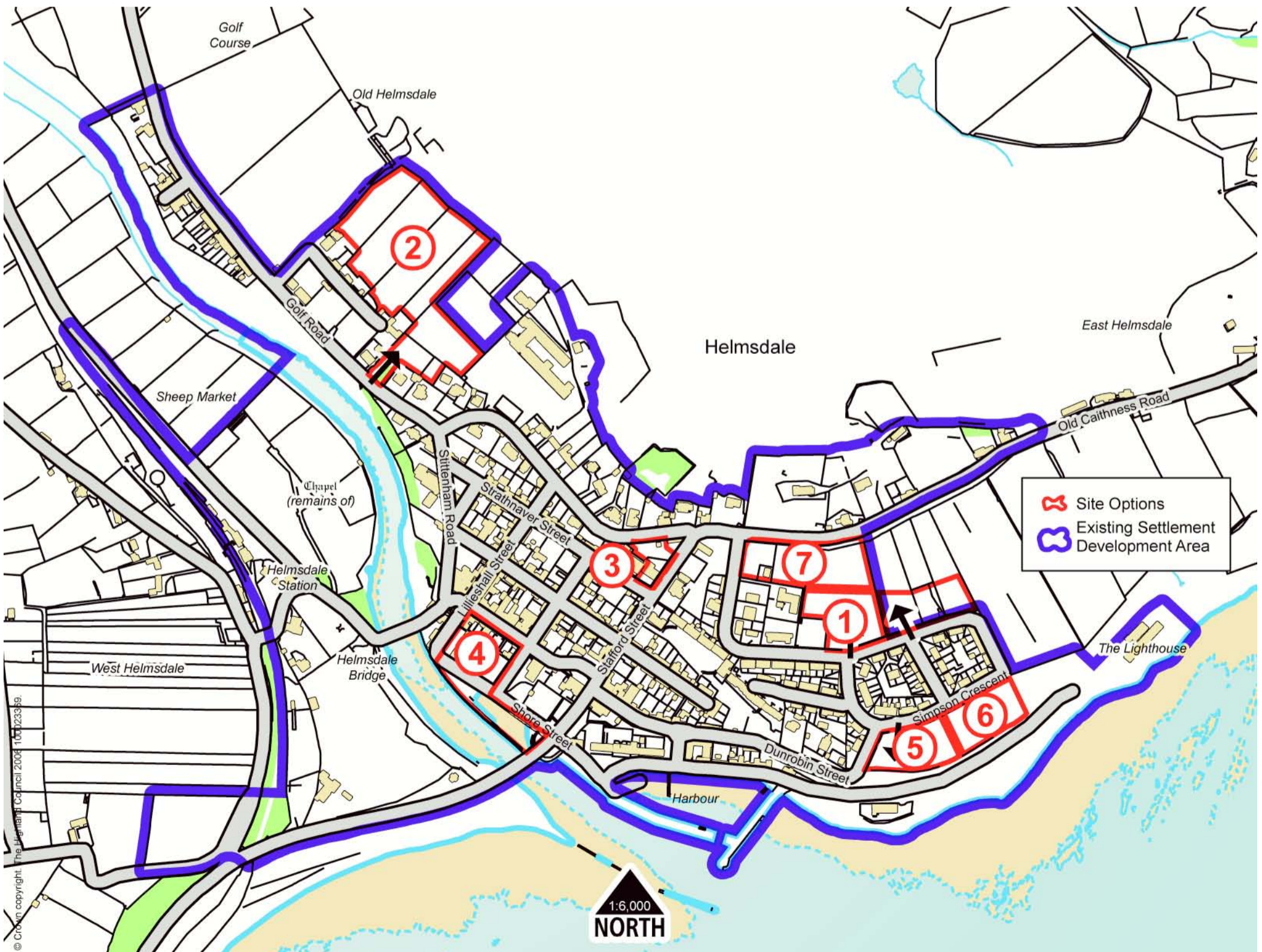
KEY SITES - Helmsdale		
1. north of Rockview Place	1.4 ha. - housing	boundary planting, affordable housing
2. north of former caravan site / west of primary school	2.3. ha. - housing	
3. St. John’s Church	0.2 ha. - housing	includes curtilage, conversion; access from Old Caithness Road
4. Shore Street	0.6 ha. - housing / business / visitor	redevelopment
5. Simpson Crescent	0.6 ha. - housing	assess proximity to waste water treatment, development setback
6. Simpson Crescent East	0.8 ha. - housing	assess proximity to waste water treatment, development setback
7. north of industrial estate	0.8 ha. - business / industrial	trunk road realignment reservation to northern boundary

PORTGOWER

Portgower lies 3km to the south of Helmsdale. Topography, substandard access and drainage/water supply deficiencies, are particular constraints.



Traditional Settlement Form (right: Helmsdale Harbour)



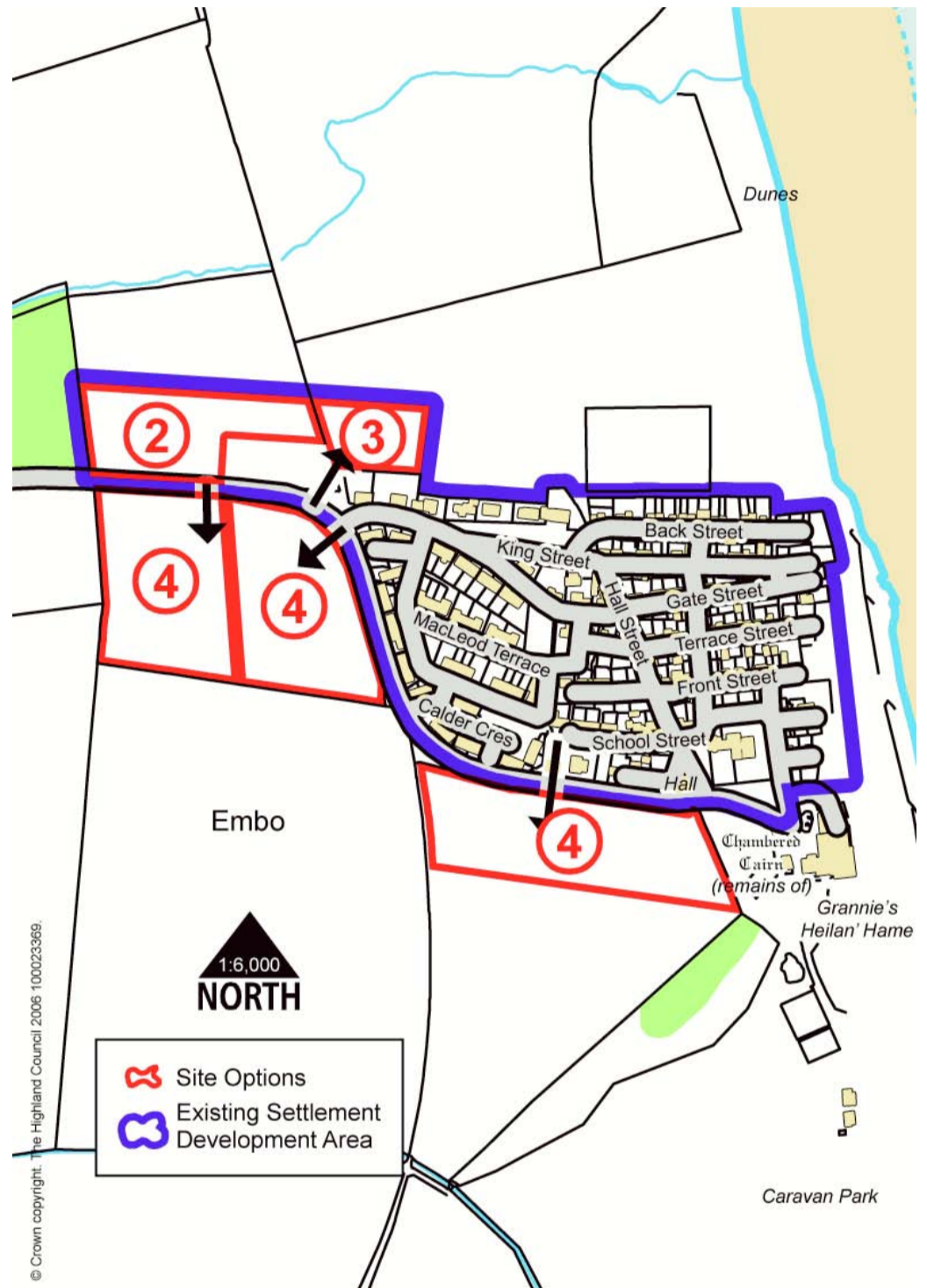
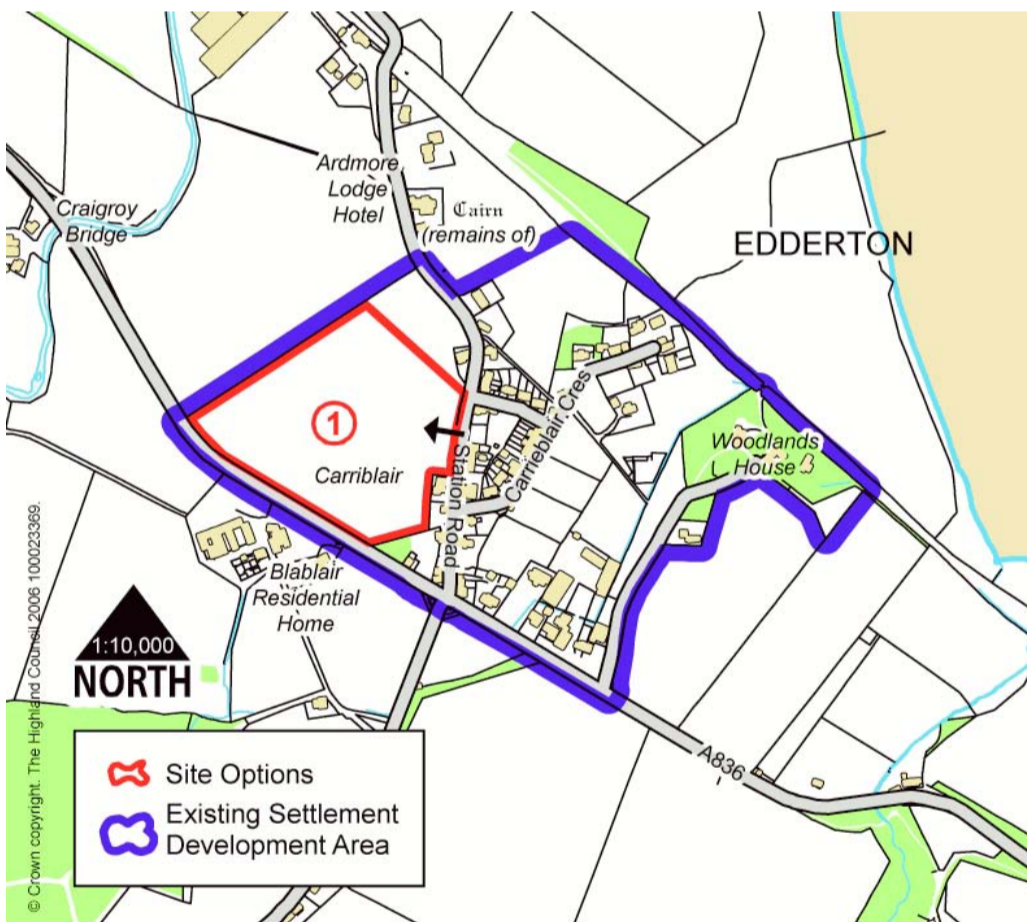
EDDERTON, EMBO AND CLASHMORE

These small linear settlements either side of the Firth support important local services. Edderton has been consulted upon as part of the Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan but is now to be incorporated into the Sutherland Local Plan. At Edderton, land is identified for development towards the north, although - despite temporary solutions to enable small scale development and a priority capital commitment to construct a new works - the lack of mains drainage and water supply are constraints at present. Poorer land west of the A836 could offer a development option in future. At Embo, the dune system and forestry provides a fine setting for the planned community. “Grannies Heilan Hame” continues to draw traffic to the local road system seasonally. Local initiatives centre on refurbishment of the former school for community use. At Clashmore, with poor subsoil conditions, the cumulative levels of septic tank emissions now require a comprehensive drainage system. In addition, the water supply is inadequate.



Heritage resource
(top: Edderton church)

KEY SITES - Edderton and Embo		
1. West of Station Road, Edderton	7.0 ha. - housing	connection to public sewer, archaeological investigation, amenity tree belt, open space
2. North west of Embo	2.5 ha. - housing	design/layout reflecting older village, access from U443, grid form
3. North of Station House, Embo	0.2 ha. - housing	Sheltered housing, reflect established design
4. South & West of Embo	10.5 ha. - housing	three areas of land offering options to land currently allocated, traffic management on U443



ROGART

Rogart is a small centre sustaining important local facilities, including a shop, hall and rail station. The marts could offer scope for redevelopment and the choice of development sites could be extended by consolidating the village opposite the garage. There are deficiencies in the water supply however.

KEY SITES - Rogart		
1. Marts and adjoining land	0.7 ha. - housing	redevelopment, drainage
2. Opposite the garage	0.4 ha. - housing	drainage

