

Corridor Options – Access to Argyll and Bute

Jim Thomson BSc(Eng), MSc, PhD, CEng, FIMechE, FIET

Some important issues:

- The preservation of an area of great natural beauty.
- Most of these routes would fundamentally change the Cowal peninsula and Bute, which are exceptionally beautiful areas of mountains, forests, and lochs. This issue should be uppermost in the minds of decision makers.
- Cost. The options will range from ‘order of’ £100 million to ‘order of’ tens of billions £, in my opinion.
- The selected option must ensure a ‘once-and-for-all’ solution to the A83 landslide issues at Rest and Be Thankful, either by fixing it or providing an alternate route.
- Winter accessibility (e.g. altitude, exposure, road gradients).
- Reliable access to (especially) Kintyre, Knapdale and Cowal.
- The potential significance of this decision for any future bridge/tunnel to Northern Ireland (if the NI bridge were built from Kintyre).

Option	Brief title	Cost	Comments	Environ- mental concern	Ranking (no. of £ + no. of X)
1	Glen Croe	£	(a) See options from 2012 consultant engineer’s report. These are summarised below. (b) The brown , yellow and green corridor options seem attractive. (c) All three options were priced in 2012 at about £100 million.	X	2
2	Glen Kinglas	££	(a) No large-span bridges. (b) There will be a steep climb from Inverarnan/Ardlui up to c.300 m (i.e. higher than Rest and Be Thankful) and the road along Glen Kinglas will be quite exposed and prone to drifting in winter. (c) This option will probably require an upgrade of the road between Tarbet and Inverarnan on Loch Lomond.	XX	4
3	Glen Fyne	££	(a) No large-span bridges. (b) There will be a steep climb from Inverarnan up to c.300 m (i.e. higher than Rest and Be Thankful), and a steep descent down to Loch Fyne. (c) This option will probably require an upgrade of the road between Tarbet and Inverarnan on Loch Lomond.	XX	4

4	Garelochhead – Ardentinny – Strachur-Cairndow	£££	(a) One large-span bridge (across Loch Long). (b) The route up Glen Finart will be quite steep and exposed – maybe a tunnel option here? (c) This option includes road improvement/ major upgrade along the north end of Loch Eck, which is an exceptionally beautiful and unspoiled area. (d) Any upgrades around Cairndow would have to protect the magnificent gardens at Ardkinglas.	XXX	6
5	Garelochhead – Ardentinny - Loch Eck – Loch Striven – Otter Ferry – Lochgilphead	£££	(a) Two large-span bridges (across Loch Long and across Loch Fyne, respectively). (b) The route up Glen Finart will be quite steep and exposed – maybe a tunnel option here? (c) This option includes road improvement/ major upgrade along the south end of Loch Eck, which is an exceptionally beautiful and unspoiled area. The area includes Puck’s Glen and Benmore Gardens. (d) This option makes use of the existing high-quality road between the A82 and Garelochhead.	XX	5
6	Gourock-Dunoon-Loch Eck-Strachur-Cairndow	£££	(a) One large-span bridge (across the Clyde estuary from Gourock to Dunoon). (b) This option includes road improvement/ major upgrade along the entire length of Loch Eck, which is an exceptionally beautiful and unspoiled area. The area includes Puck’s Glen and Benmore Gardens. (c) Any upgrades around Cairndow would have to protect the magnificent gardens at Ardkinglas. (d) This option is entirely at low level, so it should not suffer excessively from drifting and icing in winter.	XXX	6
7	Gourock-Dunoon-Loch Striven-Otter Ferry-Lochgilphead	£££	(a) Two large-span bridges (across the Clyde estuary from Gourock to Dunoon, and across Loch Fyne at Otter Ferry). (b) This option is mostly at low level, so it should not suffer excessively from drifting and icing in winter.	XX	5

8(a)	West Kilbride – Little Cumbrae- Bute- Colintrave- Strachur- Cairndow	££££	(a) Three large-span bridges (West Kilbride to Little Cumbrae, Little Cumbrae to Bute, Colintrave). (b) This route will be expensive without shortening the route from Glasgow to Kintyre. (c) The Isle of Bute will become an extension of the mainland with a major road passing through it. This would be a significant change, not necessarily for the better. (d) The road through Bute would include a major upgrade to the road between Rothesay and Colintrave, a beautiful stretch of road along the Kyles of Bute.	XXXX	8
8(b)	West Kilbride – Little Cumbrae- Bute- Rothesay- Toward- Dunoon- Loch Eck- Strachur- Cairndow	££££	(a) Three large-span bridges (West Kilbride to Little Cumbrae, Little Cumbrae to Bute, Rothesay to Toward). (b) The Isle of Bute will become an extension of the mainland with a major road passing through it. This would be a significant change, not necessarily for the better. (c) This option includes road improvement/ major upgrade along the entire length of Loch Eck, which is an exceptionally beautiful and unspoiled area. The area includes Puck's Glen and Benmore Gardens. (d) Any upgrades around Cairndow would have to protect the magnificent gardens at Ardkinglas.	XXXX	8
9	West Kilbride – Little Cumbrae- Bute- Colintrave- Otter Ferry- Lochgilphead	££££	(a) Four large-span bridges (West Kilbride to Little Cumbrae, Little Cumbrae to Bute, Colintrave, and across Loch Fyne at Otter Ferry). (b) The Isle of Bute will become an extension of the mainland with a major road passing through it. This would be a significant change, not necessarily for the better. (c) The road through Bute would include a major upgrade to the road between Rothesay and Colintrave, a beautiful stretch of road along the Kyles of Bute.	XXXX	8

10	Rhu-Rosneath-Ardentinny-Loch Eck-Strachur-Cairndow	£££	(a) Two large-span bridges (across Gare Loch at Rhu, and across Loch Long). (b) The route up Glen Finart will be quite steep and exposed – maybe a tunnel option here? (c) This option includes road improvement/ major upgrade along the north end of Loch Eck, which is an exceptionally beautiful and unspoiled area. (d) Any upgrades around Cairndow would have to protect the magnificent gardens at Ardkinglas.	XXX	6
11	Rhu-Rosneath-Holy Loch-Loch Striven-Otter Ferry-Lochgilphead	££££	(a) Three large-span bridges (across Gare Loch at Rhu, across Loch Long, and across Loch Fyne at Otter Ferry). (b) This option is mostly at low level, so it should not suffer excessively from drifting and icing in winter. (c) This looks like a ‘best’ solution, although it will be one of the most expensive.	XX	6

Options for Rest and Be Thankful summarised from 2012 Civil Engineering consultant’s report

Option	Indicative cost (2012 exc. VAT)	Comment
Red Corridor	£9-10 million	This was the selected option – “A range of landslide mitigation measures”
Brown Corridor	£105-120 million	As for Red Corridor PLUS 1 km long ‘debris flow shelter’.
Yellow Corridor	£83-95 million	A new road slightly offset from the current road and including a 1.2 km long viaduct.
Purple Corridor	£460-520 million	A 1.9 km twin-bore tunnel from low on the glen ending at Loch Restil.
Blue Corridor	£66-75 million	An improved Old Military Road with a gradient of about 8% maximum. “With this option the likelihood of road closure due to landslides is considered to be negligible” – yet the August 2020 landslide crossed the Old Military Road.

Green Corridor	£27-91 million	A new 4km single carriageway road on the opposite side of the glen from the present A83.
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