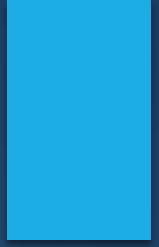


Colonsay Housing



SURF AWARDS – SHARED LEARNING EVENT

1ST MAY 2025

Colonsay Housing

8 MILES LONG
3 MILES WIDE
125 PEOPLE



COLONSAY
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
COMPANY

Why we need affordable housing

- ▶ Demand vs.
 - ▶ Availability, affordability
 - ▶ Demography
 - ▶ Housing quality
- ▶ Community wealth
- ▶ Community empowerment
- ▶ Strategic importance
 - ▶ Arresting population decline
 - ▶ Securing a working-age population

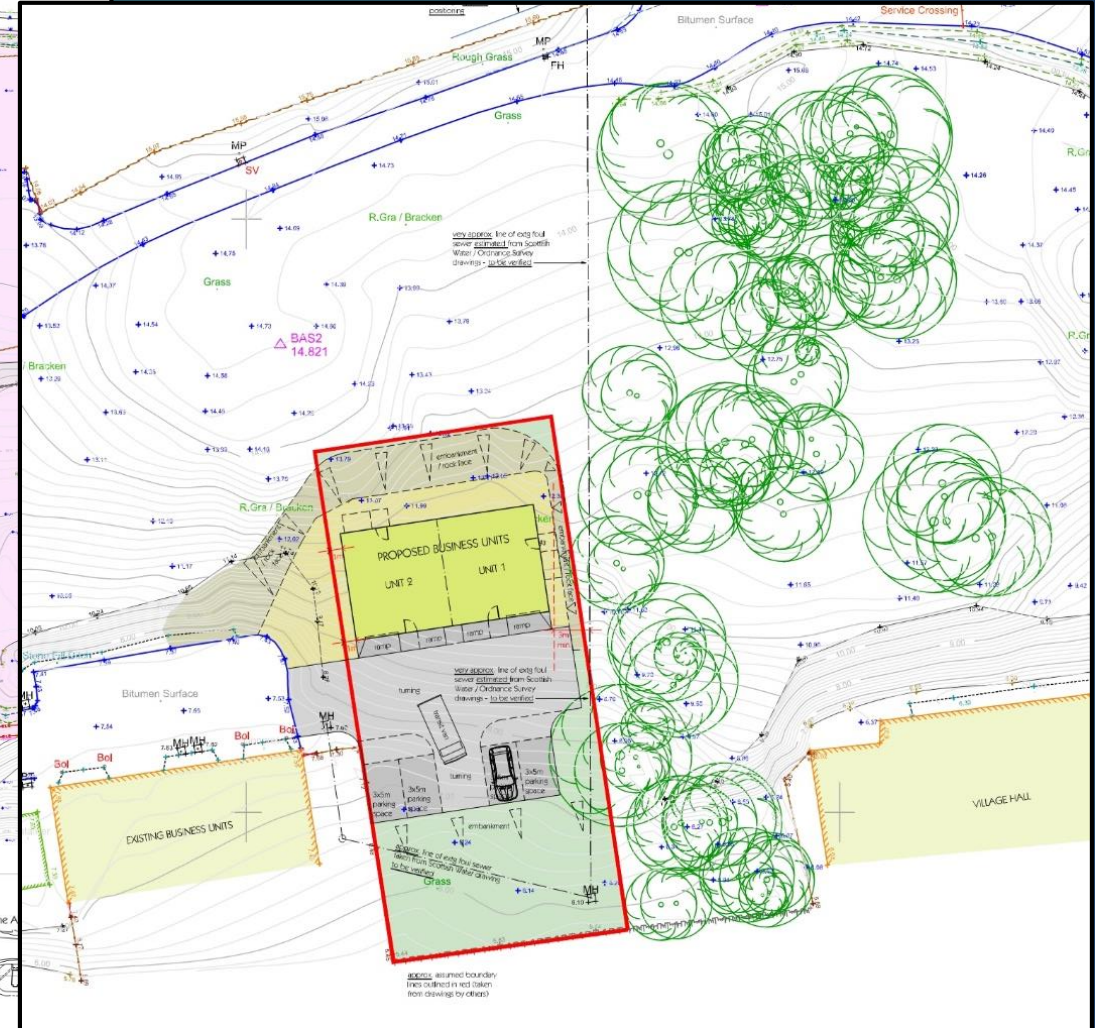
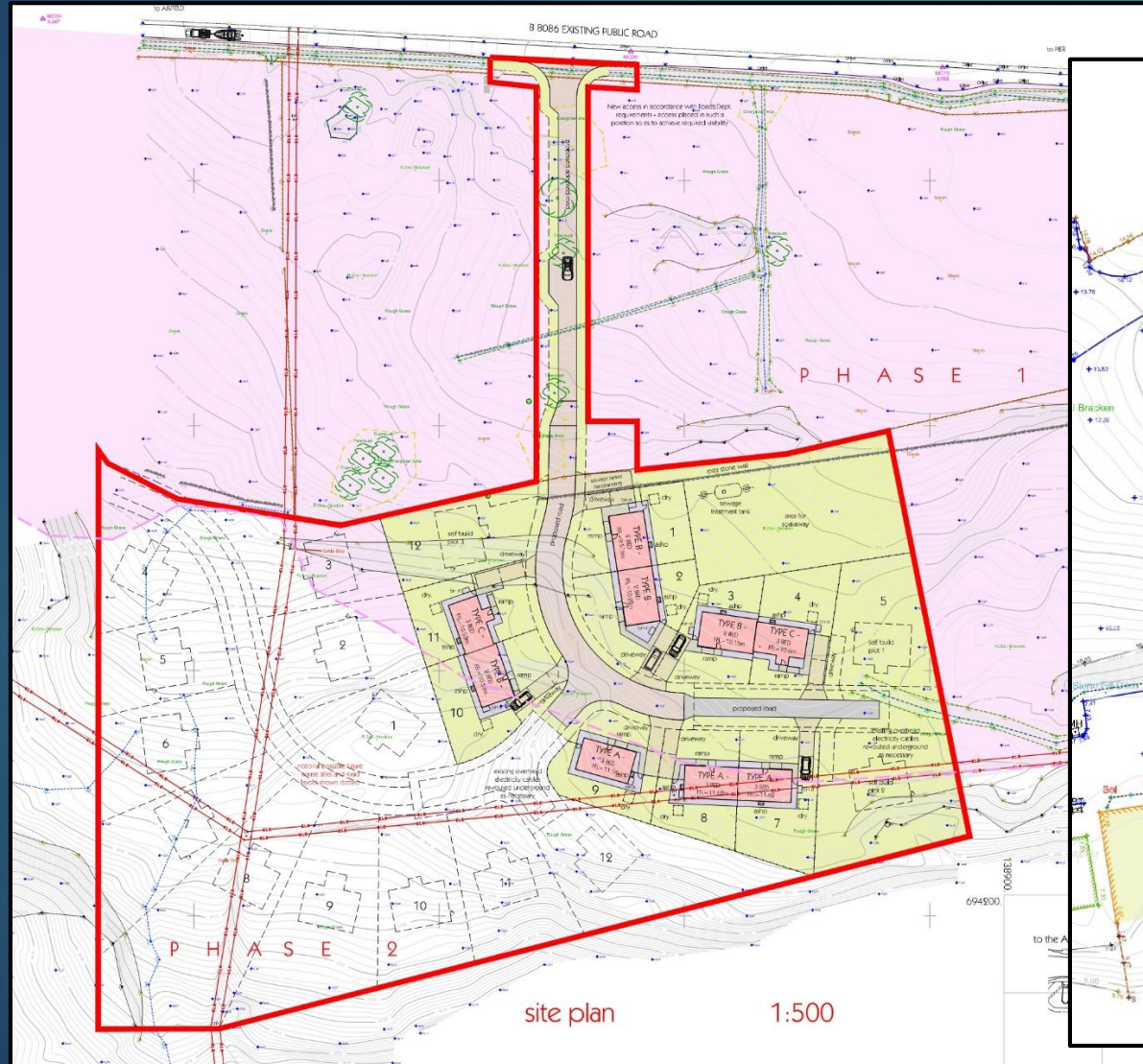


What we have achieved

- ▶ A 20 year journey ...
 - ▶ Failed early attempt
- ▶ External CCDC review
 - ▶ Clearer focus, purpose
 - ▶ Asset-owning
 - ▶ Local control
- ▶ Successful land acquisition
- ▶ Development process
- ▶ 9 houses, 2 business units



What we have achieved



Our housing in numbers



- ▶ Land for 24 houses
- ▶ 9 in phase 1
 - ▶ 6 community led homes
 - ▶ 3 MOWI crew houses
- ▶ 3 self-build plots
- ▶ Costs: land £0.5m, development £3.8m
- ▶ 5 major funders
- ▶ 5,000+ hours of staff time
- ▶ 7,000+ hours (!) of volunteer time

How this came together

- ▶ HIE support over 20 years
- ▶ Communities Housing Trust advice
- ▶ CCDC more “professional”
- ▶ Political will / support:
 - ▶ SLC and SLF
 - ▶ Argyll and Bute Council
 - ▶ Scottish Government
- ▶ Industry partner - MOWI
- ▶ Funding mix
- ▶ Tenacity!



Impacts

- ▶ First affordable homes in more than a generation
- ▶ Homelessness reduced
- ▶ More first homes
- ▶ Worker housing, supporting local economy
- ▶ Community capacity, credibility and confidence
- ▶ A clear way forward
- ▶ Associated developments
 - ▶ Success breeds success ...



Challenges

- ▶ Overcoming local inertia
- ▶ Our initial capacity / inexperience
- ▶ Identifying and managing risk
 - ▶ Delay, Finance, Cashflow
 - ▶ Funding inflexibility
 - ▶ Unpredictability of demand
- ▶ Challenge of asset management
 - ▶ Little or no ongoing support
- ▶ Sustainability
 - ▶ Reduce dependency on volunteers



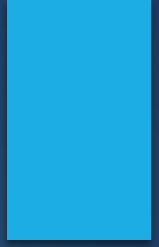
Some lessons learned

- ▶ Very tough going at times, but definitely worth it.
 - ▶ Maybe not the best way, but the only option at the time. It worked
 - ▶ High dependence on community's voluntary capability. Creates a vulnerability.
- ▶ Build political, community and funder confidence in the project - and in you
- ▶ Surround yourselves with capable people. Allow for lots of support in the budget
- ▶ It will cost more, take longer and be more difficult than you expect
 - ▶ Allow for that, and have plans for when things don't go to plan ...
 - ▶ Keep track of finances and knock-on impacts, so there are no nasty surprises
 - ▶ Put as much contingency in the budget as they'll let you. Stuff happens.
- ▶ Project delivery is the exciting bit, but only the beginning:
 - ▶ Plan for what happens after project hand-over. That might influence project design
 - ▶ Lots of help and funding for project delivery, but on you own with asset management

Some policy observations

- ▶ Community led projects are hard work. What can be simplified / better supported?
- ▶ Housing and Enterprise funding could be better integrated
 - ▶ We'd like to try all-in packages: homes and workplace, to encourage relocation
- ▶ Funding model doesn't assess an organisation's managerial / financial capability:
 - ▶ CCDC is required to make a contribution through commercial borrowing. High risk.
 - ▶ The loan charges soak up too much critical rental income. Market rates are punitive.
 - ▶ There's not enough left to cover asset management costs. The model seems flawed
- ▶ Funding issues
 - ▶ Legal costs of valuations, loans, securities, ranking, sales & leases are horrendous. Simplify?
 - ▶ Funding won't cover linked revenue costs – e.g. leases, audit. Why not?
 - ▶ Funding ignores cashflow – why? We've needed an emergency bridging loan
 - ▶ Annual accounts makes you look rich. You're then ineligible for other grants

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