



THE
STUDENT
HOUSING
COMPANY

Student Housing Guidance

Finalised Version

BRAE
HOUSE

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Introduction

How does it relate to other guidance?

This document is part of a suite of non-statutory planning guidance:

This constitutes non-statutory planning guidance that supports the application of Edinburgh City Local Plan Policy Hou 10 and the emerging Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) Policy Hou 8, which both state:

Planning permission will be granted for purpose-built student accommodation where:

- a) The location is appropriate in terms of access to public transport and university and college facilities; and

- b) The proposal will not result in an excessive concentration of student accommodation in any one locality

The guidance sets out how the Council will encourage the further provision of purpose-built student accommodation and balance the needs of the existing community and the need for general housing. This guidance applies to new buildings and changes of use for student accommodation.



Misc: Student Housing, Radio Telecommunications, Open Space Strategy etc.



Context

The Council recognises the important contribution that higher education makes to the city. Aim 3 of the emerging LDP recognises higher education as one of the key sectors in contributing to the strength of Edinburgh's economy.



Analysis of 2011 census data shows that full-time students comprise over 12% of Edinburgh's population. The most visible impact of students is in the accommodation sector. This comes in a number of forms including university-provided halls of residence, private purpose-built student accommodation, or shared properties in the private rented sector, often in the form of licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

Student accommodation is defined as managed communal accommodation which forms student's primary residence. This form of development shall be considered to fall outwith a specified use class and is defined as Sui Generis. Planning permission is therefore required for a change of use to or from student accommodation including other Sui Generis uses such as flats.

Student population and concentration

Data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) shows a 26.6% increase in the number of full time students at the three universities in the Council's area (University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University and Heriot-Watt University) between 2001 and 2012. The HESA data also shows that the number of full time students since 2011/12 has remained almost constant at just under 44,000 rising to 44,898 2013/14.

The total number of students does not automatically translate into demand for purpose-built student accommodation. Students choose to stay at home or live in privately rented accommodation making these choices for a variety of reasons including cost.

Historically the increasing number of licensed HMOs has led to the loss of larger flats, which might otherwise have been occupied by families with children. This has resulted in:

- a rapid turnover of population;
- less stable communities; and
- properties left vacant for extended periods in the summer.

It is preferable that student needs are met as far as possible in well managed and regulated schemes as these have reduced issues of antisocial behaviour.

It is acknowledged that developer led student accommodation will only be developed in places which are financially viable, giving due consideration to the projected occupancy rates during and outwith the term times.

The limited provision of purpose-built student accommodation combined with the increase in student population has resulted in a noticeable

increase in student concentration in and around the city centre, as well as expansion into Leith and along arterial routes in the west of the city. The most densely concentrated areas are located within easy walking distance of the University of Edinburgh's George Square campus, as identified on Map 1. Map 2b uses the 2011 census data to show full time students (ages 16+) as a percentage of the total population. Map 3 has been provided by the Universities and illustrates the location of students in rented accommodation, including living at home. This shows that while there are higher concentrations centrally students are relatively dispersed across the city. This information supports the strategy of seeking to deliver student accommodation over a wide area. In contrast Map 4 illustrates that the location of purpose built student accommodation is focussed on limited areas. The limited spread of student accommodation has intensified the concentration of students and provided a limited offer of type and affordability for students.

Despite the increasing proportion of purpose built student accommodation there is no evidence to suggest the number of students living in general housing or HMOs has reduced (Maps 2a and 2b). Therefore there is a need for more purpose built student housing in order to free up general housing stock through an increased offer and increased competition. This need is balanced with the wider community needs including the need for additional housing.

Impact of student accommodation

A high student population can bring benefits, for example in supporting local services. Purpose-built accommodation can reduce potential antisocial aspects of locating significant numbers of students within the community. However, the quantity of students can place pressures on the physical and social infrastructure of an area and change the area's character. The concentration of students, as a proportion of the transient population, can

undermine the social and physical fabric which defines a community and place. In recent years the development of a significant number of larger student developments, in the Old Town, South Side and Fountainbridge have been on sites where much needed housing would previously have been delivered. This guidance seeks to balance the need for additional student accommodation with the need for mainstream and affordable housing in the most sustainable locations to meet the wider need of the community. The limited quantity of housing



development on site and consented across the city and in the city centre in particular, means that it is essential to consider the merit of additional student accommodation while giving due consideration to the opportunity to deliver much need housing.

A significant element of Edinburgh's character is the balanced sustainable communities which make up the whole city including the city centre. These communities are made up of groups of people with common interests which are located in one place. Balanced sustainable communities require the dominant residential component to be permanent and not transient. The student population, where not living at home, can be a significant element of the transient population. While students make many positive contributions to society, excessive concentrations may over time result in a poor quality of place, a diminished sense of community and make an area less attractive to all sections of the population. It is acknowledged that student accommodation is only one land use which contributes to the transient population within Edinburgh. Where the student population is dominant, exceeding 50% of the population, there will be a greater potential imbalance within the community, however this cannot solely be controlled through purpose built student accommodation. The delivery of additional housing is one way in which the planning authority can mitigate against detrimental changes in character through land use. A balanced consideration of land uses, including housing and student accommodation must guard against an excessive transient population.

The existing level of students living centrally, is a result of a number of historic factors including, the attraction of city centre living, the availability of suitable accommodation and the location of further education buildings. It is logical to locate purpose-built student accommodation close to campuses, however, this must be balanced with the needs of the existing communities and the suitability of sites for housing to meet the need identified in the LDP.

Maps 3 and 4 have been provided by the Universities. The maps show that the student population is well dispersed in Edinburgh and located along transport corridors. This information supports the guidelines objective to support further student accommodation in sustainable locations outwith the areas of greatest community pressure.



Considerations of the many related factors is reflected in locational and design guidance criteria a) to d), including the support for student accommodation within campus. In recognition of the current locations of students, the accessibility of services for students throughout the city, and the continued demand for accommodation, criteria b) sets out a general support for student accommodation on smaller sites. This support is qualified by the need to assess any potential negative cumulative impact from this and other land uses on the character of an area.

Purpose-built student accommodation can have a significant impact on the physical environment and the overall quality of a place. Creating Places - A policy statement on architecture and place for Scotland sets out the six qualities of successful places which all development should consider. It is particularly important that the design of purpose-built student accommodation should create safe and pleasant places for residents and the wider community, create a mix of uses avoiding a single land use and ensure adaptability.

Edinburgh has a housing requirement set out in the Local Development Plan (LDP). It is the role of the LDP to determine how the housing requirement up to 2024 will be met, taking account of the contribution made from existing sites and other allowances such as completions from windfall sites and demolitions. The windfall assumption is set out in the Housing Land Study (June 2014). Meeting this windfall assumption relies on brownfield sites identified as having a high development potential to be delivered for general housing. It is appropriate to apply

specific guidance upon these sites to encourage the delivery of much needed housing and balance the impact of purpose built student on communities.

Large mono-use development has significant potential to harm the character of an area. Locational and design guidance criterion c) seeks to guide the mix within larger proposals to ensure a balance between the need for student accommodation and housing, while mitigating the impact upon the character of an area.



Locational and design Guidance

The criteria in ECLP Policy Hou 10 and LDP Policy Hou 8 will be applied to proposals for student housing using the locational and design guidance set out below:

- a) In locations within or sharing a boundary with (or separated only by a road) a main university or college campus, as identified in Map 1, student housing will generally be acceptable.*
- b) Outwith criteria a) student housing will generally be supported on sites with less than 0.25ha developable area. Consideration should be given to the cumulative impact of student housing, and other land uses which contribute to a transient population, where these uses will have a detrimental impact on character.* **
- c) Outwith criteria a) and b) sites identified as a high probability of delivering housing within Map 5 taken from the LDP Housing Land Study (June 2014) and sites with greater than 0.25ha developable area must comprise a proportion of housing as part of the proposed development, to balance the mix of land uses and to contribute to housing land need. On these sites the new build residential gross floor area shall represent a minimum of 50% of the total new build housing and student accommodation gross floor area.*
- d) Student accommodation should comprise a mix of type of accommodation, including cluster units, to meet varying needs of students.

* Development should be designed to positively contribute to place through the location of alternative ground floor uses where this is characteristic of the street or area. Additional alternative uses may be required in addition to student accommodation and housing.

**To avoid the sub-division of sites the applicant shall be required to demonstrate that the site did not form part of a larger area, within a single control or ownership, on 25th February 2016. Where this is not demonstrated the new build housing requirement, as set out in c), shall apply.

The guidance will not be applied in isolation and consideration must be given to other matters addressed in the LDP and planning guidelines including The Edinburgh Design Guidance. Development should be of an appropriate design to positively contribute to the areas character or appearance. Development should accord with the Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing Guidance.

Student accommodation is a primary place of residence and therefore it is critical that design is of a high quality with adequate amenity to contribute to healthy and sustainable lifestyles. The Edinburgh Design Guidance 2013 applies to all development, and of particular relevance to amenity is section 2.9 Daylight, sunlight, privacy and outlook. Where development cannot reasonably accord with the associated technical guidance, which sets out the

minimum standards required, development will not be supported.

Definition of developable area

For the purpose of the application of locational and design guidance criterion b) and c) set out above, developable area is defined as the application site area, less any areas of existing highway retained within the boundary.

List of Figures

Map 1 identifies the main university and college campuses where it is deemed that further student housing would be acceptable in principle.

Map 2a illustrates student concentrations based on the 2001 census.

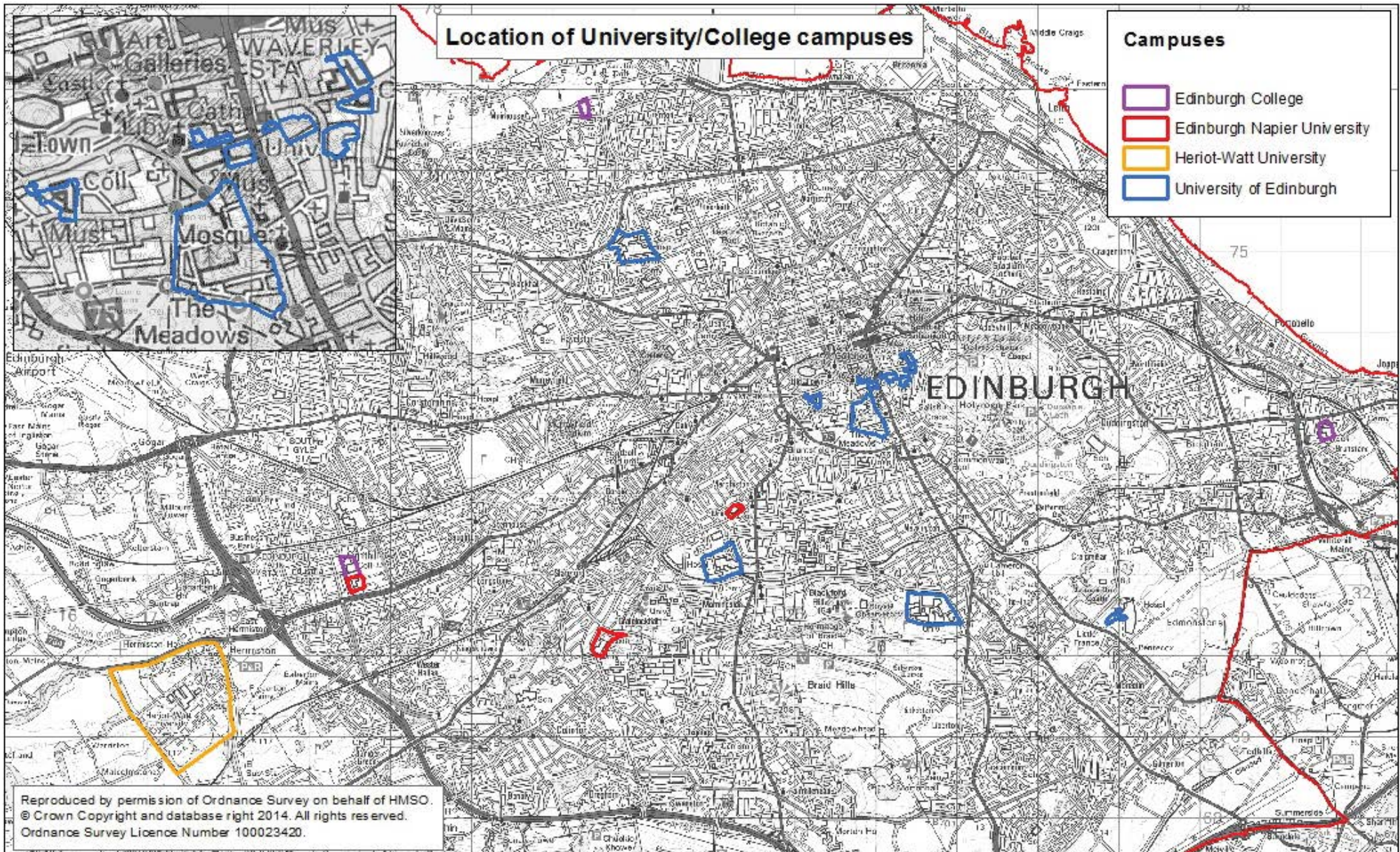
Map 2b illustrates student concentrations based on the 2011 census.

Map 3 illustrates the location of students living in privately rented accommodation, including living at home.

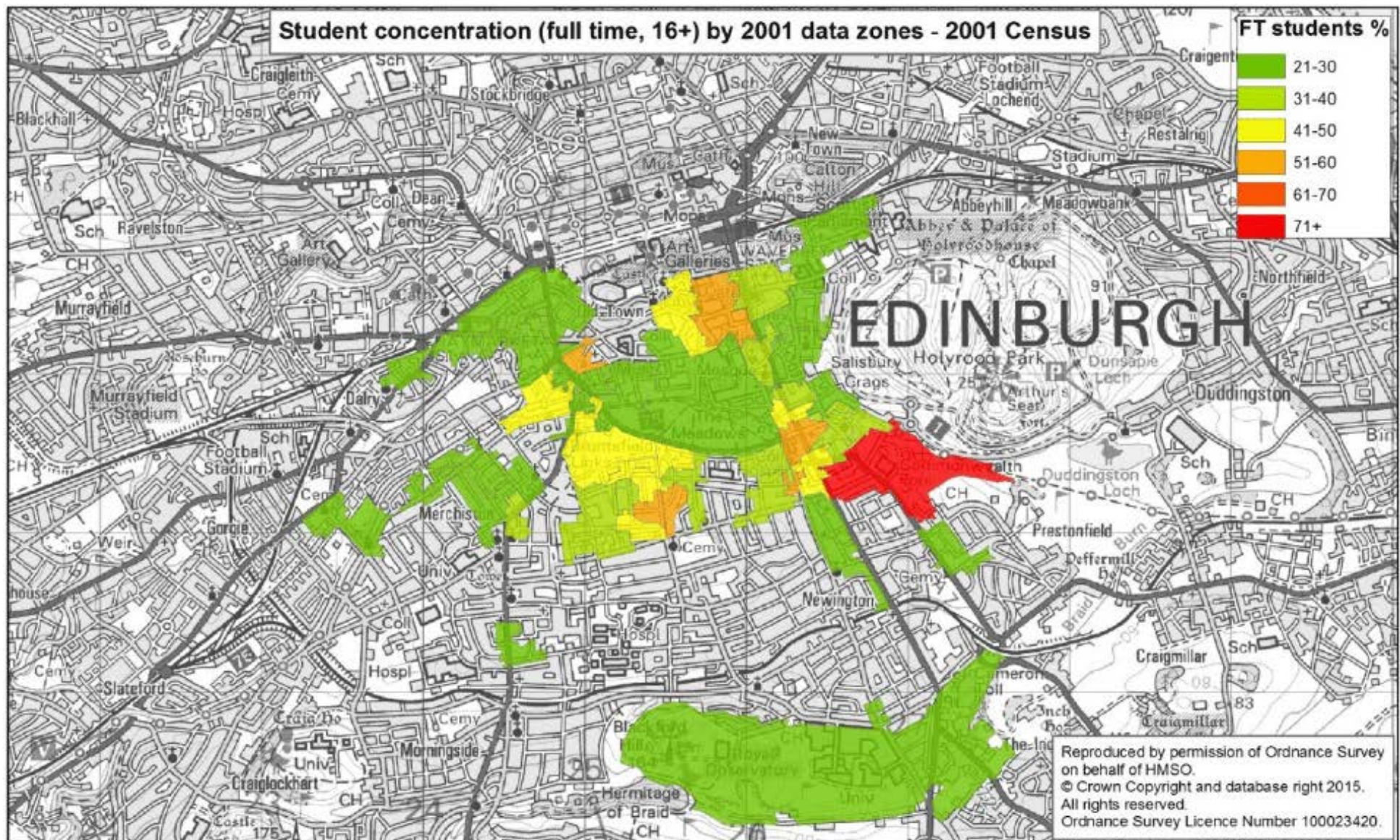
Map 4 identifies student living in university managed purpose accommodation.

Map 5 identifies sites in the LDP Housing Land Study (March 2014).

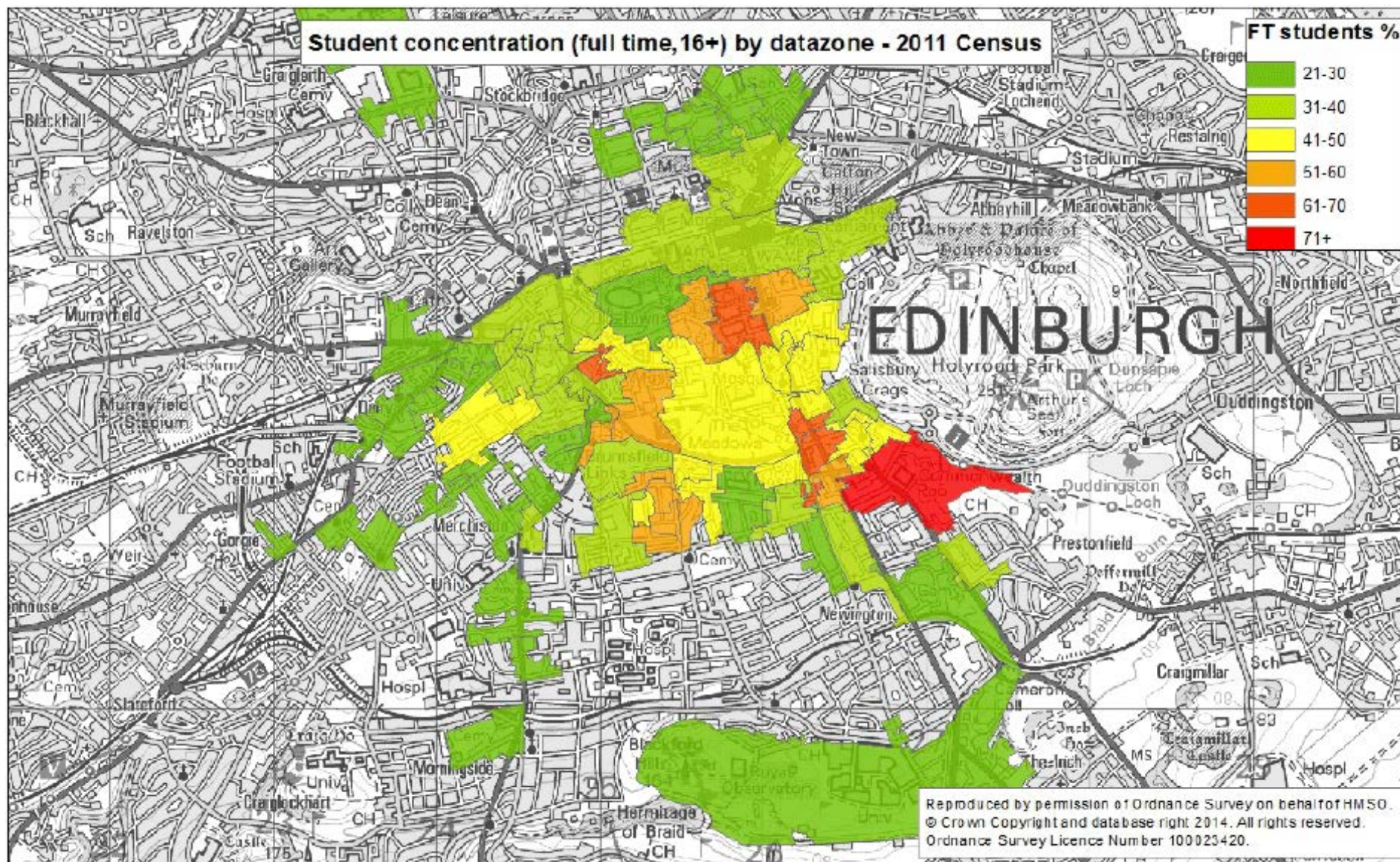
Map 1: Locations of university and college campuses



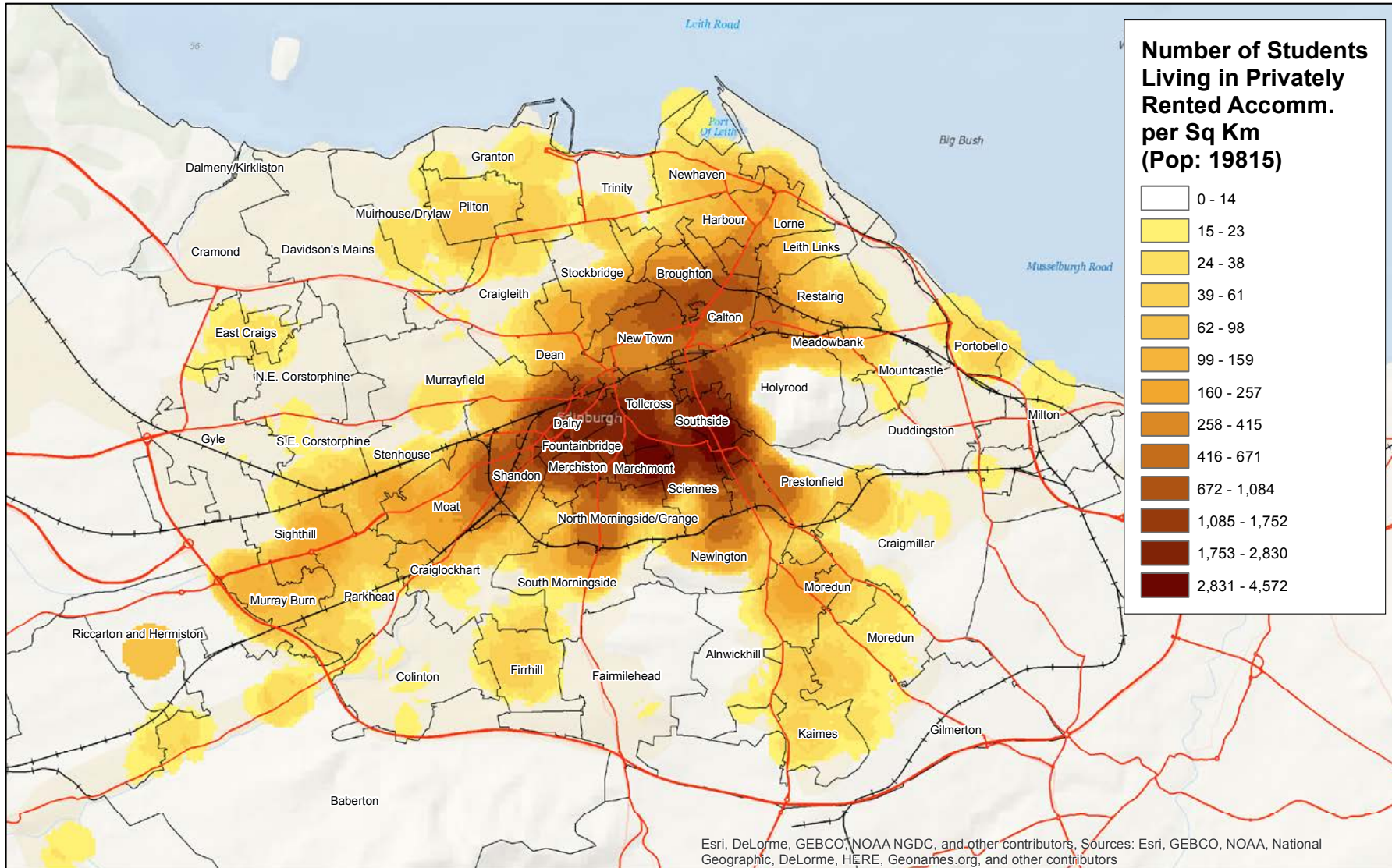
Map 2 (a): 2001 census data on student population



Map 2 (b): 2011 census data on student population



Map 3: Combined university students living in privately rented accommodation.

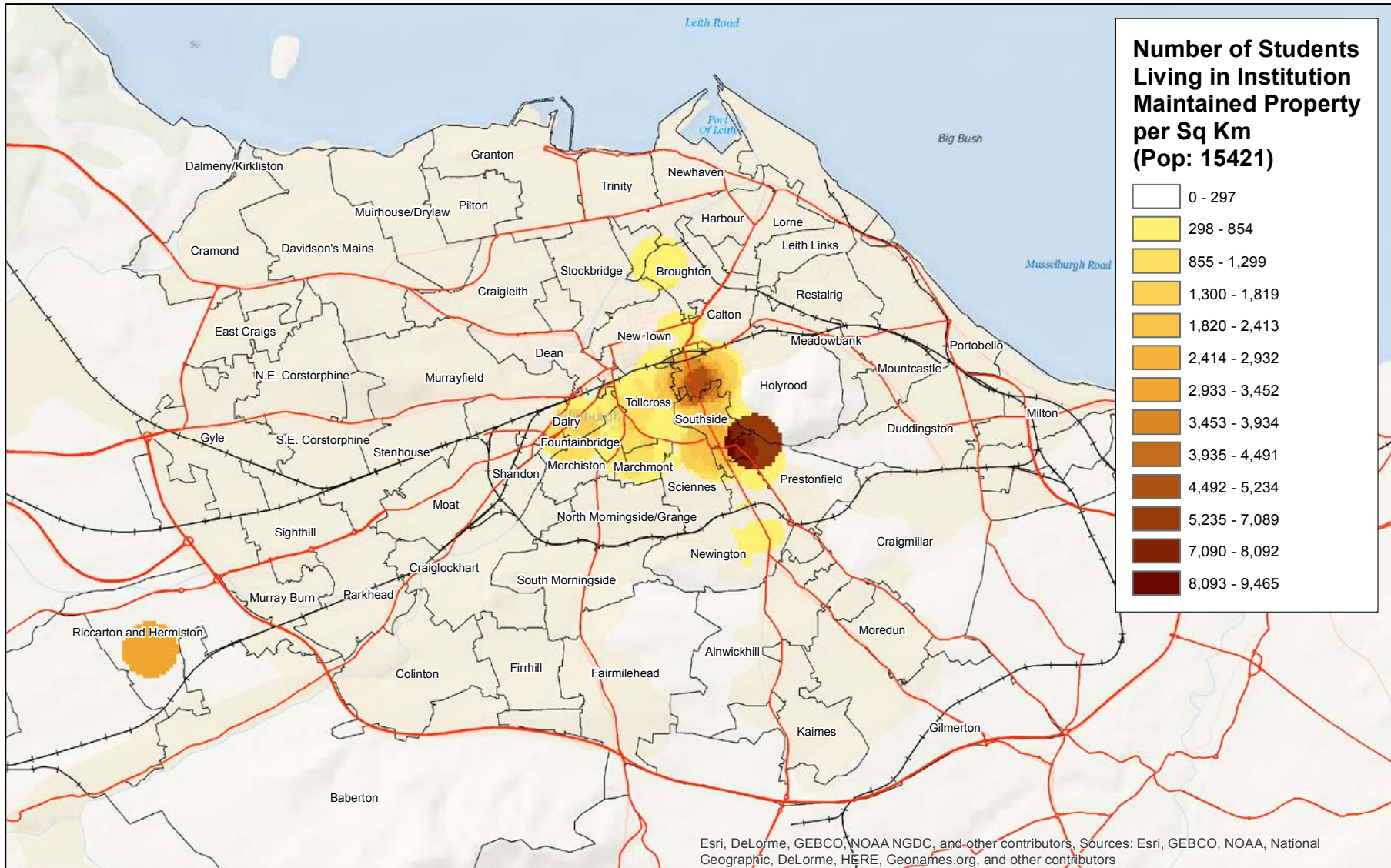


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Map 4: Combined university students living in university managed accommodation.

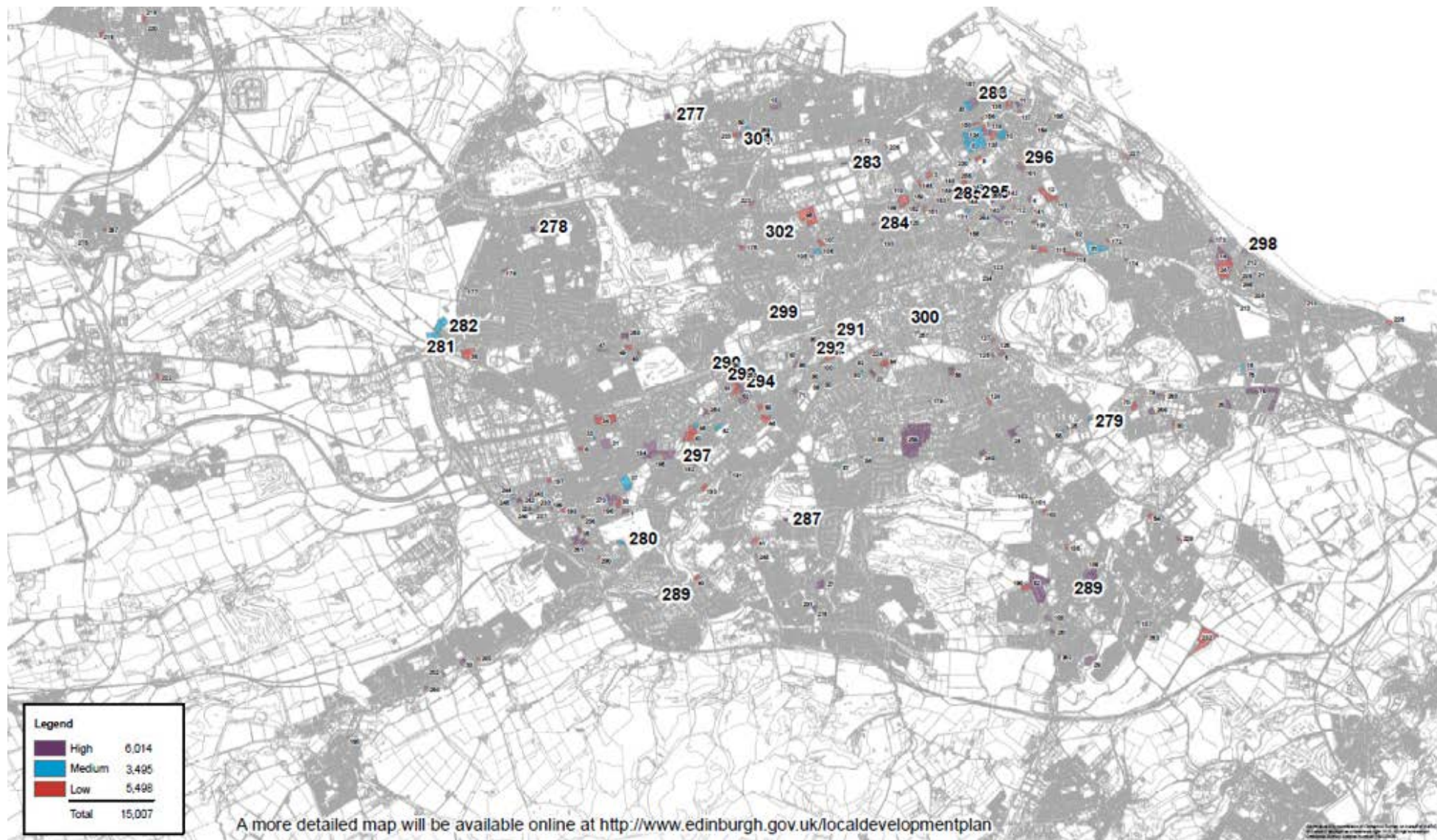


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Map 5: LDP Housing Land Study – potential sites for housing (June 2014)



This information is available online as part of the Edinburgh Local Development Plan Second Proposed Plan interactive



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আমাদের সঙ্গে অনুবাদ করুন ترجمہ کلف حاضر

يسعدنا توفير الترجمة MOŻEMY PRZETŁUMACZYĆ 很樂意翻譯

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