

Review of consultation outcome

The Helensburgh waterfront consultation

Two simple questions

- 1. Were we consulted?**
- 2. Were we listened to?**

QUESTION 1

Were we consulted?

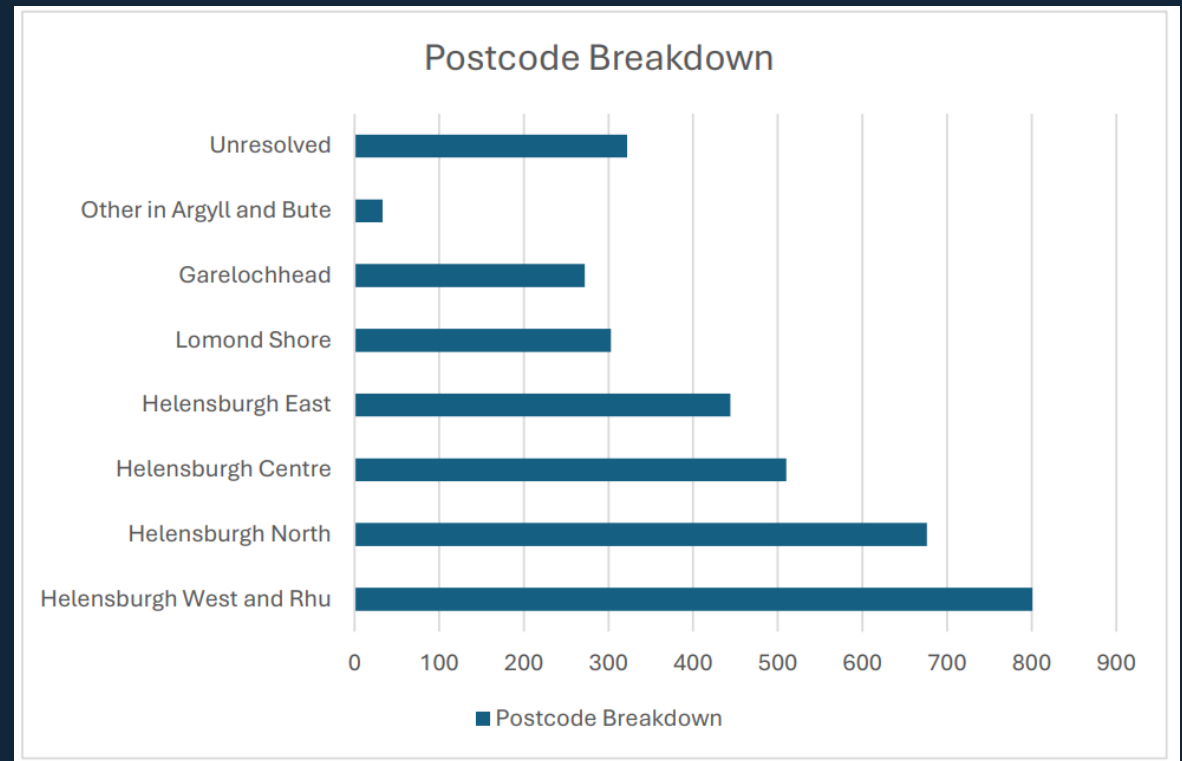
Yes.

3,430

of us answered.

THE COUNCIL AGREES

“A significant level of community engagement.”



THE COUNCIL'S OWN COUNT

94.8%

opposed the sale.

That's about 3,250 people.

94.8% as published in the Council Officer report for the Policy & Resources meeting.

LET'S LOOK CLOSER

What did we say?

9 in 10

No supermarket.

7 in 10

**Don't sell it. It's
Common Good
land.**

3 in 4

**Keep it for the
community.**

1 in 3

**Make it a place
people come to.**

HCC's analysis. How many people chose to raise each point, across all 3,430 responses. Most raised more than one.

QUESTION 2

Were we listened to?

THEME 1 OF 4

“No supermarket.”

9 in 10

of us said this

THE REPORT SAYS

Our worries are just “speculation”.

And a retail study has already dealt with them.

LISTENED TO? **No.** Our worries were called guesses, and answered with a study done before we were asked.

THEME 1 · THE RETAIL STUDY

So what does the Colliers retail study actually say?

What it is	A 2024 report for the Council: can the town support more shops?
What it found	Room for one more supermarket if footfall increases.
What's planned	Moving the Co-op. Not one more.
The site	1.38 acres. Aldi and Lidl want 1.5 or more.
Its shopping data	From a survey done in 2007.

But nobody told us:

Which shop?

How big is the shop?

What happens to the old Co-op?

What does the town actually get, after costs?

“Views are invited at this stage on the proposal generally. Views on detailed designs when they are confirmed would be invited at a later stage.”

Argyll and Bute Council, launching the consultation, June 2026

A&BC asked for general views. Then called them speculation.

THEME 2 OF 4

“Don't sell it. It's Common Good land.”

7 in 10

of us said this

THE REPORT SAYS

It's not protected from sale.

It doesn't provide evidence for this.

The money can go towards the leisure centre.

LISTENED TO? No. They've decided it can be sold, without showing why. Only where the money goes is still open.

If it is sold, it stops being Common Good land.

All that's left is the money.

Scottish Government guidance: sale proceeds “become a common good income fund”.

The report: a “contribution” to a leisure centre that's already built.

THEME 3 OF 4

“Keep it for the community.”

3 in 4

of us said this. 1 in 3 said: green space, skatepark, play, events.

THE REPORT SAYS

Yes, there's “significant support” for open space.

But it's sticking with what was decided in 2023.

LISTENED TO? **No.** They agree lots of us want it. Then they stick with the old decision.

THEME 4 OF 4

“Make it a place people come to.”

1 in 3

of us talked about the views, visitors and the pier

THE REPORT SAYS

The views: not mentioned.

Visitors and tourism: not mentioned.

The pier can work without this site.

LISTENED TO? **No answer.**

Most of this isn't mentioned at all.

THE PATTERN

Every objection gets a “however”.

The result

Responses “largely oppose” the sale. “**However**, the proposal still represents a viable and deliverable final phase.”

Shops

Residents “speculate”. “**Notwithstanding** this...”

Green space

“Significant support”. But the earlier assessment “**remains relevant**”.

Retail capacity

Concerns “**have been addressed**” in a study written before we were asked.

2023

“No clear consensus.”

2026

94.8% opposed.

The deal

Same buyer. Same price.

Advice

Unchanged.

And the process itself?

The buyer was chosen before the land was recognised as Common Good.

Six weeks to respond, when the guidance says eight.

The site still isn't on the Common Good register.

So, were we listened to?

No.

A&BC called it a significant response.
They agreed almost all of us said no.
But the recommendation remains to sell.