

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries
Consideration of responses to consultation on provisional proposals for
constituency boundaries – East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council
areas

Action required

1. The Commission is invited to consider responses to the consultation on its provisional proposals and whether it wishes to make changes to its proposals for constituencies in East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council areas or hold a local inquiry.

Background

2. The electorates of the five existing Scottish Parliament constituencies within East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council areas are shown in the table below:

Existing constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Ayr	62,566	4.4%	South Ayrshire 1–5
Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley	59,218	-1.1%	East Ayrshire 7(part), 8–9 South Ayrshire 6–8
Cunninghame North	56,604	-5.5%	North Ayrshire 1–4, 5(part)
Cunninghame South	51,298	-14.4%	North Ayrshire 5(part), 6–9
Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley	65,742	9.7%	East Ayrshire 1–6, 7(part)

3. The provisional proposals retained the existing constituency names but amended the boundary between the Cunninghame South constituency and the Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley constituency by Stewarton.
4. The provisional proposals aimed to adhere to the principles of the review. The provisional proposals: improved variation from the electorate quota from the existing arrangements; and aimed to minimise change to the existing boundaries while considering local ties, with three constituency boundaries unchanged.
5. East Ayrshire has an electorate of 96,401 and entitlement to 1.6 constituencies, North Ayrshire has 107,902 electors and entitlement to 1.8 constituencies and

South Ayrshire with 91,125 electors an entitlement to 1.5 constituencies. Together the three Ayrshire council areas are entitled to 4.9 constituencies. The Commission could have combined Ayrshire with Inverclyde or Dumfries and Galloway Council areas with an entitlement of 1.0 and 2.0 constituencies respectively but there are no obvious advantages in doing so. The other neighbouring council areas are East Renfrewshire with an entitlement to 1.3 constituencies, Renfrewshire with an entitlement to 2.4 constituencies and South Lanarkshire with an entitlement to 4.3 constituencies but have higher ground acting as a natural boundary between them and Ayrshire.

6. East Ayrshire Council objected to the provisional proposals. North Ayrshire Council opposed them, and South Ayrshire Council did not respond to the consultation. Both East and North Ayrshire Councils submitted an identical alternative suggestion. A body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed did not object to the proposed constituencies.
7. The electorates of the five proposed Scottish Parliament constituencies within East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council areas are shown in the table below:

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Ayr	62,566	4.4%	South Ayrshire 1–5
Carrick, Cumnock, and Doon Valley	59,218	-1.1%	East Ayrshire 7(part), 8–9 South Ayrshire 6–8
Cunninghame North	56,604	-5.5%	North Ayrshire 1–4, 5(part)
Cunninghame South	62,113	3.7%	East Ayrshire 1(part), North Ayrshire 5(part), 6–9
Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley	54,927	-8.3%	East Ayrshire 1 (part), 2–6, 7(part)

8. A map of the provisional proposals is at Appendix A.

Representations received

9. Ten responses were received for these constituencies during the one-month consultation period. All responses have been shared with the Commission. Responses to the consultation will be available on the Commission's consultation site www.consult.boundaries.scot if the respondent gave permission to do so.

Summary of responses

10. Suggestions and comments received during the initial consultation for this area included:

- opposition to the proposed Cunninghame South and Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley constituency boundaries; and
- suggestions for alternative boundaries which address variation from the electorate quota in the proposed Cunninghame South constituency.

11. Unless otherwise stated, the maps in this paper show alternative suggestions in block colours, existing ward boundaries are red and provisional proposal boundaries are a black line.

North Ayrshire Consultation Responses and Analysis

12. A member of the public supported the provisional proposals.

13. A member of the public suggested the proposed Cunninghame South constituency no longer represented the area it is named after, comprising as it does parts of North and East Ayrshire Council areas.

14. A member of the public stated electoral boundaries should never change.

15. A member of the public suggested the Commission should contact all electors when undertaking a consultation.

16. Councillor Nairn McDonald (North Ayrshire ward 8 – Irvine East) stated the provisional proposals offer no direct links to the rest of the constituency both physically and socially.

17. North Ayrshire Council opposed the provisional proposals as they do not take account of locality boundaries, local ties or local identity. Whilst acknowledging the variation from the electoral quota and in an effort to improve upon the proposed boundary, the Council suggested that Polling Districts E108, Kilmaurs and Polling District E109, Fenwick and Waterside, are retained within Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley constituency.

18. The boundary of Polling District 109 closely follows the boundary of Fenwick Community Council area which may suggest it recognises local ties in the area.

19. The North Ayrshire Council suggestion is shown in the table below and in Appendix B.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Cunninghame South	59,525	-0.6%	East Ayrshire 1(part) North Ayrshire 5(part), 6-9
Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley	57,515	-4.0%	East Ayrshire 1(part), 2-6, 7(part)

20. The advantages of this suggestion are it:

- minimises change from the existing arrangements;
- was suggested by both East Ayrshire Council and North Ayrshire Council; and
- improves variation from the electoral quota of the existing Cunninghame South constituency.

21. There are no obvious disadvantages to this suggestion.

East Ayrshire Consultation Responses and Analysis

22. There were no responses from members of the public regarding the provisional proposals for East Ayrshire Council area.

23. East Ayrshire Council responded in similar terms to North Ayrshire Council and formally objected to the proposals. They stated communities in East Ayrshire ward 1 Annick look towards Kilmarnock and have nothing in common with communities in Cunninghame South. They believe that the Annick ward should remain within a Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley constituency. They also stated the proposals do not consider new housing developments and population growth. East Ayrshire Council submitted the same alternative suggestion to North Ayrshire Council.

24. The East Ayrshire Council suggestion is presented in Appendix B and the electorate is shown in the table above along with analysis of advantages and disadvantages.

25. Willie Coffey, MSP for Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley, opposed the provisional proposals and suggested they would break strong community ties in towns such as Kilmaurs, Stewarton, Lugton and Dunlop which all look to Kilmarnock rather than communities in the proposed Cunninghame South constituency. Mr Coffey suggested transferring Dundonald with approximately 2,200 electors from a Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley constituency to a Cunninghame South

constituency because Dundonald has closer ties with Irvine and it would be less disruptive than the provisional proposals.

26. Historical links between these two areas for electoral purposes have occurred in the past. Dundonald has been in a UK Parliament constituency with Irvine from 1950–1983 and from 2005 until present although they have been in separate Scottish Parliament constituencies since the Parliament was established in 1999.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Carrick, Cumnock, and Doon Valley	56,959	-4.9%	East Ayrshire 7(part), 8–9 South Ayrshire 6(part),7,8
Cunninghame South	53,557	-10.6%	South Ayrshire 6(part), North Ayrshire 5(part), 6–9

27. The alternative suggestion from Willie Coffey MSP is shown in Appendix C and the table above. The boundary adopted to divide Dundonald from the remainder of South Ayrshire ward 6 (Kyle) is the Dundonald Community Council area boundary.

28. The advantages of this suggestion are:

- it would minimise change from the existing arrangements;
- it would improve variation from the electorate quota from the existing arrangements;
- Dundonald and Irvine have previously been in the same UK Parliament constituency; and
- the suggested boundary follows a recognised community council boundary.

29. The disadvantages of this suggestion are it proposes variation from electoral parity at -10% in the suggested Cunninghame South constituency.

30. The East Ayrshire Conservative and Unionist Association opposed the proposals on the basis of a lack of local ties, such as transport links, between Stewarton and Irvine. They suggested an alternative boundary by the west of Kilmarnock, transferring around 4,000 electors in Crosshouse, Knockentiber and Gatehead from the Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley constituency to the Cunninghame South

constituency. They believe their suggestion improves variation from the electoral quota, considers new housing developments, has better transport links and access to local amenities.

31. The East Ayrshire Conservative and Unionist Association suggestion is mapped at Appendix D and shown in the table below.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Cunninghame South	55,221	-7.8%	East Ayrshire 3(part), North Ayrshire 5(part), 6-9
Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley	61,819	3.2%	East Ayrshire 1,3(part)-6, 7(part)

32. The advantages of this suggestion are it:

- takes account of local transport links and long-standing patterns of movement for work and amenities; and
- minimises change from the existing arrangements.

33. The disadvantages of this suggestion are:

- the suggested boundary traces a route through areas of new build housing estates and may sever recently established local ties; and
- the boundary, whilst broadly similar to the community council boundaries between Crosshouse Community Council area in the west and Bonnyton and Grange/Howard Community Council areas in the east still leaves neighbouring communities in separate constituencies.

34. In comparison to the provisional proposals the suggestion would worsen variation from the electoral quota in Cunninghame South and improve it in Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley.

35. The Secretariat has developed an alternative boundary, similar to the East Ayrshire Conservative and Unionist Association suggestion which does not divide new housing estates between constituencies. It aims to follow historical ward boundaries to the west of Kilmarnock. This alternative design shown in Appendix E and the table below.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
-------------------------	------------	--------------------------------	-------

Cunninghame South	53,998	-9.9%	East Ayrshire 3(part), North Ayrshire 5(part), 6-9
Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley	63,042	5.2%	East Ayrshire 1,3(part)-6, 7(part)

36. The advantages of this suggestion are it:

- may provide for a better boundary as it follows ground features to ensure a more definitive boundary between areas of housing; and
- minimises change from the existing arrangements.

37. The disadvantages of this suggestion are:

- the suggested boundary also traces a route near areas of new build housing estates and may sever recently established local ties; and
- as in the suggestion above it would worsen variation from the electoral quota in Cunninghame South and improve it in Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley.

South Ayrshire Consultation Responses and Analysis

38. There were no responses regarding the provisional proposals for South Ayrshire council area. The provisional proposals for South Ayrshire Council area are unchanged from the existing arrangements.

All Scotland Consultation Responses

39. Over 60 responses made general comments opposing the review or made comments out-with the legislation.

40. Six responses made general comments supporting the review.

41. A further 18 responses commented on more than one area. This included a member of the public, the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party and Scottish Labour Party.

42. The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party acknowledged the proposals and alternative suggestion from the East Ayrshire Conservative and Unionist Association. They suggested renaming the proposed Cunninghame South constituency as Cunninghame South and Stewarton or Cunninghame South and Crosshouse.

43. The Scottish Labour Party responded but had no comment to make on the proposed boundaries for this grouping although welcomed the retention of a grouping of the three Ayrshire council areas and five constituencies.

44. A member of the public submitted an alternative suggestion based on following ward boundaries wherever possible. The response suggested:

- a Northwest Ayrshire constituency – similar to the proposed Cunninghame North – however Stevenston is added to the constituency to keep the “three towns” of Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston together. The respondent stated the three towns share many local services and have strong transport links as reasons to support the suggestion;
- removing East Ayrshire ward 1 (Annick) from the proposed Cunninghame South constituency and adding South Ayrshire ward 1 (Troon) to create a Mid Ayrshire constituency. The response suggested Troon’s proximity to the North Ayrshire towns of Irvine and Kilwinning along with good transport links made this an appropriate suggestion;
- mainly retaining the existing Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley constituency but it would not include a small part of East Ayrshire’s ward 7 (Ballochmyle), however the constituency would be renamed Kilmarnock and Northeast Ayrshire;
- renaming Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley as Prestwick and Southeast Ayrshire. Prestwick would be added from the existing Ayr constituency and part of part of the South Ayrshire ward 7(Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton) and ward 8 (Girvan and South Carrick) would be added. The response suggested Carrick has very little in common with the Cumnock and the Doon Valley areas with limited shared facilities or transport links.

45. This suggestion is mapped at Appendix F and shown in the table below.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Ayr and Southwest Ayrshire	55,206	-7.8%	South Ayrshire 3,4,5,7(part),8
Kilmarnock and Northeast Ayrshire	65,558	9.4%	East Ayrshire 1-6
Kilwinning, Irvine and Troon	57,242	-4.4%	South Ayrshire 1 North Ayrshire 6,7,8,9
Northwest Ayrshire	63,565	6.1%	North Ayrshire 1-5
Prestwick and Southeast Ayrshire	53,857	-10.1%	East Ayrshire 7-9

			South Ayrshire 2,6,7(part)
--	--	--	-------------------------------

46. The advantages of this suggestion are:

- contains a single split ward which may better reflect local ties than the provisional proposals which contain three split wards.

47. The disadvantages of this suggestion are it:

- presents a large amount of change and makes changes to every constituency from the existing arrangements and provisional proposals; and
- contains variation from the electoral quota at 10% and 9.4% for two constituencies.

Summary

48. The existing Cunningham South constituency has a variation from the electoral quota of -14%.

49. The Commission's provisional proposals aimed to address variation from the electoral quota by transferring Stewarton from the Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley constituency to the Cunningham South constituency.

50. There was a limited response to the consultation on provisional proposals for constituencies in Ayrshire but most of the responses opposed the provisional proposals because Stewarton has little in common with Irvine. One response supported the provisional proposals.

51. East Ayrshire Council objected and North Ayrshire Council opposed the provisional proposals. East Ayrshire Council objecting to the proposals requires the Commission to hold a local inquiry.

52. Both East Ayrshire Council and North Ayrshire Council submitted the same alternative suggestion that aimed to both address variation from the electorate quota while considering local ties and minimising change.

53. The East Ayrshire Conservative and Unionist Association submitted an alternative suggestion to the west of Kilmarnock, but the boundary split new housing developments. The Secretariat developed an option based on this suggestion which may provide stronger boundaries. Both of these constituency designs offer variation from the electorate quota at less than 10%.

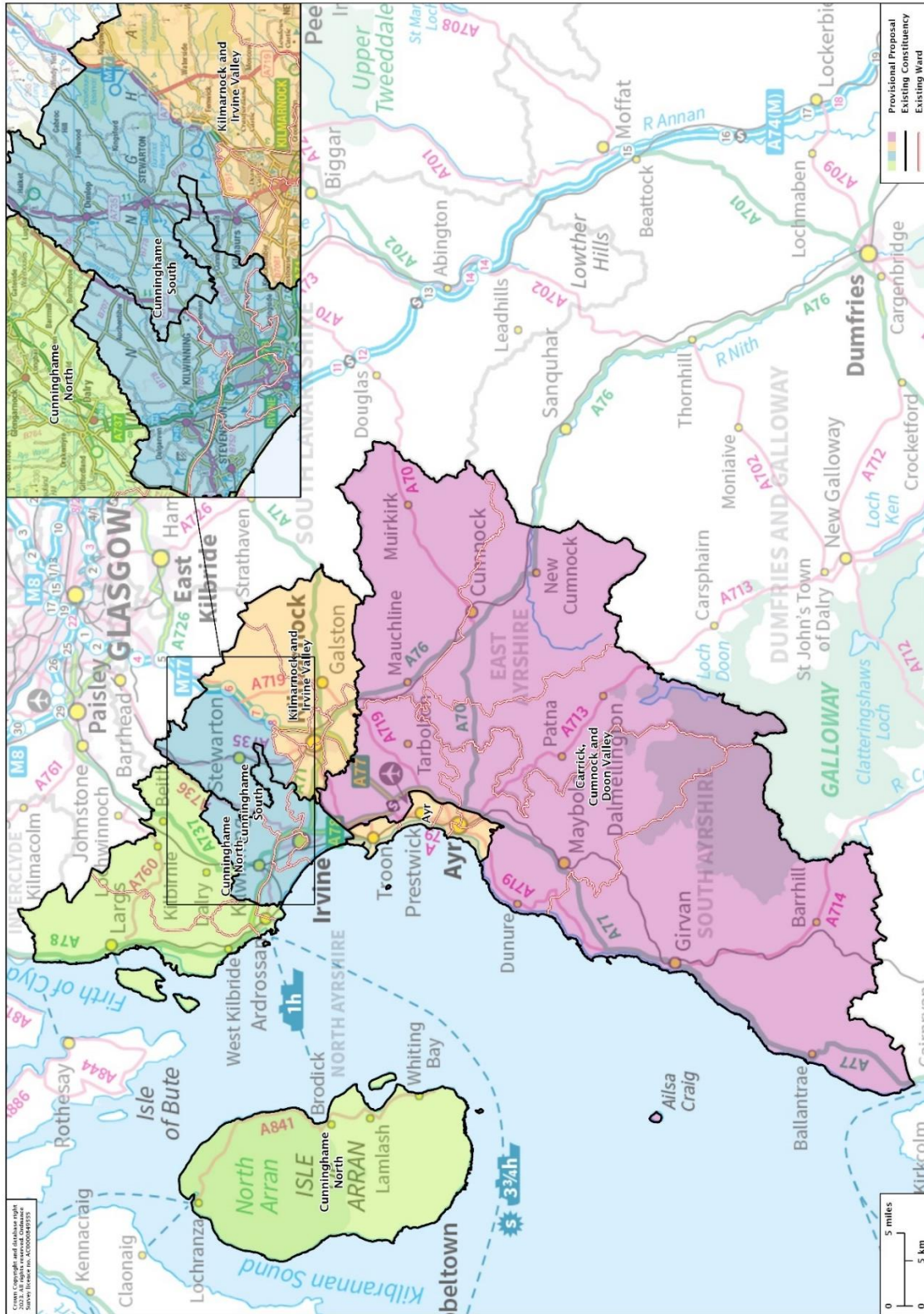
54. Willie Coffey, MSP for Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley submitted an alternative suggestion which considers historical links between Irvine and Dundonald but it proposes variation from electoral parity at -10%.
55. One response suggested five new constituency boundaries based mainly on ward boundaries. This suggestion makes changes to all five Ayrshire constituencies when the provisional proposals had retained three of the existing constituency boundaries.

Recommendations

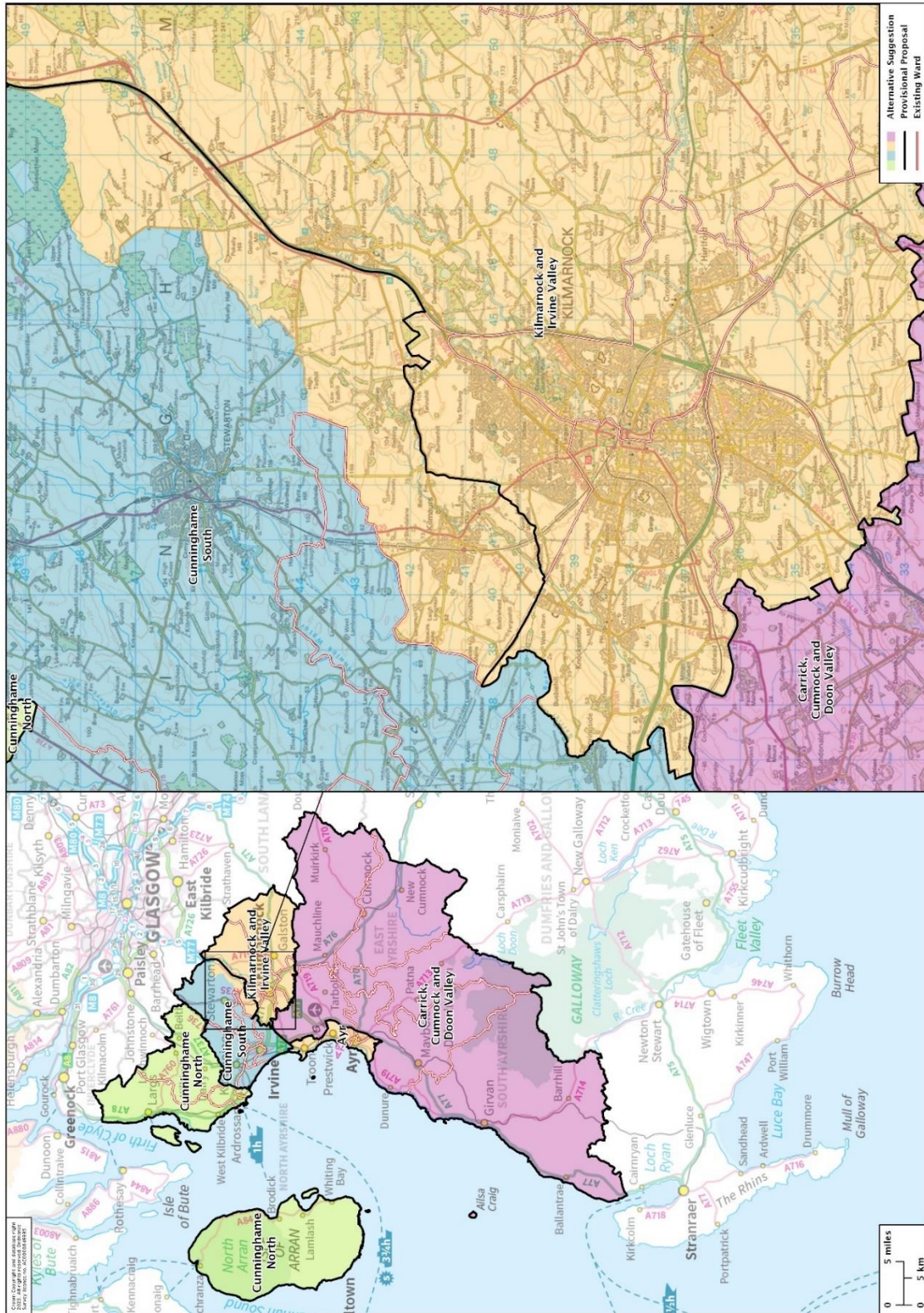
56. Taking into account all of the evidence arising from the public consultation on the provisional proposals, the Commission must hold a local inquiry in respect of Cunninghame South and Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley constituencies because East Ayrshire Council objected to the proposals. The Commission is invited to offer any initial consideration of the handling of the inquiry, including possible location and timing and if it wishes to share with the public at the local inquiry, the alternative suggestions shown in this paper.

Secretariat
August 2023

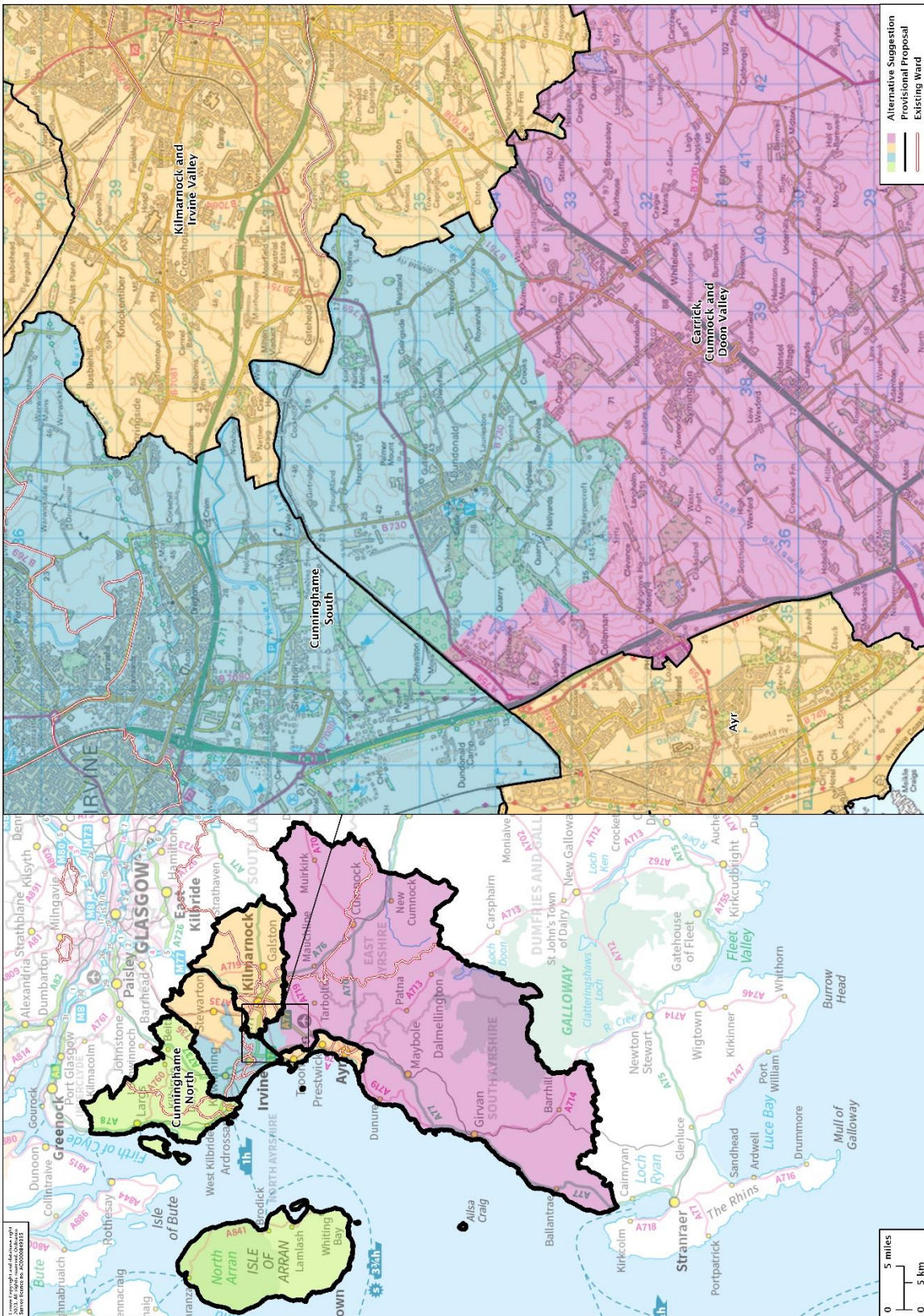
Provisional Proposals – for East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council areas



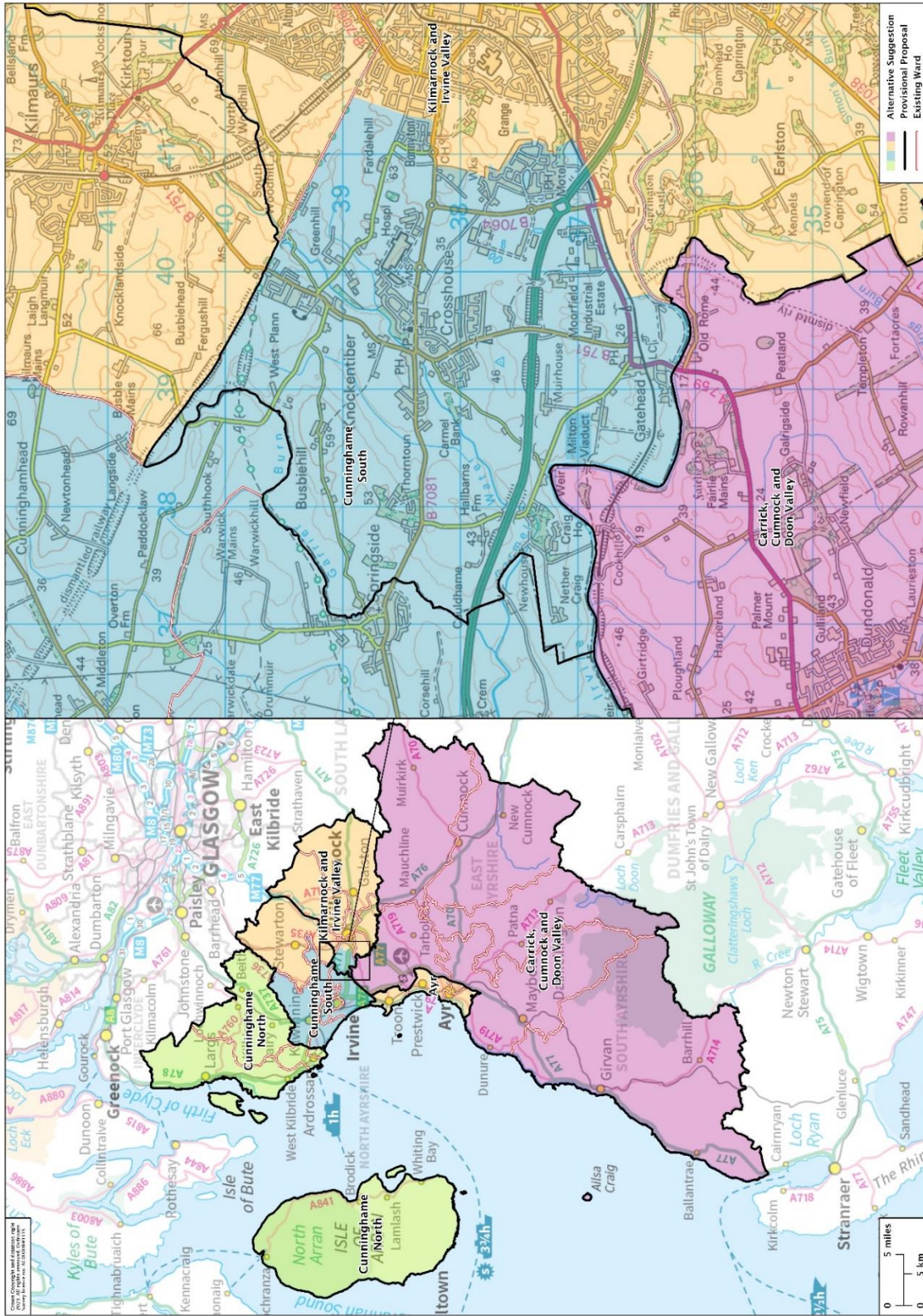
Alternative Suggestion – North Ayrshire Council and East Ayrshire Council



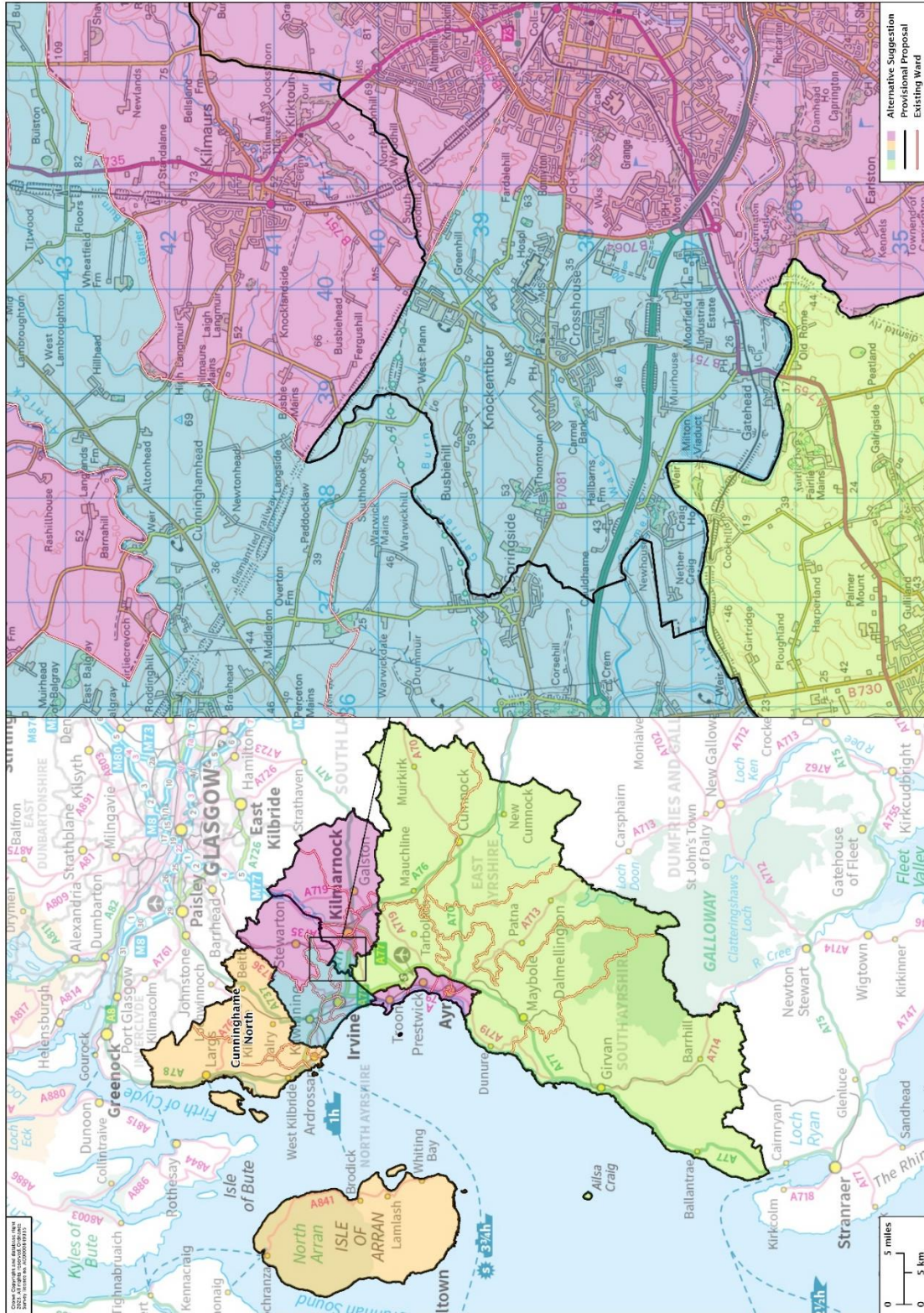
Willie Coffey MSP Alternative Suggestion



East Ayrshire Conservative and Unionist Association Suggestion



East Ayrshire Conservative and Unionist Association Suggestion – Revised



All Ayrshire Member of the Public Suggestion

