

Preface	1
Chapter 1 Introduction	3
West Lancashire Local Development Framework	3
Preparation of the Core Strategy	3
Evidence Base to the Core Strategy	4
National and Regional Planning	5
Local Plans and Strategies	6
Chapter 2 Spatial Portrait for West Lancashire	9
Introduction	9
West Lancashire Borough	9
Skelmersdale (and Up Holland)	15
Ormskirk (and Aughton)	15
Burscough	16
The Northern Parishes	16
The Eastern Parishes	17
The Western Parishes	17
Key Issues	18
Chapter 3 A Vision for West Lancashire	21
Introduction	21
Vision for West Lancashire 2027	22
Chapter 4 Spatial Objectives	25
Introduction	25
Spatial Objectives for West Lancashire	25
Monitoring	26
Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire	27
Introduction	27
Option 1: Skelmersdale Focus	28
Option 2: Skelmersdale & Ormskirk Focus	31
Option 3: Skelmersdale & Burscough Focus	34
Option 4: Rural Dispersal	37
Option 5: Cross Boundary	40
Other Options	42
Chapter 6 Effects of the Options on Individual Settlements	43
Chapter 7 Key Spatial Issues	49

Contents

Introduction	49
Skelmersdale Town Centre	49
Edge Hill University	51
Affordable Housing	53
Gypsy/ Traveller Sites	54
Older People	56
Infrastructure	57
Climate Change	59
Chapter 8 What Happens Next?	61
How the Council will deal with Comments	61
Next Steps in the Core Strategy Process	61
Glossary	63
Appendix A LDF Preparation	67
Local Development Framework Structure	67
Results of Consultation	68
Appendix B Spatial Objectives	73
Appendix C Evidence Base	83
List of Evidence Base Documents	83
Brief Analysis of each Document	84
Meetings with Key Stakeholders	91
Infrastructure	93
Appendix D Planning Policy Background	97
National Planning Policy	97
Regional Planning Policy	98
Local Plans and Strategies	99

West Lancashire has a wonderful mix of vibrant towns and picturesque villages, and boasts some of the most beautiful countryside in the UK. It is vital that we manage, guide and encourage development within the Borough to meet the aspirations of our towns and villages and the communities within them.

This 'Options Paper' represents the next milestone in the preparation of the Core Strategy and the delivery of the West Lancashire Local Development Framework, which will supersede the existing Replacement Local Plan. It has been developed by gathering information from the evidence base and the results of consultation during the Issues stage and presents a draft vision of West Lancashire in 2027, with five alternative Options for the future development of the Borough.



Ultimately, this document is for the benefit of all residents within the Borough. Therefore, it is important that we hear from all those within the community to obtain their views on what is being proposed in order to help us to make an informed decision on what our Preferred Option should be.

I very much look forward to hearing your views on the proposals and options within this document so that they can be taken into consideration as the Council progresses to the next stage.

Councillor Martin Forshaw
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation
West Lancashire Borough Council

September 2009

Preface

How to Comment

The Council welcomes your comments on all aspects of this document, particularly upon the five Options for the future development of the Borough. However, if you feel that there are other realistic and achievable options that have not been considered at this stage, then we would welcome your views. Throughout this document we have included a number of questions in clear yellow boxes to prompt your response. An example of this is shown below:

Question 1

This is an example question, please tell us your views.

There are a number of methods that you can use to comment on the Core Strategy Options Paper. Preferably we would encourage you to make comments through our online Consultation Portal. Alternatively, written responses will be accepted using forms which can be found at the Council Offices, Libraries and Post Offices or on the [Council's website](#). Our contact details and website addresses are listed in the table below.

Key Dates

The consultation period will run from Thursday 3rd September 2009 until Thursday 15th October 2009, allowing a period of 6 weeks to submit your comments.

Contact Information

If you wish to discuss any aspects of the Options Paper and its potential implications, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the LDF Team through the contact details listed below:

Contact	Direct Line and E-mail Address
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LDF Team General Enquiries	01695 585 284 ldf@westlancs.gov.uk
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Consultation Portal	http://consult.westlancs.gov.uk
Postal Address	Ian Gill LDF Project Manager Planning and Development Services West Lancashire Borough Council 52 Derby Street Ormskirk L39 2DF

West Lancashire Local Development Framework

1.1 The West Lancashire Local Development Framework (LDF) is a collection of planning documents which will guide the development of the Borough. It is a new way of planning the future of an area and will supersede the current West Lancashire Replacement Local Plan 2001-16. Introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the new LDF system is built upon the principles of: sustainable development, addressing climate change, spatial planning, high quality design, good accessibility and community involvement. Spatial planning is a new concept which does not just take into account land use, but also considers other issues that could indirectly affect, or be affected by, land use, such as health, education and crime.

1.2 The West Lancashire Core Strategy is the most important part of the LDF and is the first Development Plan Document (DPD) to be prepared by the Council. The Core Strategy will contain a vision and strategy which will set out how we want West Lancashire to develop over the period to 2027. It will not only make sure that new homes, jobs and services required by communities are located in the most sustainable places, but will also deliver the necessary infrastructure, facilities and other development to make this possible.

1.3 At a later stage of its preparation, the Core Strategy will contain a number of detailed Development Management Policies to help assess planning applications. In addition, the Core Strategy will eventually be accompanied by a Site Allocations DPD, which will address site-specific issues across the Borough, and by any other documents that the Council considers appropriate to support the policies within the Core Strategy. Appendix A explains the structure of the West Lancashire LDF in more detail.

Preparation of the Core Strategy

1.4 The West Lancashire Core Strategy has gone through a number of stages so far in its preparation. These are explained below:

Stage 1: Evidence Base

1.5 It is important to gather up-to-date and comprehensive information in order to support the Core Strategy; this is known as the 'evidence base'. We have collected information on a range of subjects including: demographics, housing, employment, retail, open space and climate change. Further details about the evidence base can be found in Appendix C.

1.6 Although the Council started work on the evidence base back in 2006, it was not until 12th February 2008 that we formally began preparing the Core Strategy. This was marked by consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, which is available to view on the Council's [website](#).

Stage 2: Issues

1.7 The second milestone in preparation of the Core Strategy, known as the Issues stage, has recently been passed. This was marked by workshops at the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Annual Conference and Spatial Forms in June and July 2008, and also the release of the Issues Questionnaire in January/February 2009. The purpose of the Issues stage was to provide an opportunity for key stakeholders, businesses and the local community to identify

Chapter 1 Introduction

key issues affecting the Borough, and to put forward their views. During this stage, we also met with key organisations and infrastructure providers to discuss infrastructure constraints across the Borough and the deliverability of the options. In addition, the Council consulted on the subject of the Core Strategy in June 2009, in terms of what it should contain and the issues it should address.

Stage 3: Options

1.8 The Options Paper is an important stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy. Interpreting the evidence base and the results of consultation during the Issues stage, it presents a draft vision of West Lancashire in 2027, and five alternative options for the future development of the Borough. The options indicate various ways of addressing the key issues and achieving the vision. They also show how settlements might change and the different amounts of development that they may accommodate. The document also contains possible approaches towards key spatial issues, such as: Skelmersdale Town Centre, Edge Hill University, affordable housing, specialist needs housing, Gypsy/ Traveller sites, older people, infrastructure and climate change.

1.9 We are keen to seek your views and opinions on the draft vision, options and key spatial issues. This will help us as we move to the next stage of preparing our Core Strategy: choosing a Preferred Option. It may be that the Preferred Option contains aspects of more than one of the options presented within this Options Paper, or contain aspects of an option that has been submitted by the public through the consultation process. The Preface to this document provides instructions on how you can comment on this document.

Evidence Base to the Core Strategy

1.10 It is important for the Core Strategy to be backed up by robust, relevant and up-to-date information. In preparing this document, we have relied upon a number of studies, reports, and sets of data, which together are referred to as the 'evidence base'. The evidence base helps us to identify what the issues are, to determine ways of dealing with the issues, and eventually, to demonstrate that the Preferred Option we choose is the best one.

1.11 The different parts of the evidence base are described in more detail in Appendix C. Its principal components consist of the following studies:

- The **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment** (2009): looks at how much land there is that could potentially deliver housing within the Borough;
- The **Housing Needs Study** (2005, update to be completed autumn 2009): examines how much housing, and what types of dwellings, are required to meet people's housing needs in the Borough, especially in terms of affordable housing;
- The **Strategic Housing Market Assessment** (2009): looks at the wider housing market within which West Lancashire lies, and its implications for housing in the Borough;
- The **Employment Land and Premises Study** (2009): looks at how much employment land there is in the Borough, and how much we are likely to need in the future;
- **West Lancashire Economy Study** (2009): provides a better understanding of the Borough's economic baseline position and its key industrial sectors;
- The **Retail and Leisure Study** (2007): examines the health of the Borough's main town centres, current and future expenditure patterns, the impact of proposed new development, and the capacity for future retail development;

- The **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** (2007): carried out in consultation with the Environment Agency (EA), examines the risk of flooding in the Borough from rivers and the sea. If the Council makes a decision to allocate land for development in areas of high flood risk, a more detailed flood risk study would be required; and
- The **Open Space, Sport & Recreation Assessment** (expected 2009): assesses West Lancashire's open space and sport and recreation facilities, focusing on their quality, and how well they are used and valued. It also provides new open space standards and reviews the Borough's playing pitch strategy.

1.12 Other sources of evidence we will use include:

- A Spatial Atlas setting out socio-demographic information about the different parts of West Lancashire;
- Annual Monitoring Reports;
- Housing land supply and completions data (Housing Land Supply annual reports);
- Employment land supply and take-up data (Employment Land Monitor annual reports);
- Transport-related information; and
- Information on environmental issues.

National and Regional Planning

1.13 West Lancashire is influenced by policies at a number of levels, including national and regional plans and strategies. Therefore it is important that future development plans for the Borough are consistent with overarching guidance and in general conformity with other strategies and plans.

National Guidance

1.14 The LDF will take into account of a wide range of national guidance included within Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs). National guidance should not simply be repeated within the Core Strategy, but should be influential in its production and delivery. PPSs and PPGs aim to deliver sustainable development and are summarised in Appendix D or can be viewed on the Communities and Local Government (CLG) [website](#).

Regional Guidance

1.15 The North West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) was adopted in September 2008 and covers the period up to 2021. The RSS interprets national guidance at a regional level, focusing on the specific spatial requirements of the North West. More details on RSS policies affecting West Lancashire are provided in Appendix D or can be found at the 4NW Technical Planning [website](#).

1.16 The RSS is currently undergoing a partial review focusing on the topics of Gypsies & Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and Regional Parking Standards. In addition, preparation of the "RS2010" has commenced. RS2010 is an integrated single regional strategy for the North West, which will eventually replace the RSS, the Regional Economic Strategy, and the Regional Housing Strategy. For the time being, the current RSS remains part of the development plan in West Lancashire, and the LDF policies will need to conform to it.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Local Plans and Strategies

Sub-Regional Plans and Strategies

1.17 West Lancashire's location ensures strong links with Lancashire authorities to the north and east, Merseyside authorities to the south and west and Greater Manchester authorities to the east. Partnership working is essential to ensure West Lancashire's geographical position is maximised, strengthening links with neighbouring local authorities and assisting in the delivery of the Core Strategy.

1.18 The most relevant sub-regional documents to West Lancashire as follows, further details of which are provided in Appendix D:

- Ambition Lancashire Sustainable Community Strategy (2005-2025);
- Lancashire Local Area Agreement (2008-2011);
- Mid-Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement;
- Lancashire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (2009-2021);
- Lancashire Local Transport Plan 2 (2006-2010); and
- Lancashire Climate Change Strategy (2009-2020).

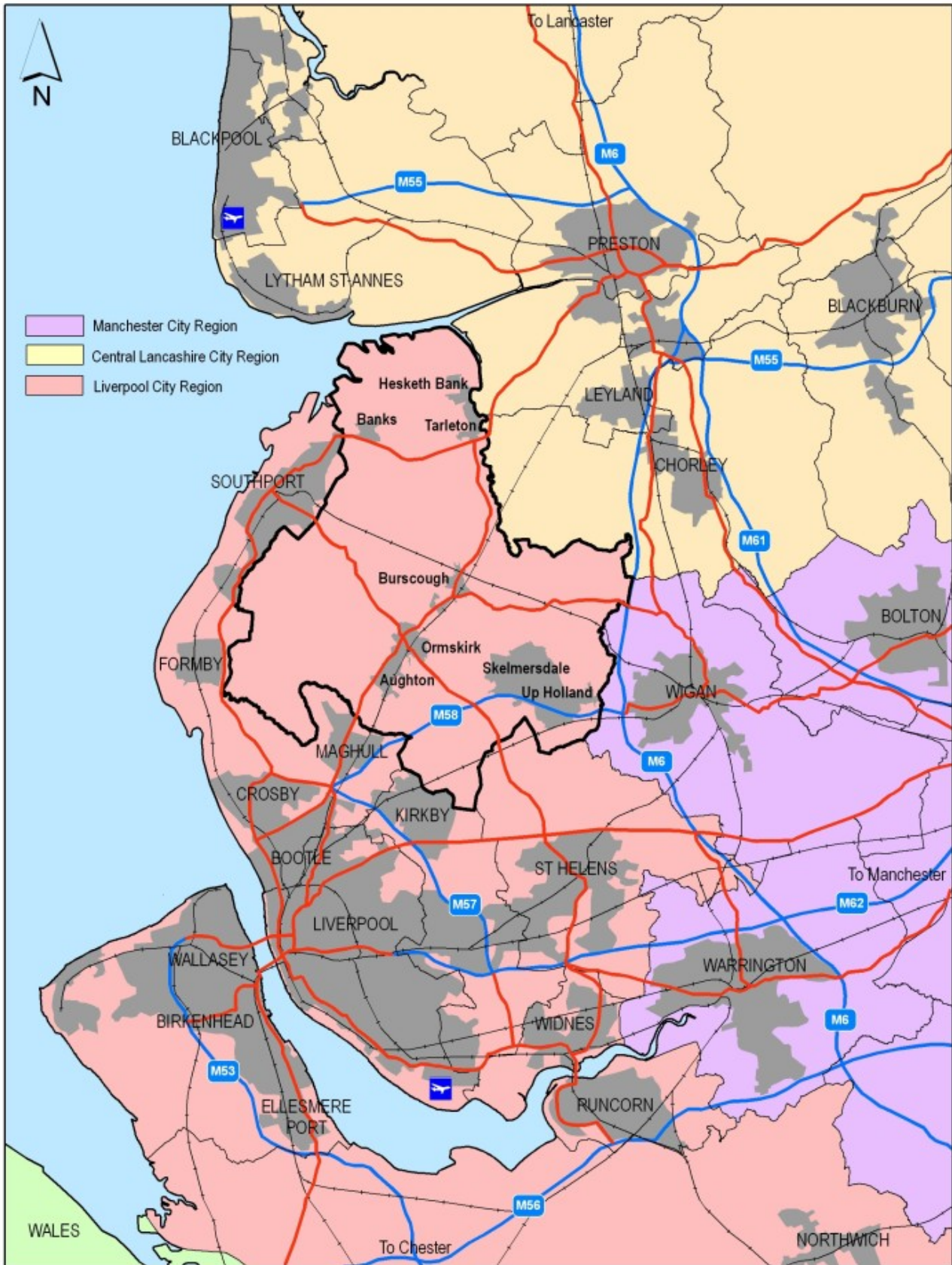
Local Plans and Strategies

1.19 At a local level, the Core Strategy needs to have regard to existing plans and strategies, and to the objectives already established within these documents. The most important documents include, with further details in Appendix D:

- West Lancashire Sustainable Community Strategy (2007-2017);
- Housing Strategy (and update);
- Affordable Housing Strategy;
- West Lancashire and Lancashire Climate Change Strategies;
- Consultation and Engagement Strategy;
- Council Corporate Strategy;
- Crime and Disorder Strategy; and
- Parish Plans.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Figure 2.1 West Lancashire Sub-Regional Setting



Introduction

2.1 The spatial portrait for sets the context for the Core Strategy by illustrating the key characteristics and features of the Borough that are unique to West Lancashire. The spatial portrait has been influenced by involvement with the local community and key stakeholders during the Issues stage of preparation, and also key statistics from the evidence base, including the [2008 Annual Monitoring Report](#) and the Spatial Atlas, a summary of which can be found in Appendix C.

West Lancashire Borough

2.2 West Lancashire's geographical location in the North West of England is unique. It has a dual identity, being the southernmost Borough in the County of Lancashire, but also located within the Liverpool City Region. The Borough comprises a mix of vibrant towns and villages sitting alongside tranquil countryside and covers an area of 134 square miles (34,700 hectares). It has the greatest amount of Green Belt land in England ⁽¹⁾.

2.3 The Borough is predominantly rural in nature, and is widely recognised as an attractive place to live, work and visit. The majority of people live in the Borough's three main settlements: the rapidly maturing New Town of Skelmersdale (including Up Holland); the historic market town of Ormskirk (including Aughton); and the small market town of Burscough. There are three distinct rural areas: the Northern, Eastern and Western Parishes, containing a number of villages, the largest of which are the linear settlements of Tarleton and Hesketh Bank.

2.4 West Lancashire is bordered by the Ribble Estuary to the north and the Borough of Sefton to the west. The Boroughs of Knowsley and St. Helens lie to the south, with the Boroughs of Wigan, Chorley and South Ribble lying to the east. West Lancashire is situated within the Liverpool City Region, due to its strong economic, social, cultural and transport links, particularly with Southport and Liverpool. The Borough is also influenced by, and has links to, the Central Lancashire and Manchester City Regions, particularly with Wigan. West Lancashire's location within the sub-region is illustrated by Figure 2.1 opposite, whilst a more detailed map of the Borough is illustrated by Figure 2.2 below.

2.5 There are also strong cross-boundary links, as a number of settlements in the Borough physically connect with settlements in neighbouring authorities. In the east these include connections with Orrell (Wigan) at Tontine, and Shevington (Wigan) at Appley Bridge. In the west these include connections with Birkdale (Sefton) at Moss Road and New Cut Lane, Ainsdale (Sefton) at Segar's Lane and Southport (Sefton) at Brown Edge/ Southport Road.

Natural and Built Environment

2.6 The Borough contains a large proportion of the best and most versatile agricultural land in Lancashire and the highest total area of wildlife trust reserves in the County ⁽²⁾. It is home to the internationally important Martin Mere and Ribble Estuary wetlands sites. The River Douglas flows along the eastern boundary of the Borough, whilst the Leeds-Liverpool Canal crosses the Borough from east to west and branches off to the north. The rural

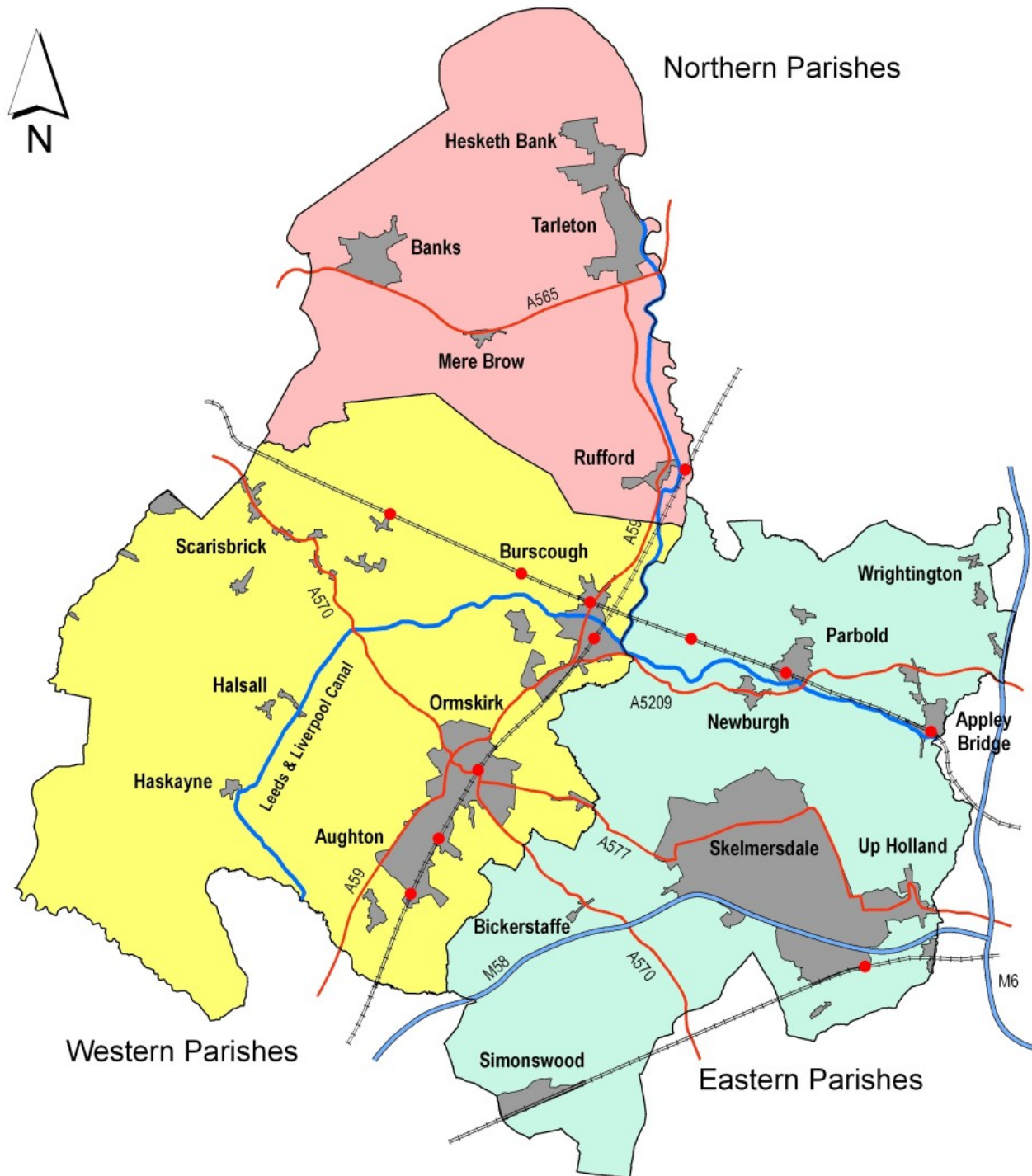
1 Local Planning Authority Green Belt Statistics: England 2008/09

2 Lancashire County Council AMR 2008

Chapter 2 Spatial Portrait for West Lancashire

landscape is a mixture of mosslands in the north, west and south, a coastal plain in the centre of the Borough, farmed ridges in the east, and coastal marshes in the Ribble Estuary. Two of the highest points in the Borough are Parbold Hill and Ashurst Beacon which provide spectacular views across the region to the Irish Sea and the Welsh Mountains.

Figure 2.2 West Lancashire Settlements and Rural Areas



2.7 In terms of tourism, the Borough's major attractions include Martin Mere near Burscough (Wildfowl and Wetland Trust), Rufford Old Hall (National Trust) and Ormskirk market. Key areas for recreation include Beacon Country Park in Up Holland, Mere Sands Wood near Rufford, the Leeds-Liverpool Canal and a network of rural footpaths. There are a total of 28

Chapter 2 Spatial Portrait for West Lancashire

conservation areas across the Borough, and some of the key heritage assets include the Grade 1 listed Scarisbrick Hall and Lathom House, listed churches of Ormskirk Parish Church, St.Michael's in Aughton, St.Thomas the Martyr in Up Holland and St.Cuthbert's in Halsall.

Population

2.8 The population of the Borough in 2007 was estimated as 109,839 ⁽³⁾. This has risen by just over 1% since 2001 when the population was 108,378 ⁽⁴⁾. The population is projected to increase further to 117,600 by 2031, equating to an additional 7,761 residents ⁽⁵⁾. Approximately one-quarter of residents are currently of retirement age. By 2031 this proportion is projected to have risen to around one third of residents, whilst over the same period, the proportion of people aged 15-59 will have dropped from 59% of the population to less than 50%.

2.9 There is also a variation in the population age structure between settlements. In general, the rural areas of West Lancashire are more attractive to people of middle or retirement age, whilst Skelmersdale has a younger, more varied population structure. Inevitably over future years, this will provide a significant challenge to the delivery of services, provision of an adequate labour force and a suitable balanced housing stock that takes account of the ageing population.

Housing

2.10 The average house price for the Borough in 2008 was £217,252, which represents seven times the average wage, and an increase of over 40% since 2004 ⁽⁶⁾. This creates a significant affordability problem for the Borough, particularly in the rural areas where house prices are higher. Some of the highest house prices in the Borough can be found in Rufford, Aughton, Newburgh and Parbold, whilst some of the lower house prices can be found in the central wards of Skelmersdale.

2.11 Around three quarters of dwellings are owner-occupied in the Borough, with the remaining quarter being rented. Whilst the Borough proportion of owner-occupied households is higher than national and regional averages, this proportion drops below 50% in the central wards of Skelmersdale.

Deprivation

2.12 West Lancashire has relatively low levels of multiple deprivation, being ranked the 141st most deprived of the 354 English Council areas. However, Skelmersdale is a significant 'hot spot' of deprivation, being the most deprived area in the Borough with 14 of its 23 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) featuring in the top 20% most deprived areas of the country ⁽⁷⁾. At the opposite end of the scale, Parbold, Aughton Park and Tarleton have some of the lowest levels of deprivation in the country. This illustrates the stark contrast between Skelmersdale and the rest of the Borough in terms of multiple deprivation, and the need to reduce the gap.

3 Mid Year Population Estimates, ONS

4 Census 2001, ONS

5 Population Projections 2006, ONS

6 Hometrack 2008

7 The English Indices of Deprivation 2007, CLG

Chapter 2 Spatial Portrait for West Lancashire

2.13 Some rural areas of the Borough also suffer from certain types of deprivation. For example, the parishes of Downholland, Great Altcar, Bickerstaffe and parts of Scarisbrick are amongst the top 10% nationally most deprived areas in terms of barriers to housing and key local services. This is likely due to their remote locations and high property prices.

Health, Education and Crime

2.14 The health of people in West Lancashire is roughly in line with national averages, with life expectancy at 77 years for men and 80 years for women. However those living in the most deprived areas of the Borough, particularly Skelmersdale, have life expectancies 6 years shorter than those in the least deprived areas. The causes of avoidable deaths of people under 65 can stem from lifestyle choices such as smoking, poor diet and lack of exercise.

2.15 Just under a fifth of West Lancashire's workforce has a degree (or equivalent) or higher, in line with national figures. The highest proportions of people with degree level qualifications are found in Aughton, Parbold, Newburgh and Wrightington, which are predominantly dormitory settlements for people commuting to other areas. Skelmersdale has the highest proportion of people with no qualifications.

2.16 Crime rates in the Borough are relatively low compared with other local authorities in England, and these have steadily decreased over the last few years.

Transport

2.17 The majority of the Borough has relatively good road access to the neighbouring towns of Southport, Preston, St.Helens, Wigan and Liverpool. There are also good connections to the wider motorway network via the M58 and M6. However, there is a major issue regarding traffic congestion around Ormskirk Town Centre as a result of the one-way system on the A570.

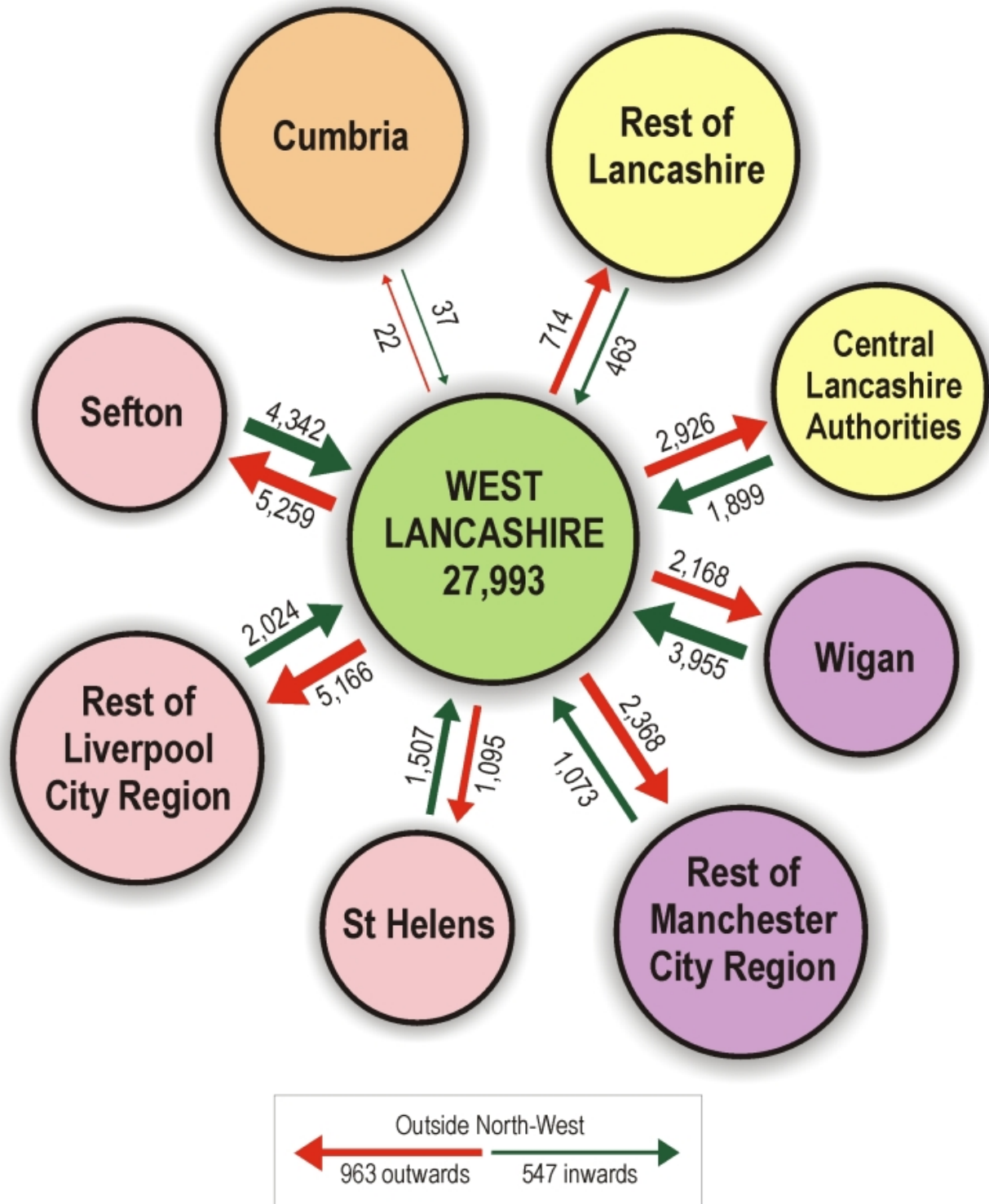
2.18 Three rail lines running through the Borough provide links to Liverpool, Preston, Southport, Wigan and Manchester, although interchanging between these lines within the Borough can be difficult. There are regular bus services between Southport and Wigan. However, public transport provision in the remainder of the Borough is poor, particularly in the rural areas.

2.19 Patterns of movement illustrate that around 57% of West Lancashire residents travel to work within the Borough, with the most popular outward destinations being Sefton (11%), the Liverpool City Region (11%) and the Central Lancashire Authorities (Preston, South Ribble and Chorley) (6%)⁽⁸⁾. Patterns of inwards movement reveal that the most likely origin of commuters who work in West Lancashire are Sefton (10%), Wigan (9%) and the Liverpool City Region (5%). This is illustrated by Figure 2.3 below.

8 2001 Census

Chapter 2 Spatial Portrait for West Lancashire

Figure 2.3 West Lancashire Travel to Work Flows (Source: 2001 Census)



Economy

2.20 The economy of West Lancashire is heavily concentrated on manufacturing, particularly in Skelmersdale, coupled with a weakening agricultural sector in the rural areas and a stronger concentration of service sectors in Ormskirk. The concentration towards manufacturing is reflected by significantly higher than national average levels of people living in the Borough who are employed as "process plant and machine operatives" and in "administrative and secretarial" roles. Similarly, there are significantly lower levels of people employed as

Chapter 2 Spatial Portrait for West Lancashire

"managers and senior officials", in "professional occupations" and in "skilled trades occupations" ⁽⁹⁾. In the rural areas of the Borough, agricultural and horticultural employers (including packing industries) play an important role, although these increasingly rely upon migrant or seasonal workers to function.

2.21 The Borough is home to a number of international and nationally recognised companies including Pilkington Group Ltd, ASDA, Co-Operative Bank PLC, Matalan PLC and Walkers Snack Foods Ltd, in addition to important local employers such as the Borough Council and Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust. Edge Hill University is also an important asset which brings significant economic benefits for the local economy.

Key Statistics

2.22 The table below provides a brief summary of some of the Boroughs key statistics in comparison to regional and national statistics. More extensive data is provided, with commentary, in the Borough Councils' [Spatial Atlas](#) .

Table 2.1 Key Statistics for West Lancashire

	West Lancashire	North West	England
Population (2007 MYE)	109,800	6,864,300	51,092,032
Life expectancy at birth (males) (2007)	77.7	76.0	77.7
Life expectancy at birth (females) (2007)	80.6	80.4	81.8
Economic Activity Rate (2007-08)	82.5	76.7	78.8
Employment Rate % (2008)	80.1	72.1	74.5
Unemployment Rate (2008)	5	5.8	5.2
Median gross weekly pay (£) (2008)	413	450	479
JSA Claimants % (2008)	2.9	3.2	2.8
VAT Registrations % (2007)	9.2	10.6	10.2
VAT De-registrations % (2007)	7	7.5	7.3
Ratio of house price to earnings (2007)	7.05	5.64	5.94
Number of households (2001)	43,586	2,812,789	20,451,427
% of working age with no qualifications (2001)	30	32	29
% of working age with NVQ4+ qualifications (2001)	18	17	20
Numbers of SOAs in 10% most deprived (2007)	6	-	-
% of pupils achieving 5 GCSEs A*-C (2008)	57	-	-
Recorded crime rates per 1000 population (2008)	38.3	58.4	53.7

9 NOMIS 2008

Skelmersdale (and Up Holland)

2.23 Skelmersdale was a small mining town until the establishment of the New Town in 1961 when it accommodated population overspill from the conurbation of Liverpool and wider Merseyside. It has grown considerably since this time and is now the largest and most densely populated settlement in the Borough, with a population of 35,000 people (2001 Census). However, the town has not reached its originally planned capacity of 80,000.

2.24 Skelmersdale's New Town status with its 'Radburn' layout brings mixed fortunes to the town. Whilst there is an excellent road network with congestion-free roads and connections to the M58, it is one of the largest towns in the country without a railway station. In addition, the new town housing estates have left a legacy of poor quality housing and poorly designed estates, where pedestrians are segregated from the road system through a network of footpaths, underpasses and footbridges which many people do not feel comfortable using due to the perceived risks of crime. The town suffers from a poor image.

2.25 The New Town is divided into clear residential, industrial and retail zones, with 56% of the area being classed as greenspace. The town centre consists of a number of isolated buildings with poor connections, including The Concourse Centre which provides a relatively limited range of services. The town centre lacks an entertainment and night-time economy and is effectively closed off in the evenings. Consequently, many residents travel further afield to Wigan, Liverpool, Southport and Ormskirk to fulfil their needs.

2.26 Skelmersdale suffers from acute problems of multiple deprivation and in particular, the Digmoor area of the town is ranked amongst the top 1% most deprived areas in the country. Some of the more severe problems are linked with low income, high unemployment, poor health and low educational attainment. A significant proportion of residents are employed in the town, particularly in retail and manual work in the manufacturing industries, suggesting that the skills base in the town is low. However, the proposed regeneration of Skelmersdale Town Centre aims to act as a catalyst to regenerate the wider area of the town to turn about its fortunes.

2.27 Up Holland, adjoining Skelmersdale to the east, is in contrast a more traditional settlement. With a population of 7,180 (2001 Census), it provides a range of local services, although its residents arguably look more towards Wigan than they do to West Lancashire to meet their needs. Up Holland is easily accessible by bus, but the railway station is a considerable distance from the village centre, and only provides a limited service between Kirkby and Manchester via Wigan.

Ormskirk (and Aughton)

2.28 The historic market town of Ormskirk was first established as a settlement in the late Saxon period and is the civic centre of the Borough. Ormskirk, together with Aughton, has the second largest population in the Borough with 31,552 people (2001 Census). The historical character of the town is an important feature and the distinct tower and spire of Ormskirk Parish Church is a unique landmark across the surrounding rural landscape.

2.29 Ormskirk provides a full range of facilities and benefits from a hospital, magistrates court, civic hall and a university. The town is located in a strategic transport corridor with both the A59 (Liverpool-Preston) and A570 (St.Helens-Southport) passing through the town. A

Chapter 2 Spatial Portrait for West Lancashire

bypass has been proposed to alleviate the congestion suffered in the town centre, especially on market days, although the probability of this road being built is currently low. Employment in the town is predominantly provided through the town centre businesses, the Borough Council, the hospital and Edge Hill University. There are also business parks at Burscough Street and Southport Road. However, many residents commute to Liverpool, utilising the high-frequency rail service from Ormskirk. A less frequent rail service is also provided to Preston.

2.30 Aughton is located to the south of Ormskirk and is viewed with Ormskirk as a single settlement in planning terms. Although it covers a large suburban area and has a relatively high population, it has no town centre, and relies upon Ormskirk for all facilities, except for some local services. Aughton has two stations at Aughton Park and Town Green, providing a high-frequency rail service to Liverpool and Ormskirk.

Burscough

2.31 Burscough is the Borough's third largest settlement with a population of 8,668 people (2001 Census). It began as an agricultural village and developed as an industrial centre with the construction of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal and the two railway lines in the mid-19th century, deriving its income from milling wheat grown on the agricultural land. Burscough has developed considerably over recent years, both through new facilities in the town centre, a new supermarket, and the redevelopment of brownfield sites within the settlement, mostly for housing. In addition to the main urban area, Burscough also has a significant industrial estate lying a few hundred metres to the west of the town, and a significant non-league football club.

2.32 Burscough is located on the A59 and has two railway stations: Burscough Junction providing a link between Preston and Ormskirk and Burscough Bridge Interchange providing a link between Southport and Manchester. There are also a number of bus routes, with services to Tarleton, Ormskirk, Rufford, Preston and Southport. Close to Burscough is the internationally important Martin Mere Wildfowl and Wetland Trust reserve.

The Northern Parishes

2.33 The largest settlements in the Northern Parishes are the adjoining linear settlements of Tarleton and Hesketh Bank, located adjacent to the River Douglas, Leeds-Liverpool Canal and the Ribble Estuary. Tarleton is the larger of the two settlements with a population of 5,350 people (2001 Census). It has a good variety of services located in the centre and around St. Mark's Square. It benefits from being situated on the A59/ A565 corridor, enjoying good road access to Ormskirk, Burscough, Rufford, Southport and Preston. A number of bus routes also provide direct links to these locations.

2.34 Hesketh Bank is located to the north of Tarleton with a population of 3,873 people (2001 Census). It has provision for basic services, but looks to Tarleton for some of its services. Only one bus route runs through Hesketh Bank, providing a link between Southport and Longridge, via Preston. As with the surrounding settlements in the Northern Parishes, employment in Tarleton and Hesketh Bank is largely based upon agriculture, horticulture and produce packing industries. There are issues with traffic congestion in the two villages,

particularly along the spinal Hesketh Lane /Station Road route. HGVs accessing agricultural and produce packing facilities combine with local traffic, particularly at peak times, and can cause significant problems.

2.35 Banks is located in the north west of the Borough along the A565 corridor, near to the border with Crossens (Sefton). It is located in a high flood risk area and has a relatively small population of 3,792 people (2001 Census). There are a limited range of facilities within the village, and bus routes provide links to Southport, Preston and Chorley.

2.36 Rufford is a small settlement located on the A59 in the north east of the Borough, with a population of 2,048 people (2001 Census). The village lacks basic facilities and looks to Burscough for many of its services. Rufford is reasonably well served by public transport with its own railway station on the Ormskirk to Preston line, and a number of regular bus services providing links to Southport, Preston, Ormskirk, Burscough, Tarleton and Chorley. Other settlements in the Northern Parishes include Holmeswood and Mere Brow.

The Eastern Parishes

2.37 Parbold is the largest settlement in the Eastern Parishes with a population of 3,890 people (2001 Census). It is an attractive village which expanded from a small hamlet based around the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. It lies in the Douglas Valley and is close to Parbold Hill. A range of services are provided in the village, which is essentially a commuter settlement with little local employment. Parbold rail station provides a regular service to Southport, Wigan and Manchester, whilst bus services link Parbold to Skelmersdale, Ormskirk, Wigan, Wrightington Hospital and Mawdesley.

2.38 Wrightington Parish has a combined population of 4,055 people (2001 Census). Appley Bridge, the largest village in this parish, is located on the eastern border of the Borough adjacent to Shevington (Wigan), and relies heavily upon the services provided on the Wigan side of the border. The village is surrounded by very attractive countryside, and lies beside the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. Appley Bridge station provides good rail links to Southport, Wigan and Manchester, but suffers from parking problems, being very popular with commuters.

2.39 There is also a variety of dispersed settlements lying within the parishes of Bickerstaffe, Hilldale and Lathom, including Roby Mill, Newburgh, Crawford and Simonswood.

The Western Parishes

2.40 Scarisbrick is a dispersed settlement, incorporating the areas of Bescar, Brown Edge, Pinfold and Shirdley Hill, with a combined population of 3,504 people (2001 Census). There are few facilities shared between these settlements, although local residents look towards Southport (Sefton) and Ormskirk for their services. Train stations at Bescar Lane and New Lane, serving Scarisbrick, have a limited service on the Southport-Manchester line. Scarisbrick is located on the main A570 road between Ormskirk and Southport, and has a number of bus routes with regular services to Southport, Ormskirk, Skelmersdale and Wigan.

2.41 Halsall and Haskayne with a combined population of 1,873 are small rural settlements, both with limited facilities, located on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal and A5147. Public transport is poor in this area with no train services and only one bus route between Southport and Bootle which runs through both settlements.

Chapter 2 Spatial Portrait for West Lancashire

2.42 Other settlements in the Western Parishes include Westhead, a small linear village between Ormskirk and Skelmersdale, and Great Altcar, lying on the mosslands east of Formby.

Question 1

Do you agree that the Spatial Portrait set out above is factually correct and locally distinctive? Is there anything that should be added, deleted or amended?

Key Issues

2.43 The spatial portrait for West Lancashire highlights a number of important issues in the area, which are summarised below. The list of issues is limited to those that we feel are most important to be addressed through the West Lancashire LDF. We have tried to concentrate on locally distinctive issues, although certain issues inevitably apply across much of the country. The issues are not ranked in any particular order of importance or priority.

Question 2

Do you agree with the key issues listed below? Are there any others you feel we should address?

Key Issues

- **Skelmersdale:** the town suffers from a poor image, areas of deprivation, above average unemployment, below average educational attainment and qualifications, a limited variety of job opportunities, and below average health;
- **Skelmersdale Town Centre:** a Masterplan is in place to regenerate the Town Centre, which could kick-start regeneration more widely within the Town. If the Town Centre regeneration stalls then different ways of delivering regeneration in the Town will need to be sought;
- **Edge Hill University:** the University has expressed a desire to expand; this needs to be done in the most sustainable and acceptable manner. Student accommodation and its integration with the local community is a particular issue in Ormskirk;
- **Affordable housing:** there is a pressing need for affordable housing across most of the Borough, particularly in the rural areas;
- **Gypsy/ Traveller sites:** the Borough is required by regional policy to provide a certain number of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople;
- **Older people:** an ageing population has implications for accommodation (including the "retirement village" concept), healthcare, access to services for older people, and the wider economy as the proportion of working age people decreases;
- **Infrastructure:** there is limited infrastructure capacity to accommodate new development in certain settlements, most notably Burscough, which will affect where new development can go if solutions cannot be found;
- **Green Infrastructure:** the Borough contains nationally significant wildlife sites, as well as open space and recreational facilities. Appropriate access to, and linkages between, these assets need to be maximised;
- **Health:** although the Borough on the whole enjoys comparable levels of health with the rest of the country, there are pockets of poor health in certain areas;
- **Retail:** a large proportion of retail expenditure by residents of the Borough takes place outside of West Lancashire, especially for comparison goods, reflecting competition from neighbouring centres;
- **Employment:** the Borough has a varied and wide ranging employment base, including strong agricultural, manufacturing and distribution sectors. It is vital for the economy of the Borough that a wide range of job opportunities can be created.
- **Green Belt:** most settlements have tight Green Belt boundaries and little room for expansion, limiting the options available for future development;
- **Agricultural land:** most of the agricultural land in the Borough is classified as being of the best and most versatile category. Development pressures in the countryside mean that any land lost to future development is likely to be of the best quality;
- **Traffic congestion:** whilst this is not particularly severe issue in the Borough, there are local "congestion hot-spots" in Ormskirk and Tarleton /Hesketh Bank;
- **Rail:** existing routes serving the Borough could be improved, in particular the connections at Burscough and better links to, and a new station at Skelmersdale;
- **Specialist needs housing:** in addition to student and older people's accommodation, sites may be required for seasonal agricultural and horticultural workers and those with disabilities or special needs;
- **Flooding:** some parts of West Lancashire are subject to high flood risk (tidal and fluvial) which could restrict development in those areas.

Chapter 2 Spatial Portrait for West Lancashire

Introduction

3.1 In simple terms, the LDF "Vision" is a statement of how we would like to see West Lancashire at the end of the Core Strategy period, i.e. in the year 2027.

3.2 The Vision should not be an aspirational "wish-list", but should be something that we and our partners are capable of achieving through the LDF. It is important that the Vision is unique to West Lancashire, and recognisable as a Vision for this Borough, rather than a vague, general statement that could apply anywhere. It should reflect the key issues we have identified, and show how the LDF will have dealt with them. The different objectives and options we identify later in this report should work towards achieving the Vision in one way or another.

3.3 It is important for the LDF Vision to be consistent with the visions (or aims and objectives, or "mission statements") of other local strategies, the most important of these being the West Lancashire LSP's Sustainable Community Strategy. Other applicable local strategies include Parish Plans, the Economic Strategy, Affordable Housing Strategy, Corporate Strategy and Climate Change Strategy.

3.4 The Vision for West Lancashire set out on the following pages has been drawn up over several months, using a number of different sources. Firstly, officers carried out a SWOT (Strengths /Weaknesses /Opportunities /Threats) analysis for different areas of the Borough. These were used to identify key issues in the different areas, which in turn were used to draw up an initial draft Vision for individual settlements and for the Borough as a whole.

3.5 In June 2008, we consulted with the LSP on the SWOT analysis and draft Vision. Following this, we amended the Vision, taking into account the LSP's comments. We have since consulted twice more on the draft Vision, inviting the wider public to make comments on it at three "Spatial Forums" (July 2008) and through the Issues Questionnaire (January 2009) which was completed by a number of individuals and organisations.

3.6 During spring 2009, we rewrote the Vision, taking into account the comments made by the various stakeholders mentioned above, and making sure it reflected the goals of the other strategies covering West Lancashire, and that it was locally distinctive and achievable. We also received advice and feedback on the vision from a Planning Officers Society "Critical Friend". The resulting Vision is set out below.

Chapter 3 A Vision for West Lancashire

Vision for West Lancashire 2027

The West Lancashire of 2027 will continue to be an attractive place where people want to live, work and visit. Major steps will have been made in the regeneration and sustainable growth of Skelmersdale, the long-term stability of Ormskirk, Aughton and Burscough, and the sustainability of rural settlements.

The Borough will retain its local character but will also capitalise on its highly accessible location within the North West and its links with the three city-regions of Liverpool, Manchester, and Central Lancashire. It will readily adapt to change and tackle the major issues of climate change, economic variations and an ageing population.

West Lancashire's rural and urban communities will be stronger and more sustainable. They will maintain their individual identity and offer residents better access to services, facilities and the housing market. New and renovated housing, particularly affordable housing and appropriate housing for the elderly, will be designed to meet people's needs. The public will have improved access to healthcare, resulting in better standards of health and wellbeing.

Economic development will play to the key strengths and resources of West Lancashire by diversifying the employment base in Skelmersdale, Ormskirk and Burscough, with small-scale employment opportunities in the rural areas. Employment opportunities and skills training will be targeted at deprived areas to build up a strong and diverse economy across the whole Borough.

The identity and unique landscape of West Lancashire will be valued, conserved and enhanced, enabling people to access and enjoy all that it offers. This will incorporate the Borough's heritage assets, important habitats and biodiversity, green spaces and attractive countryside, including the Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Park.

Skelmersdale

By 2027, the social, health and economic inequalities between Skelmersdale and the rest of the Borough will have been reduced. Skelmersdale's image will have been improved markedly by relevant organisations working with the Council on the regeneration and renewal of housing estates and the town centre, plus a major town centre expansion scheme providing better retail, leisure, transport and public buildings to serve the whole Borough.

The improved town centre and better quality housing, in terms of design, mix and tenure, will attract new residents to the town and help to meet Skelmersdale's ongoing housing needs. This will, in turn, encourage stronger community and voluntary sector organisations to flourish.

We will have worked with local businesses and education providers, including a rejuvenated Skelmersdale College, to raise educational attainment, enhance training and development opportunities and tackle worklessness, leading to a more skilled local workforce with higher aspirations. Improved industrial estates and provision of new

employment land will lead to a greater range of employers and jobs in the town resulting in a better quality and variety of job prospects for its residents and the retention of the trained and skilled workforce.

Improved bus and rail facilities, and a network of usable, well-maintained and safe cycle and pedestrian routes will mean easier access to education, employment and other key services such as health care, helping to reduce health inequalities between Skelmersdale and the rest of West Lancashire.

High quality maintenance of the town's recreational features and extensive areas of green open space, including the Tawd Valley and wooded cloughs, will encourage increased use and enjoyment by townspeople and visitors. This will improve Skelmersdale's image locally and play a part in improving people's general wellbeing and health.

Ormskirk

In 2027, the Historic Market Town of Ormskirk/ Aughton will maintain its important role as a Key Service Centre, providing a good range of retail, leisure facilities and key services for residents of the town and the surrounding rural areas. Edge Hill University will continue to be a key economic driver for Ormskirk with an important role across the Borough and wider sub-region.

The Council and other organisations will have addressed problems of town centre traffic congestion and improved the general attractiveness of the town centre with increased accessibility by public transport, cyclists and pedestrians.

Ormskirk's links with Liverpool and Merseyside will be strengthened. Rail services to Burscough, Preston and Southport will have been improved, making the town more accessible to other parts of the North West.

Burscough

Burscough in 2027 will retain its role as an attractive Key Service Centre, providing a range of facilities for local people whilst still looking towards Ormskirk for certain services. The town's role as a local employment hub for surrounding rural areas will be reinforced with sustainable growth of the industrial and business areas linked to the town centre. Also, Burscough's access to public transport will be enhanced.

Working with utilities providers and developers, the Council will ensure that appropriate infrastructure improvements will be in place for necessary new development. Burscough's tourism and recreational potential will be maximised by drawing on attractive features such as the Leeds-Liverpool Canal heritage, the surrounding countryside and Martin Mere.

Chapter 3 A Vision for West Lancashire

Rural Areas

In 2027, rural areas will continue to thrive off a strong agricultural sector, whilst enhancing biodiversity and providing a more diverse and adaptable economy. Appropriate new employment opportunities in the rural areas will include home-based working, facilitated by high-speed broadband.

The unique landscape and important biodiversity of rural West Lancashire will continue to be valued both for its natural environment and as a recreational resource. Sustainable tourism will be based on the attractive countryside and local heritage (particularly along the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, and the Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Park).

The Northern Parishes area (including Tarleton, Hesketh Bank, Banks, Mere Brow, and Rufford) will continue its important horticultural role. Derelict sites will be regenerated to help meet local housing and employment needs, and to provide other benefits. Development in the flood risk areas will be managed carefully to avoid increasing the overall danger from flooding.

The Western and Eastern Parishes rural areas will benefit from improved accessibility through good public transport links to Local and Key Service Centres such as Ormskirk and Skelmersdale, and neighbouring urban areas such as Sefton and Wigan. The pleasant built and natural environment of these rural areas will be sustained and conserved.

Question 3

Do you agree that the Vision presented above is unique to West Lancashire and responds to local challenges and opportunities? Is there anything that should be added, deleted or amended?

Introduction

4.1 To deliver the LDF Vision set out within Section 3 of this Strategy a number of realistic objectives must be prepared. These objectives must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) so that it can be made clear that the Vision can be delivered.

4.2 The objectives within this section are important as they will be used as a basis to measure the success of the Core Strategy in achieving the Vision. How these objectives will be monitored is set out within the section of this report

Spatial Objectives for West Lancashire

4.3 The draft objectives for the Core Strategy, presented below, explain how the Vision can be achieved. These objectives embrace the aims and visions of other key strategies and plans important to West Lancashire, including the West Lancashire Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

4.4 Government guidance, contained within Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12), requires that key objectives be linked with indicators and targets that are SMART. The objectives are measured using indicators and targets, the details of which can be found in Appendix B. As preparation of the Core Strategy progresses, the indicators and targets may be revised in accordance with plan, monitor and manage guidance.

Table 4.1 Spatial Objectives for the West Lancashire Core Strategy

Spatial Objectives for West Lancashire	
1	Strong and Safer Communities To have strong and vibrant communities, in which both young and old people are actively engaged and where people feel safe and secure.
2	Education, Training and the Economy To create more, and better quality, training and job opportunities to get more people into work.
3	Health To improve the general health of residents and promote social wellbeing through high quality green infrastructure and cultural activities
4	Natural Environment To protect and improve the natural environment, including biodiversity and green infrastructure, in West Lancashire
5	Housing To provide a range of new housing types in appropriate locations to meet the needs of West Lancashire's population, including affordable housing and specialist accommodation.

Chapter 4 Spatial Objectives

Spatial Objectives for West Lancashire	
6	<p>Services and Accessibility</p> <p>To provide good quality services that are accessible to all, with the promotion of the vitality and viability of town and local centres which are well linked to their rural hinterlands and neighbouring City Regions. All new development should be located in areas that are accessible and which have a range of services.</p>
7	<p>Location of Development and Built Environment</p> <p>To ensure that development is designed to a high quality and is appropriate for its locality, maximising efficiency in the use of land and resources, avoiding areas of significant constraint and minimising pollution. Heritage assets will be protected and enhanced. The unique character and features of local areas will be protected and reinforced through new development and other initiatives.</p>
8	<p>Climate Change</p> <p>To mitigate against and adapt to climate change through a variety of measures including correctly locating and designing new development, reducing energy consumption, having sustainable alternative energy sources, and minimising waste and increasing recycling.</p>
9	<p>Skelmersdale</p> <p>To make Skelmersdale an attractive and vibrant place to live and reduce the social inequalities between the town and the rest of the Borough.</p>

Question 4

Do you agree with the Spatial Objectives listed above? Are there any objectives which should be added, deleted or amended?

Monitoring

Why monitor?

4.5 PPS12 states that each local planning authority should produce a Core Strategy which includes a vision, strategic objectives, a delivery strategy and clear arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the strategy. Monitoring is an essential part of the planning process, forming the cyclical chain of Plan - Monitor - Manage. By monitoring the success of each objective using indicators, contingency plans can be introduced if policies are failing, or policies can be adapted in light of changing circumstances, thereby enabling the delivery of the strategy to be well-managed.

4.6 The results of monitoring will be reported through the Borough Councils Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). A full explanation of the AMR and the importance of monitoring is provided in Appendix B.

Introduction

5.1 This chapter sets out five 'Spatial Planning Options' for delivering the Vision and Spatial Objectives of the West Lancashire Core Strategy. Formulating a set of options and subsequently narrowing them down to a single 'Preferred Option' are important stages in preparing the Core Strategy. Each of the options put forward should be realistic and able to be achieved within the timescales of the Core Strategy.

5.2 In drawing up the five options, we have taken account of comments made during the 'Issues' stage of the Core Strategy. We are now seeking people's views on the options put forward in this chapter. Comments are invited on whether the options are considered acceptable, whether they would help deliver sustainable development, how likely they would be to achieve the Core Strategy Vision and Spatial Objectives, and how easy they would be to deliver.

5.3 People are also welcome to suggest alternative options to the ones in this chapter, although these alternatives should be deliverable and, where possible, backed up by robust evidence. If the Council agrees that any further options presented are appropriate, then these will be appraised for their sustainability and will be given due consideration.

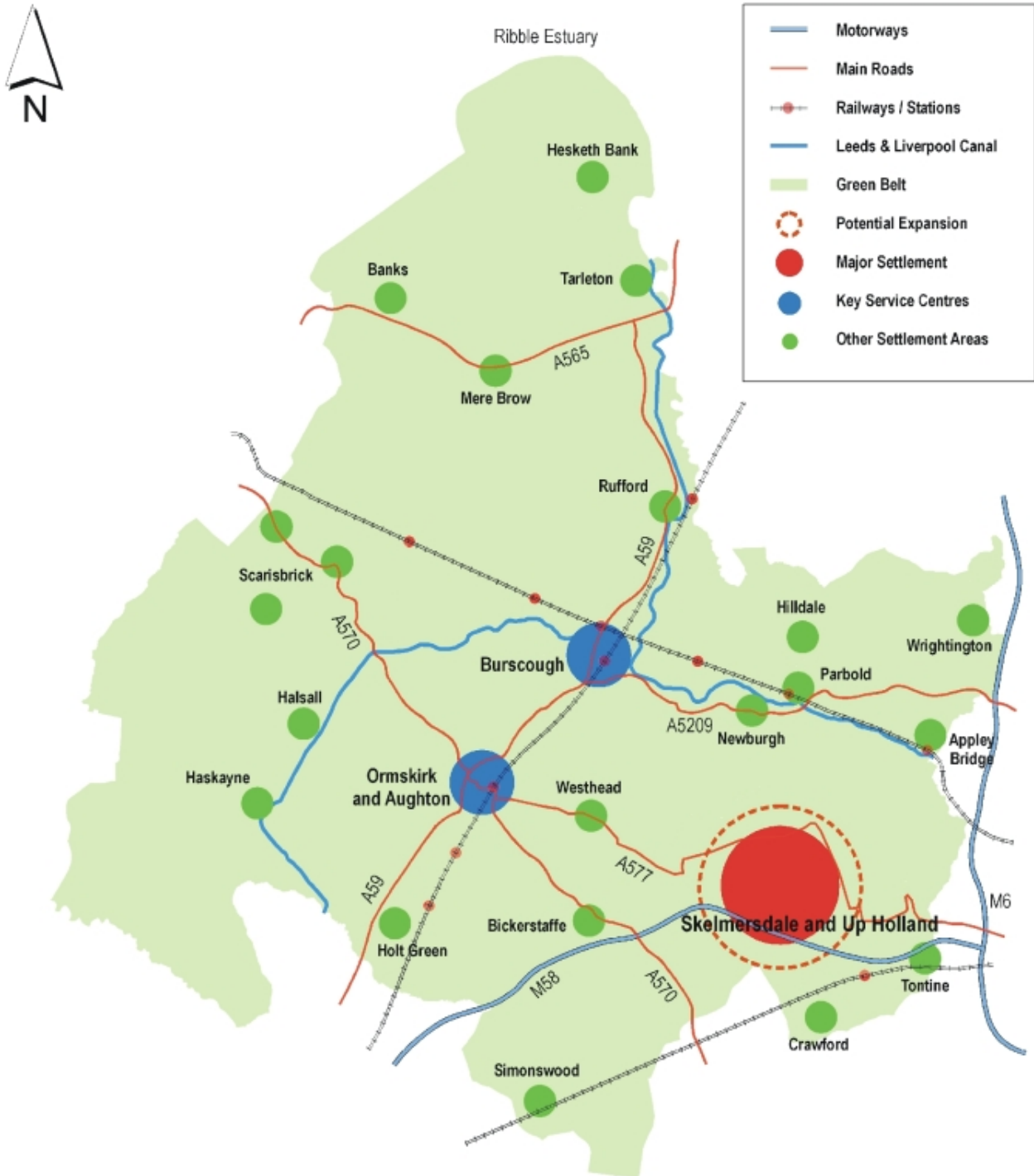
5.4 We will use the results of the consultation on the options to prepare a Preferred Option to deliver the Core Strategy Vision. This may be one of the five options, or may be a hybrid, combining the most sustainable, appropriate, and deliverable aspects of the different options. We intend to publish and consult upon the Preferred Option in early 2010.

5.5 For the five options below, we have attempted to provide an indication of how much development would go to different areas of the Borough between now and 2027. It is difficult to predict how much employment land, retail or other land uses each option would result in, so we have limited the forecasts to indicative numbers of dwellings.

5.6 As part of the preparation of this Core Strategy document, an 'Interim Sustainability Appraisal' has been prepared, which can be viewed in more detail on the Council's [website](#). This appraisal process tests the sustainability of each of the options in terms of the environmental, economic and social impacts. At this stage, given the high level nature of these options, implications and issues have been difficult to predict. However, as part of preparing a Preferred Option, a more detail appraisal will be prepared setting out the sustainability implications of the option and how any negative impacts can be avoided or mitigated.

Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

Option 1: Skelmersdale Focus



Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

Table 5.1 Option 1 Development Hierarchy

Level of Development	Settlement	Role	Indicative No.s of Dwellings 2009-27
Highest Development	Skelmersdale (and Up Holland)	Priority for Growth and Development	3,000
Development for Local Needs	Ormskirk (and Aughton), Burscough	Key Service Centre	Ormskirk: 400 Burscough: 200
Development in Exceptional Circumstances	All Other Settlements	Minor Settlement	350

What does Option 1 mean?

5.7 In this option, the majority of the Borough's development will be focused on Skelmersdale, in an attempt to kick-start regeneration and tackle deprivation issues and the perception of a 'poor image' of the town to the outside world, in line with the West Lancashire Vision 2027 and Spatial Objectives.

5.8 This would seek to accommodate a large proportion of development within the town itself, using windfall sites, areas of safeguarded land and the regeneration plans for Skelmersdale Town Centre as a method of meeting the RSS requirements for housing and employment. However it is likely that some form of expansion to the settlement area, and therefore changes to the Green Belt boundary, would be needed to ensure that requirements for land are met, particularly in the case of employment.

5.9 As this option focuses more than the other options on meeting the Borough's requirements for new housing and employment in Skelmersdale, it offers the greatest scope for tackling inequalities and deprivation issues in the town, using new development and investment as a catalyst. It is envisaged that any regeneration of the town as a whole will be facilitated through the creation of a new town centre for Skelmersdale.

5.10 The regeneration of housing estates could be considered in order to revitalise run-down housing areas and improve the quality of housing in the town through good urban design. Gaps in service provision, whether they be transport, health or education can be identified and filled as part of this regenerative process. Green spaces in the town will be improved and provide better value for the communities they serve.

5.11 It is hoped that through the delivery of improvements to the leisure, cultural and sports facilities in Skelmersdale, a better community spirit can be fostered to help the town's residents live, work and relax in safe and pleasant communities. In addition, this option will provide the most investment and greatest opportunities to tackle social and transport infrastructure gaps within the town.

Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

5.12 Creating new employment areas in Skelmersdale and encouraging people to take up training and education opportunities will create a wider and more diverse employment base, which, in turn will help in tackling deprivation issues within the town.

5.13 Ormskirk and Burscough are recognised as Key Service Centres within the Borough and their status will be maintained under this option. However, their growth will be restricted to the use of windfall and infill sites within the settlement boundaries. The restriction of builders and investors to utilising sites in the Skelmersdale area, whilst the natural demand might be coming from elsewhere, could have a significant effect upon the housing market. Such restrictions would also limit opportunities to bring forward affordable housing development across the Borough.

5.14 Under this option, rural issues will be addressed through the enhancement of the rural economy, and improvement of accessibility and rural services. However, there are likely to be restrictions on development, particularly in relation to market housing and consideration will have to be given on how affordable housing need will be met.

Table 5.2 : Pro's and Con's for Option 1

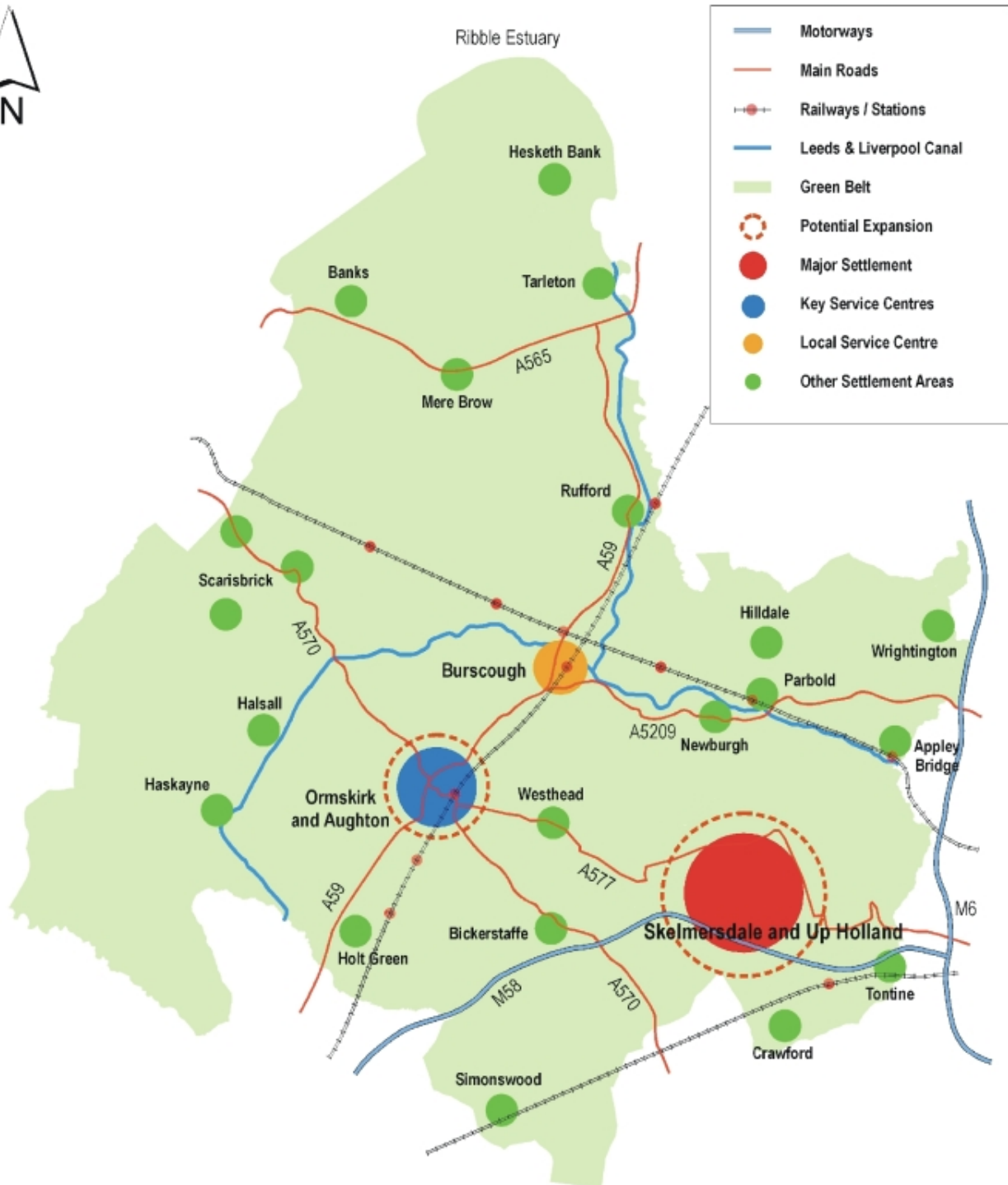
Pro's	Con's
Development of a new town centre in Skelmersdale.	Reliance on the Skelmersdale town centre scheme being implemented.
Deprivation issues in Skelmersdale can be tackled.	Concern over whether investment in the town would be forthcoming.
Creation of new jobs and training opportunities in the Skelmersdale area.	Focus on regenerating Skelmersdale could restrict regeneration elsewhere.
Investment in the local infrastructure in Skelmersdale.	Limitations in provision for affordable housing outside of Skelmersdale.
Sustainable option - majority of development located in the Borough's largest town.	Some aspects of infrastructure provision are poor in Skelmersdale e.g. transport, social.
Ormskirk's and Burscough's role as Key Service Centres maintained.	Likelihood for Green Belt releases around Skelmersdale.
	Potential for overlooking rural issues.
	Erosion of low-density suburban areas in Ormskirk and Burscough through infill.

Question 5

Do you agree that Option 1 should be taken forward as our Preferred Option? Are there any elements of this Option that you feel should be amended to make it more deliverable, or to better achieve the Vision and Spatial Objectives?

Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

Option 2: Skelmersdale & Ormskirk Focus



Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

Table 5.3 Option 2 Development Hierarchy

Level of Development	Settlement	Role	Indicative No.s of Dwellings 2009-27
Highest Development	Skelmersdale (and Up Holland)	Priority for Growth and Development	2,500
Moderate Development	Ormskirk (and Aughton)	Key Service Centre	900
Development for Local Needs	Burscough	Local Service Centre	200
Development in Exceptional Circumstances	All Other Settlements	Minor Settlement	350

What does Option 2 mean?

5.15 Under Option 2, the majority of development will be focused on Skelmersdale, although there will also be a focus on Ormskirk, enhancing its existing role as a Key Service Centre in the Borough, in line with the West Lancashire Vision 2027 and Spatial Objectives.

5.16 Although Skelmersdale would still seek to accommodate the majority of development, the shift in focus towards Ormskirk will see more limited growth in Skelmersdale, particularly in relation to any expansion of the settlement and future Green Belt releases. Less development in Skelmersdale will also, as a consequence, lead to less investment there and fewer opportunities to tackle the town's social and transport infrastructure gaps and deprivation issues.

5.17 Under this option, development in Ormskirk would mainly involve building on infill sites in the town. However, given constraints with land availability, it is likely that Green Belt releases may be required in the medium to long term to provide an expansion to the existing settlement area. Any changes to the Green Belt boundary would need to be considered only in the most sustainable locations.

5.18 A focus on Ormskirk under this option will assist in resolving key infrastructure issues in the town. This will include addressing current problems such as traffic congestion, maintaining a healthy and diverse town centre and market, and improving the choice and range of services within Ormskirk. Although these infrastructure works would also be considered through Option 1, the Core Strategy can most effectively deliver such improvements through Option 2.

5.19 The delivery of greater development and growth to Ormskirk could provide opportunities to widen the range and availability of specialist needs housing, particularly in terms of housing for older people, and to address in a sustainable way the needs of student accommodation in the town.

Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

5.20 Burscough and the rural areas of the Borough will see similar restrictions as per Option 1. Development in Burscough will generally be restricted to infill sites. In rural areas, only development for a localised need will be encouraged, particularly in relation to small-scale employment and affordable housing within existing settlement areas.

Table 5.4 : Pro's and Con's of Option 2

Pro's	Con's
Ormskirk's role as Key Service Centre strengthened.	Erosion of low-density suburban areas in Burscough through infill.
Investment in local infrastructure in Skelmersdale and Ormskirk.	Potential for overlooking rural issues.
Sustainable Option – majority of development located in the Borough's two main towns of Skelmersdale and Ormskirk.	Potential for Green Belt releases at Skelmersdale and Ormskirk.
Creation of new jobs and training opportunities in both the Skelmersdale and Ormskirk areas.	Concern over whether investment in Skelmersdale would be forthcoming.
Deprivation issues in Skelmersdale tackled.	For growth in Skelmersdale, there is reliance on the town centre scheme being implemented.
Development of a new town centre in Skelmersdale.	Possible pollution issues from additional traffic congestion in Ormskirk.
Development in Ormskirk would be a sustainable option as the settlement has good transport links a good range of services.	

Question 6

Do you agree that Option 2 should be taken forward as our Preferred Option? Are there any elements of this Option that you feel should be amended to make it more deliverable, or to better achieve the Vision and Spatial Objectives?

Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

Option 3: Skelmersdale & Burscough Focus

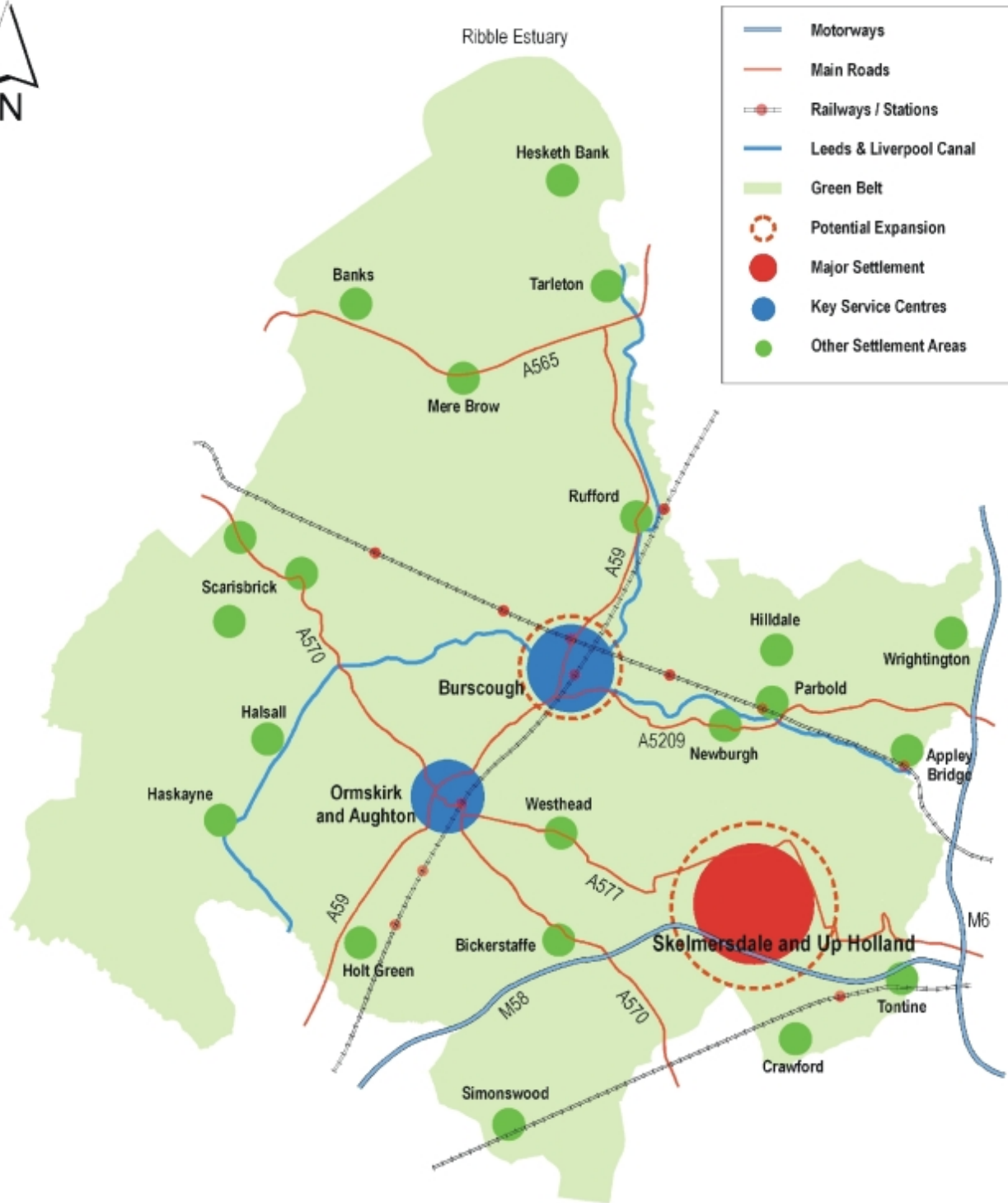


Table 5.5 Option 3 Development Hierarchy

Level of Development	Settlement	Role	Indicative No.s of Dwellings 2009-27
Highest Development	Skelmersdale (and Up Holland)	Priority for Growth and Development	2,500
Moderate Development	Burscough	Key Service Centre	700
Development for Local Needs	Ormskirk (and Aughton)	Key Service Centre	400
Development in Exceptional Circumstances	All Other Settlements	Minor Settlement	350

What does Option 3 mean?

5.21 Under Option 3, the majority of development will again be focused on Skelmersdale, although there will also be a focus on the settlement of Burscough with the aim to enhance its role as a Key Service Centre in the Borough, in line with the West Lancashire Vision 2027 and Spatial Objectives.

5.22 Although Skelmersdale would still seek to accommodate the 'majority' of development, the shift in focus towards Burscough will see more limited growth in Skelmersdale, particularly in relation to any expansion of the settlement and future Green Belt releases. Less development in Skelmersdale will also, as a consequence, lead to less investment and fewer opportunities to tackle social and transport infrastructure gaps and deprivation issues there.

5.23 Burscough (the third largest settlement in the Borough) along with Skelmersdale will be the focus for any significant development. This option will seek to make use of infill sites and opportunities for the regeneration of Brownfield sites, and will also require an expansion of the settlement into the Green Belt.

5.24 Through new development in Burscough, the Borough Council would have to seek to address the significant infrastructure issues that currently prevail, particularly in relation to water-related infrastructure and sewerage provision. These issues could be tackled by means of a comprehensive Masterplan involving significant amounts of development, which could deliver the necessary infrastructure. Development within the town would also assist in delivering other benefits, including improvements to the public transport system (particularly rail services), improvements to open space facilities and improved services and facilities in the centre of the town.

5.25 The rural areas of the Borough will see similar restrictions as per Option 1. Only development for a localised need will be encouraged, particularly in relation to small-scale employment and affordable housing within existing settlement areas.

Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

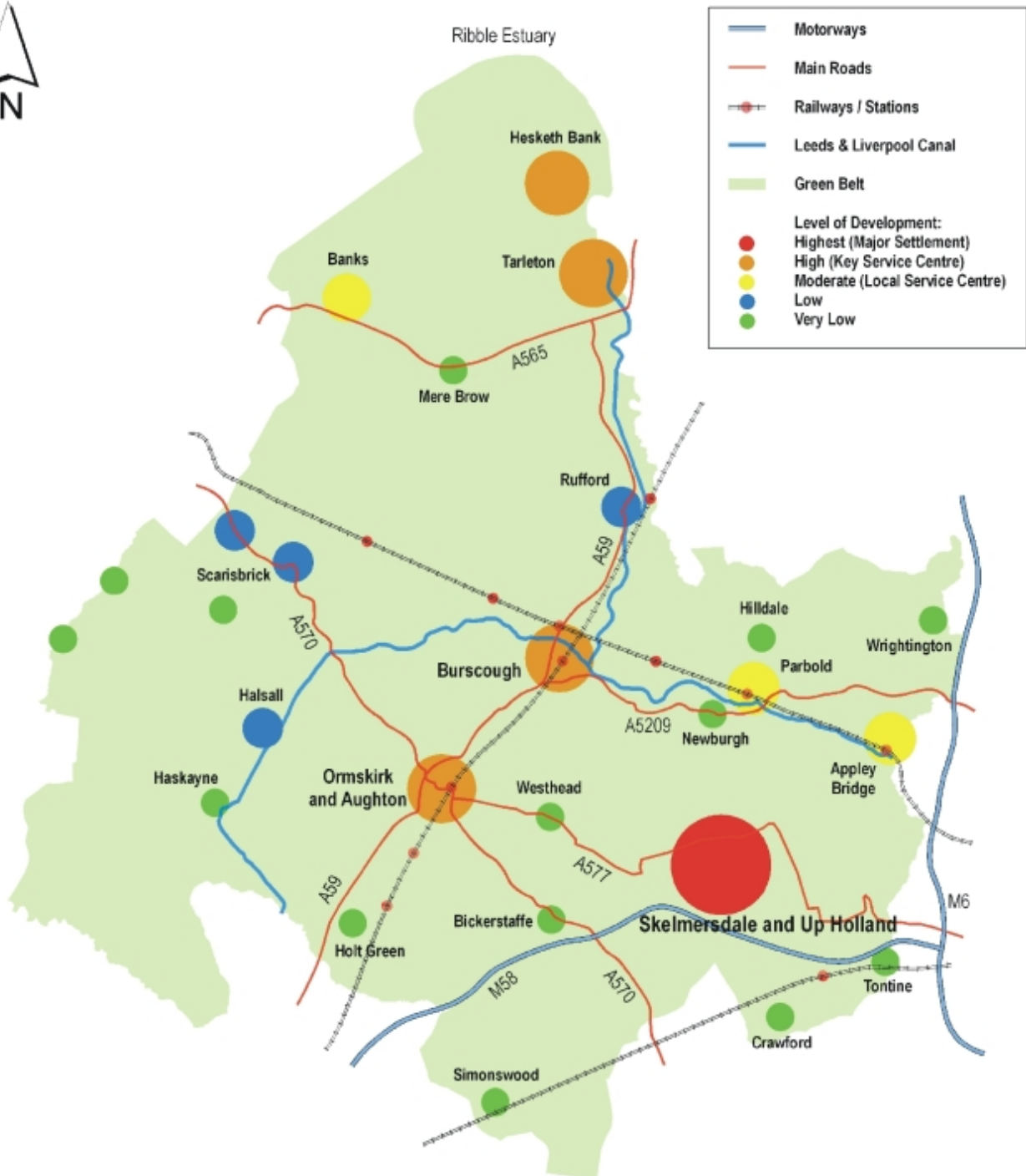
Table 5.6 : Pro's and Con's for Option 3: Skelmersdale & Burscough Focus

Pro's	Con's
Burscough is given an increased role as Key Service Centre, whilst Ormskirk's role maintained.	Infrastructure issues in the Burscough area may require significant amounts of development to address them.
Infrastructure issues in Burscough could be addressed through new development.	Green Belt releases would be required in Skelmersdale, but particularly Burscough to address local infrastructure issues.
Creation of new jobs and training opportunities in both the Skelmersdale and Burscough area.	Reliance on the delivery of Skelmersdale Town Centre to kick start regeneration in the town.
A new town centre can still be delivered in Skelmersdale and deprivation issues tackled.	Concern over whether investment would be forthcoming in Skelmersdale.
	Erosion of low-density suburban areas as a consequence of infill development.
	Further development might cause increased air pollution problems in Burscough due to extra traffic movements.

Question 7

Do you agree that Option 3 should be taken forward as our Preferred Option? Are there any elements of this Option that you feel should be amended to make it more deliverable, or to better achieve the Vision and Spatial Objectives?

Option 4: Rural Dispersal



Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

Table 5.7 Option 4 Development Hierarchy

Level of Development	Settlement	Role	Indicative No.s of Dwellings 2009-27
Highest Development	Skelmersdale (and Up Holland)	Priority for Growth and Development	2,500
Moderate Development	Ormskirk (and Aughton), Burscough, Tarleton, Hesketh Bank.	Key Service Centre	Ormskirk: 500 Burscough: 250 Tarleton /Hesketh Bank: 300
Development for Local Needs	Banks, Parbold, Appley Bridge, Rufford, Scarisbrick, Halsall	Local Service Centre	250
Development in Exceptional Circumstances	All Other Settlements	Minor Settlement	150

What does Option 4 mean?

5.26 In the rural areas of the Borough, some rural settlements will be developed and sustainably expanded, particularly Tarleton and Hesketh Bank (seeking to re-use derelict sites that are located on the urban fringe). As with the other options, Skelmersdale will again take the majority of development, in line with the West Lancashire Vision 2027 and Spatial Objectives.

5.27 The option will seek to regenerate existing sites or develop windfall sites within the rural settlement boundaries but will in certain cases will lead the expansion of some settlements where it can be justified. Development of rural settlements will follow a hierarchical approach where settlements will be considered in relation to their current service capacity or where service capacity can be upgraded to a satisfactory level.

5.28 With the majority of development focused in Skelmersdale and the rural settlements, this means that the key service centres of Ormskirk and Burscough will have development opportunities restricted to within their urban areas. No greenfield development will be permitted. Less development in these areas may mean that any required infrastructure works cannot be fully influenced by the Core Strategy.

5.29 Residential development in the rural settlements will place an increased emphasis and importance on accessibility to Key and Local Services Centres and key facilities within the Borough (and across its borders). This means that the Core Strategy needs to focus on public transport needs and connectivity. More people living in the rural areas of the Borough

Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

will mean that there is a need to develop the rural economy, and encourage rural employment hubs and home working. More people living and working in rural communities will help and support local service provision and improve the range of services on offer.

5.30 In relation to the other options proposed, this option would change the rural character of the Borough the most by directing the greater amount development into these rural areas and will create most impact. All protected environmental sites will be unaffected. However, there are likely to be more, smaller Green Belt releases as part of this option which could have effects on the landscape (dependent on where they are proposed).

Table 5.8 : Pro's and Con's of Option 4: Rural Dispersal

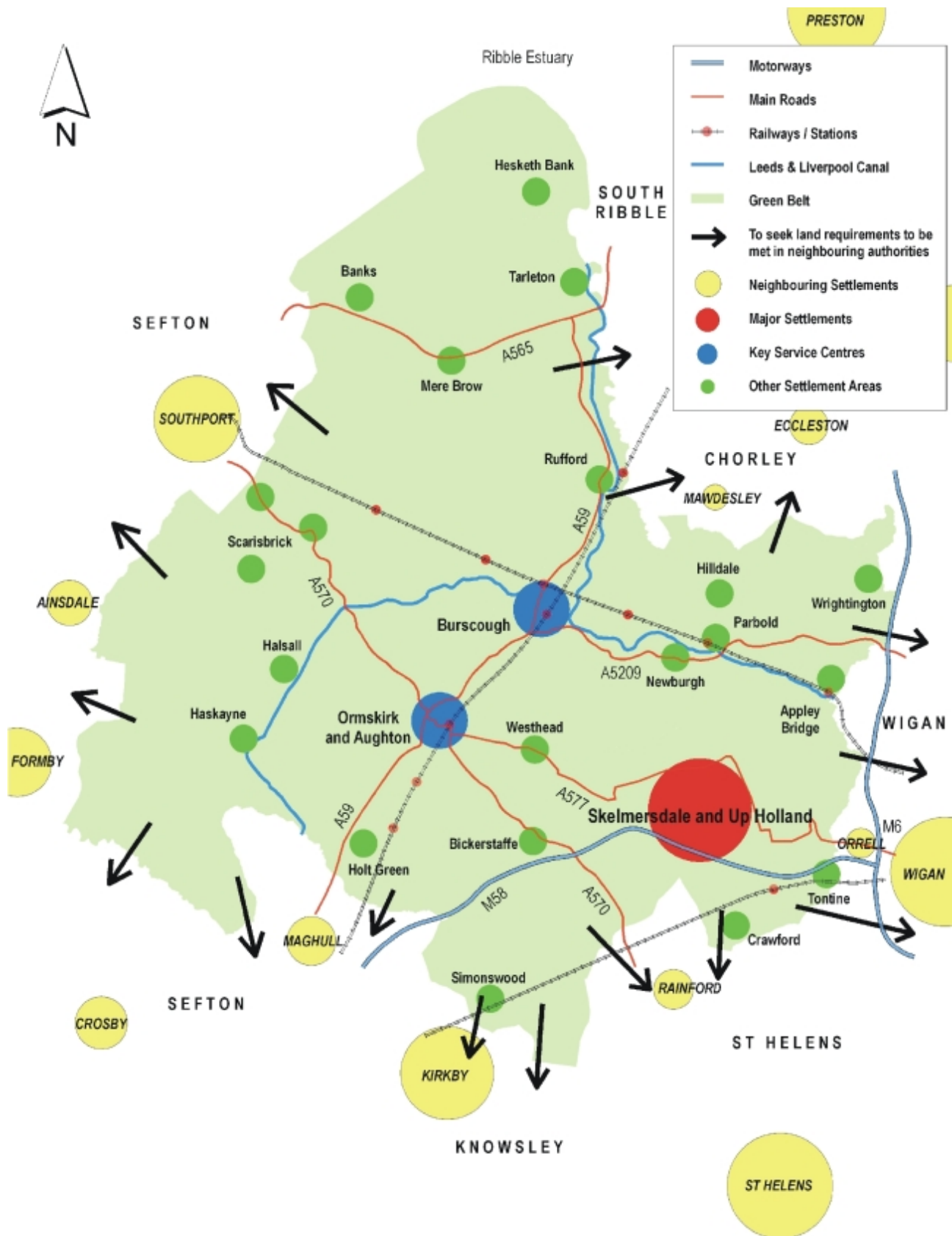
Pro's	Con's
Improvement and support to rural services.	Pressure on accessibility from rural sites.
Improvements to rural accessibility.	Sporadic expansion of settlements.
Regeneration of rural sites.	Potential Green Belt releases.
Boost to rural economy.	Impact on countryside character.
Derelict land in Tarleton/ Hesketh Bank to be remediated.	Reduced potential for growth of Key Service Centres.
Improved Skelmersdale Town Centre will still be delivered and deprivation issues in the town will be tackled.	Less sustainable patterns of development.
	Potential increase in traffic on rural roads.
	Increased pressure on infrastructure.

Question 8

Do you agree that Option 4 should be taken forward as our Preferred Option? Are there any elements of this Option that you feel should be amended to make it more deliverable, or to better achieve the Vision and Spatial Objectives?

Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

Option 5: Cross Boundary



Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

Table 5.9 Option 5 Development Hierarchy

Level of Development	Settlement	Role	Indicative No.s of Dwellings 2009-27
Highest Development	Skelmersdale (and Up Holland)	Priority for Growth and Development	2,200
Moderate Development	Neighbouring Authority Areas	Meeting Extra Development Needs	1,000
	Ormskirk (and Aughton), Burscough	Key Service Centre	Ormskirk: 300 Burscough: 150
Development for Local Needs	All Other Settlements	Minor Settlement	300

What does Option 5 mean?

5.31 Through this option it is still envisaged that the majority of development will be concentrated in West Lancashire, with Skelmersdale providing the most significant focus for development, in line with the West Lancashire Vision 2027 and Spatial Objectives. As with Options 1, 2, 3 & 4, opportunities for infill development, use of safeguarded sites and regeneration opportunities in the Borough's settlements will be encouraged.

5.32 If Green Belt releases are to be considered as part of a Preferred Option, it is important that the Council demonstrate that alternatives have been fully explored through the Options process. Under this fifth option, the potential for the expansion of settlements using Green Belt land will be ruled out. Instead, the Council will enter into dialogue with neighbouring authorities to see whether any further needs can be accommodated outside of the Borough.

5.33 At this stage only preliminary discussions have taken place with other local authorities to ascertain whether any capacity exists to meet any of West Lancashire's needs in other districts. Therefore the deliverability of this option will depend on the outcome of further discussions with neighbouring authorities on whether or not this is a viable option. The inclusion of this option provides the basis for these discussions to take place.

5.34 There are significant consequences of other authorities meeting West Lancashire's needs. Opportunities for investment may be lost, along with potential opportunities to address infrastructure issues and meet specific spatial objectives such as providing enough employment land and affordable housing. However, there are positive aspects to this option, less development within the Borough will provide greater protection to the local environment and landscape, which under other options could be altered through the need for Green Belt release.

5.35 The implications of this option also should be considered in two ways. As indicated above, Option 5 looks to meet some of West Lancashire's needs elsewhere. However, it also possible that West Lancashire could be asked to meet the needs of other authorities who may also have significant constraints on delivering their own development needs.

Chapter 5 Spatial Planning Options for West Lancashire

Table 5.10 : Pro's and Con's for Option 5: Cross Boundary

Pro's	Con's
Expansion of settlements not necessary.	Investment into the Borough may be lost.
Environmental impacts could be lessened.	Some Infrastructure issues may not be addressed.
Green Belt boundaries remain.	Will not maximise affordable housing provision.
	Potential for insufficient employment land to meet the Borough's needs.
	Not clear whether needs can be met in adjoining authority areas.
	There may be requirements on the Council to meet the needs of other authorities.

Question 9

Do you agree that Option 5 should be taken forward as our Preferred Option? Are there any elements of this Option that you feel should be amended to make it more deliverable, or to better achieve the Vision and Spatial Objectives?

Other Options

5.36 The Council has only considered realistic and deliverable options (subject to exploring further some of the infrastructure and capacity issues which exist), based upon the information gathered through the evidence base, national and regional planning guidance, and what you have told us through the Issues stage of consultation. There may be other options which would equally or better achieve the Vision and Spatial Objectives, and we would welcome any suggestions so that they may be considered towards the selection of a Preferred Option.

Question 10

Are there any elements of the five different options that could be combined to create a 'hybrid' Preferred Option?

Question 11

Are there any other options requiring consideration which you feel could better achieve the Vision and Spatial Objectives and be chosen as our Preferred Option?

Chapter 6 Effects of the Options on Individual Settlements

6.1 The Spatial Portrait, set out in Chapter 2 of this report, highlights the key characteristics of the settlements within West Lancashire. The details found within the Spatial Portrait should be read in conjunction with the information in this chapter to provide a holistic view on the impacts that each option will have upon the settlement area and the surrounding landscape. In order to assist your interpretation of the potential effects of each option, Figure 6.1 below illustrates the indicative level of housing development proposed by the options. In addition, Table 6.1 overleaf illustrates the overall level of development proposed by the options in each settlement.

Figure 6.1 Indicative Level of Housing Development Proposed by the Options

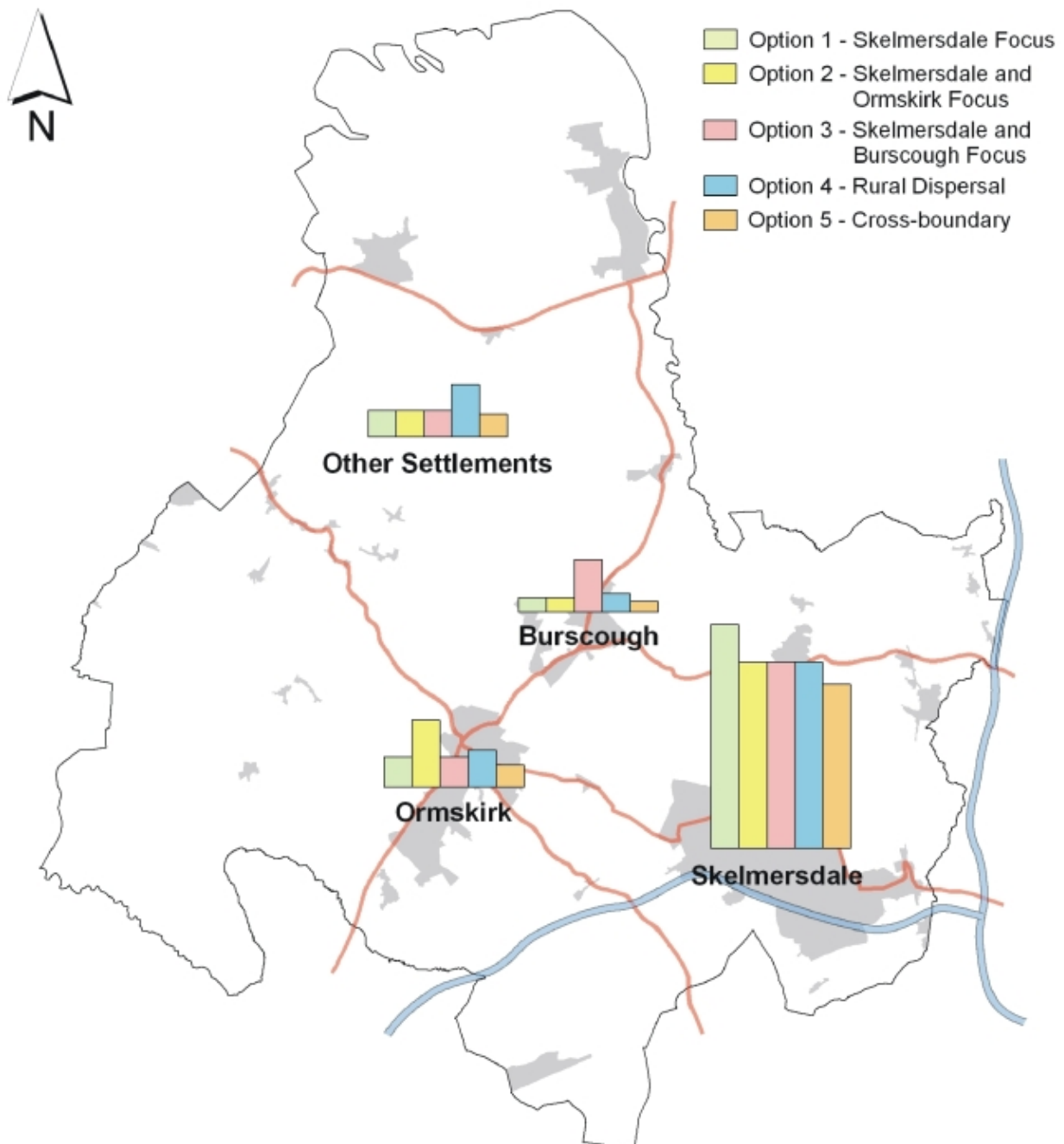


Table 6.1 Overall Level of Development Proposed in Individual Settlements

	Option 1: Skelmersdale Focus	Option 2: Skelmersdale and Ormskirk Focus	Option 3: Skelmersdale and Burscough Focus	Option 4: Rural Dispersal	Option 5: Cross Boundary (1)
Skelmersdale (and Up Holland)	Highest Development	Highest Development	Highest Development	Highest Development	Highest Development
Ormskirk (and Aughton)	Development for Local Needs	Moderate Development	Development for Local Needs	Moderate Development	Moderate Development
Burscough	Development for Local Needs	Development for Local Needs	Moderate Development	Moderate Development	Moderate Development
Northern Parishes	Development in Exceptional Circumstances	Development in Exceptional Circumstances	Development in Exceptional Circumstances	Moderate Development: Tarleton, Hesketh Bank Development for Local Needs: Banks, Rufford Development in Exceptional Circumstances: All Others	Development for Local Needs
Eastern Parishes	Development in Exceptional Circumstances	Development in Exceptional Circumstances	Development in Exceptional Circumstances	Development for Local Needs: Parbold, Appley Bridge Development in Exceptional Circumstances: All Others	Development for Local Needs
Western Parishes	Development in Exceptional Circumstances	Development in Exceptional Circumstances	Development in Exceptional Circumstances	Development for Local Needs: Scarisbrick, Halsall Development in Exceptional Circumstances: All Others	Development for Local Needs

1. Option 5: Extra development needs could be found in neighbouring authority areas

Chapter 6 Effects of the Options on Individual Settlements

Skelmersdale (and Up Holland)

6.2 As a consequence of policy contained within the RSS, there is a requirement on the Council to direct the majority of its development needs towards Skelmersdale, both in terms of housing and employment requirements. Failing to do so could result in the Core Strategy being contrary to Regional Planning Policy and being found unsound at a Public Inquiry. The Council cannot ignore the requirements of the RSS while preparing the Core Strategy and therefore all five options set out would seek to direct the majority of the development need for West Lancashire toward Skelmersdale.

6.3 The scale of what is termed 'majority' will vary between different options. For example, Option 1 would provide a higher 'majority' of development (e.g. 3,000 dwellings) to Skelmersdale than Option 4 (e.g. 2,500 dwellings).

6.4 Through Options 1-4, development opportunities will be sought within the settlement areas within the first instance, with opportunities to utilise areas of brownfield land, safeguarded sites and opportunities to regenerate existing areas of the town to encourage new growth of housing and employment uses. All options will seek to address development needs in these areas.

6.5 Opportunities for the rationalisation of open space within the town could be considered as part of the delivery of any option. Some areas of open space in the town could be considered for potential re-use for development purposes, particularly for the provision of new housing. Development in these areas could seek to fund improvements to other open space facilities within the town, improving their quality, value and management for the benefit of local biodiversity and local communities.

6.6 Although through all the options development opportunities within the settlement areas will be maximised, there may be a need to expand the settlement boundaries around Skelmersdale requiring a release of Green Belt land. If this were to take place further investigation work would be required to ensure the most sustainable and suitable location was chosen for such an expansion to take place.

6.7 All the options will seek to address the infrastructure gaps and deprivation issues that are set out within the Spatial Portrait. The greater the levels of development and investment into the town the greater the opportunities to see such equalities addressed, including improving quality of housing and improving the access to jobs and training. In respect of this Option 1 would present the greatest opportunity to address such issues with Option 5 indicating the least.

6.8 No option would exclude the redevelopment and regeneration of Skelmersdale Town Centre. It is envisaged through all options that the development of a vibrant new town centre for Skelmersdale will act as a catalyst for the wider regeneration of the town, which will benefit residents, workers and visitors.

Chapter 6 Effects of the Options on Individual Settlements

Ormskirk (and Aughton)

6.9 Almost exclusively Ormskirk's role as a Key Service Centre. Options 1, 3, 4 & 5 would seek to maintain the current growth of Ormskirk allowing for redevelopment of brownfield sites, infill sites and any sites identified in need of regeneration. None of the above options would result in the need to expand the settlement into the Green Belt to meet any identified housing or employment needs.

6.10 Ormskirk is a traditional and historic Market Town that is characterised by a densely built-up area. The consequences of all the above options would result in development densities increasing further in the town and the use of infill and 'backland' sites would be maximised.

6.11 Option 2 does seek to enhance Ormskirk's current role, directing significantly more development toward the settlement. Given Ormskirk's tight settlement boundaries and lack of safeguarded sites, it is likely that Green Belt releases will be required. As with any Green Belt releases elsewhere in the Borough, only the most sustainable and suitable locations will be used for expansion purposes.

6.12 Edge Hill University plays a significant role in the future of Ormskirk and is a key feature of the local economy, both in terms of the jobs it provides and the revenue it creates. None of the options will have any direct implication on the University or its future growth. Options for the future of Edge Hill are set out within Chapter 7 of this document.

Burscough

6.13 Burscough's role as a Local Service Centre will be maintained through the delivery of Options 1, 2, 4 & 5 which will limit any sort of expansion opportunities. Opportunities will be taken to maximise development within the existing settlement boundaries, through the use of safeguarded land, brownfield sites and infill.

6.14 Option 3 would expand Burscough's role to a Key Service Centre by targeting significantly more development towards the settlement than under any of the other options proposed. The Council is very aware of infrastructure issues within the Burscough area that would need to be addressed through any expansion of the town. Any further development in Burscough have to address such issues, particularly in relation to road improvements and water related infrastructure.

Rural Areas

6.15 Through Options 1, 2, 3 & 5, the rural areas of the Borough will see little change in terms of development opportunities. There will be limited opportunities to address rural housing issues, particularly the provision of affordable housing, as will opportunities to address the rural economy. The lack of development in these areas will mean that there is limited funding to address infrastructure gaps or issues within the rural settlements.

6.16 Option 4 seeks to allow a greater role for rural settlements to accommodate future housing and employment requirements. To deliver this 'rural dispersal' option, there would need to be consideration of settlement areas which have sufficient key service capacity, or have potential to expand their key service capacity, for expansion to accommodate further development.

Chapter 6 Effects of the Options on Individual Settlements

Northern Parishes (including Tarleton, Hesketh Bank, Rufford and Banks)

6.17 The implications of delivering Option 4 for the Northern Parishes would be the potential expansion of both Tarleton and Hesketh Bank with a view to redeveloping the most sustainable areas of land on the urban fringe (allocated under Policy DS4 of the Replacement Local Plan). Through dialogue with key stakeholders, the Council are aware that a number of infrastructure issues will need to be addressed should any development take place in these settlements, particularly relating to transport, accessibility, flood risk and water related infrastructure. Any development proposed through Option 4 must seek to finance the satisfactory resolution of these issues.

6.18 It is likely that any further development in Banks would be prohibited by its designation of being in a high flood risk area. It would be considered that through the delivery of any of the options, development opportunities in this area would be restricted to essential infrastructure requirements or development to meet an essential local need.

Eastern Parishes (including Newburgh, Parbold, Hilldale, Wrightington and Appley Bridge)

6.19 To deliver Option 4, with regard to the Eastern Parishes, settlements such as Parbold and Appley Bridge would be considered as having potential for accommodating further development. Any new development in these areas would provide the opportunities for both Parbold and Appley Bridge to expand their roles as Local Service Centres.

6.20 Given the limited level of service provision and the accessibility of other settlements in the Eastern Parishes, villages such as Hilldale, Newburgh and Wrightington are unlikely to see any further development other than for the provision for local need, particularly affordable housing.

Western Parishes (including Downholland, Haskayne, Halsall and Scarisbrick)

6.21 In the context of many settlements in the Western Parishes, the delivery of Option 4 will not result in the significant expansion of any of the settlements. It is not clear at this stage whether any of the settlements in this area either already have, or have the potential to improve, the service provision to allow for extra development to take place. Furthermore, some settlements in the Western Parishes of the Borough are fairly remote in terms of accessibility to public transport, apart from areas of Scarisbrick being on a Quality Bus Route, and therefore consideration to whether they are sustainable locations is questionable.

Question 12

Do you agree with the predicted effects upon settlements from each of the options that we have identified? Are there any other effects we have not identified which require further consideration?

Introduction

7.1 This chapter discusses a number of key spatial issues, which cannot be addressed through the Spatial Planning Options in Chapter 5. Whilst the list of spatial issues in this chapter is not exhaustive, it presents those that are the most important at this stage and require further consideration. These include:

- Skelmersdale Town Centre;
- Edge Hill University;
- Affordable Housing;
- Gypsy/ Traveller Sites;
- Older People;
- Infrastructure; and
- Climate Change.

7.2 Although we have highlighted the above issues as being the most important at this stage, we are appreciative of broader national and international issues along with the more localised issues which may be of significant importance to you and your community. Therefore, we would welcome any comments or suggestions on any issues which have not been given particular coverage in this document but you feel could be influenced by the spatial planning process.

Skelmersdale Town Centre

7.3 There has already been much work undertaken to prepare a Masterplan for Skelmersdale Town Centre. This has involved extensive consultation with key stakeholders and the wider public, as well as the signing of a development agreement with St. Modwen Properties PLC to deliver the development of a new town centre. The regeneration proposals set out within the 'Skelmersdale Town Centre SPD and Masterplan' are seen as the potential catalyst for a wider regeneration of the town and will start the process of improving the image of the town and tackling deprivation issues that exist. The SPD and Masterplan can be viewed on the Council's [website](#), whilst a summary of the proposals are set out in Table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1 Skelmersdale Town Centre SPD and Masterplan Proposals

Skelmersdale Town Centre SPD and Masterplan Proposals
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A range of new shops, bars and restaurants and potentially a new foodstore;• A new sports centre and swimming pool;• A new cinema;• A new modern college building;• A new library/resource centre;• A new Ecumenical Centre;• A new bus station;• A new police facility;• Approximately 250 new apartments within the town centre core;• Approximately 900 new quality modern houses, with a mixture of type and tenure, built to a high environmental standard;

Chapter 7 Key Spatial Issues

Skelmersdale Town Centre SPD and Masterplan Proposals

- New and attractive public spaces that provide areas for people to meet or for street entertainment;
- Improvements to the Tawd Valley and the wooded cloughs to ensure that they provide a safe high quality environment, including new pedestrian and cycling facilities, and possibly specialist recreational activities to attract yet more people into the Tawd Valley;
- New office space; and
- New roads, cycling and pedestrian facilities to link the town centre in with the surrounding residential areas and to make movement around the centre itself far easier.

7.4 All the options set out within this strategy document rely on the regeneration project taking place in order to deliver many of the spatial objectives for the town. Deliverability is a key principle of the town centre proposals and the Masterplan was drawn up at a time of economic buoyancy. However, given the current economic climate, a flexible approach may need to be taken towards delivering this regeneration project with consideration of a scheme which is reduced in scale, or where the boundaries of the Town Centre are drawn wider to enable more development to take place in order to deliver the scheme as originally envisaged.

What You Said

7.5 Consultation undertaken through the production of the SPD demonstrated a high degree of support for all aspects of the regeneration proposals. At the Skelmersdale and Eastern Parishes Spatial Forum, participants viewed the regeneration of the Town Centre as a major opportunity for Skelmersdale. Concern about the redevelopment of the Firbeck Estate was expressed, particularly by some of those affected. Overall, however, there was a high degree of support for the Masterplan proposals, with residents recognising that the scheme would result in greater investment and turn around negative perceptions of the town.

7.6 The Issues Questionnaire did not have a question specifically about Skelmersdale Town Centre, but comments were made in respect of the SWOT analysis concerning the need for a better rail connection.

Future Considerations

7.7 As the Skelmersdale Town Centre area could be viewed as critical to the delivery of development within the town, and therefore the achievement of the Vision, Spatial Objectives and Options set out within this document, Skelmersdale Town Centre could be allocated as a 'Strategic Site' within the Core Strategy. This means that a boundary for the Town Centre, could be included on a Proposals Map. This would enable the differences between the Local Plan boundary for the Town Centre and that within the SPD, which is currently drawn more widely, to be resolved (this issue is explained in Section 2 of the SPD/Masterplan document). Consideration could also be given as to whether the boundary should be drawn even wider to allow for more development as mentioned above.

Question 13

Should the Core Strategy designate Skelmersdale Town Centre as a Strategic Site in the Core Strategy? If so should the boundary of the Town Centre be drawn to match that within the Masterplan, or be drawn even more widely to include further development sites, if this helps to deliver the new Town Centre?

Edge Hill University

7.8 Edge Hill University have expressed a desire to expand their student numbers and the physical size of their campus for a number of years. The physical expansion of the campus now requires a consideration of the Green Belt boundary to the east of the current campus due to the need to redevelop and relocate uses on the existing campus. There are a variety of issues that need to be considered as part of this process:

- Will the expansion of the University be a key economic driver to both Ormskirk and the wider West Lancashire economy?
- What will the implications be if the University does not expand?
- How much land does the University need to expand and would this have an unacceptable impact upon the Green Belt and local landscape?
- Will the current problems associated with private student accommodation in Ormskirk be solved by providing more accommodation on the campus and what would the effects be upon the local housing market?
- Can adequate transport be provided to an expanded Edge Hill?

What You Said

7.9 The Market Towns and Western Parishes Spatial Forum held in Ormskirk discussed issues related to Edge Hill University and a wide mix of views were expressed. Whilst the value of the University to the local economy and to community education is recognised, there are also concerns about the extent of the expansion ambitions of the University and the ability of the local area to accommodate the numbers of students that expansion would entail. There were a mix of views on the future use of Green Belt land, with some views expressed that student accommodation should be located in Skelmersdale. Generally it was felt that there needed to be better consultation with local people as plans develop.

7.10 The Issues Questionnaire asked a specific question about where student accommodation should be located: either on the campus, within Ormskirk, or elsewhere within the Borough. The highest percentage (just under 50%) expressed preference for an on-campus location. The University itself submitted comments as part of the Issues Questionnaire exercise. They referred to their Estates Strategy and the objectives set out within it. They see growth happening at a slower pace than in recent years, but nevertheless envisage the investment of £67m in the Ormskirk campus between 2009 and 2013. They believe that it is vital that the University's ambitions are not constrained by either a lack of space or poor quality accommodation. Edge Hill University's stated desire is to develop a campus that will be recognised as one of the best in the country.

Chapter 7 Key Spatial Issues

Future Considerations

7.11 The University has recently published its Estates Strategy (EHES) for the period 2009 to 2013. The Vision set out within this document sees the Ormskirk campus as continuing to develop as the hub of a distributed learning network. EHES seeks to plan for the sustainable long term growth of the University and optimise the existing campus, recognising that, due to incremental development over a long period of time, there is a disjointed pattern of building groups, landscape features and public realm spaces. The EHES also looks at the sustainability of any expansion of the University.

7.12 EHES represents a five year action plan towards the delivery of a long-term vision to 2020. It suggests that there is scope for redevelopment within the existing campus. It also suggests the relocation of the existing sports facilities to the east, with the reallocation of that area (currently in the Green Belt) for the expansion of the university. Due to the need to relocate the running track, which is not within the Green Belt, to cater for on-campus development, decisions will need to be taken as to what the likely future expansion of the University will be.

Table 7.2 Edge Hill University Proposals

Edge Hill University Estates Strategy Proposals
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investment of £67 million between 2009-2013• An increase of approximately 600 places in student accommodation on campus• Demolition and redevelopment of existing facilities predominantly on the existing campus footprint• Some expansion of facilities onto Green Belt land, with a new access from St Helens Road and better car parking• Creation of a better designed and integrated campus with an East-West link and a better 'sense of place'• Development of a sustainable transport strategy to improve access and mitigate against traffic congestion• Relocation of running track and playing pitches towards Scarth Hill Lane to the east

7.13 There is an opportunity to create a better layout for the University with a more integrated campus and more modern, well-designed buildings. The University does have an important positive impact upon the economy of Ormskirk, and a recent study has suggested that the Council could consider branding Ormskirk as a 'University Town'.

7.14 There are concerns within the local community about increasing levels of student accommodation having a negative impact on local neighbourhoods. Providing more student accommodation on the campus could start to address these concerns. The negative effects of student numbers upon the local community in terms of transport and social impacts, as well as the landscape impact on the edge of Ormskirk, need to be weighed up against the positive aspects of University expansion. Expansion could provide benefits to the local economy, solve student accommodation problems, provide high quality facilities that can be accessed by the local population which could all be delivered in such a way to mitigate the landscape impacts and provide a high quality designed campus.

Question 14

Should the Core Strategy support the continued expansion of Edge Hill University, if it can be demonstrated that this would:

1. Be beneficial to the local economy;
2. Solve student accommodation problems;
3. Create high quality facilities for local people;
4. Be done in such a way so as to mitigate landscape impact; and
5. Provide a better designed campus?

If not, what are your concerns about expanding Edge Hill University and could anything be done to resolve these concerns?

Affordable Housing

7.15 Policy L5 of the Regional Spatial Strategy states that plans and strategies should set out requirements for affordable housing based on evidence, including Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA). The Core Strategy needs to determine the general location, size and type of developments where affordable housing should be provided in West Lancashire. The evidence should also be used to support the setting of quotas and thresholds for affordable housing provision along with an indication of the type, size and tenure of affordable housing required.

7.16 The Council has commissioned the preparation of a SHMA for West Lancashire. A draft, prepared by Nevin Leather Associates, will be published for consultation in the near future. This study is based upon existing research applying the model of affordable housing needs currently being used in the preparation of the North West's Single Regional Strategy 2010. It will be refined to take account of recent housing market developments and responses to consultation.

7.17 The initial results of the SHMA indicate that a minimum 22% of housing built over the next five years should be affordable. However, in arriving at a figure for planning policy purposes, a number of factors need to be taken into account, including as the financial viability of affordable housing provision, the characteristics of individual sites, and the need to create sustainable communities.

7.18 The initial results also suggest that affordable accommodation should consist primarily of houses rather than flats and that around 42% should be social rented with the remainder being intermediate housing. It also indicates that affordability is much more of an issue in the rural areas and market towns outside of Skelmersdale. Recognising this, the Council has commissioned further work by Fordham Research on housing need, demand and viability of provision. This will include a detailed analysis of requirements for the towns of Ormskirk and Skelmersdale as well as each rural Parish.

Chapter 7 Key Spatial Issues

What You Said

7.19 Affordable housing was raised as an issue in the Spatial Forums. The Issues Questionnaire responses indicated that people wanted affordable housing to be provided in small clusters for local people within private developments or on sites that would be identified in the LDF.

Future Considerations

7.20 The Core Strategy Vision states that West Lancashire residents will have better access to the housing market, particularly affordable housing. A range of affordable housing schemes should be available, and be responsive to changing economic climates, and the Core Strategy should support and facilitate their delivery. Demand for affordable housing varies throughout the Borough, and affordable housing should be provided in the correct locations.

Question 15

Should we identify specific sites or general locations for affordable housing?

Gypsy/ Traveller Sites

7.21 The number of pitches that the Borough Council is required to meet for both Gypsies & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is currently being considered through the Partial Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The latest draft of this document required that the Borough Council allocate 20 permanent and 5 transit pitches for Gypsies & Travellers, and 5 pitches for Travelling Showpeople. The Council has responded to the consultation exercise on these figures and has requested that, in terms of Gypsies and Travellers, the number of permanent pitches be reduced to 14 and the number of transit pitches be increased to 10. The Council agreed with the pitch requirement for Travelling Showpeople.

7.22 Although the common view is that Gypsies & Travellers constantly move around, this is not necessarily the case. Some Gypsies & Travellers will live on the same site permanently, usually in family groups, occasionally moving for temporary periods. In terms of the provision that needs to be found this consists of two types as mentioned above

- **Permanent sites** - these are sites where Gypsies & Travellers will live permanently on the same site.
- **Transit sites** - these are sites where Gypsies & Travellers who do move around the country can stop for temporary periods where there is no threat of eviction. They help to reduce the problem of unauthorised encampments. Facilities will be more limited than those on a permanent site.

7.23 The Core Strategy will set the broad framework for where the pitch numbers for both permanent and transit sites should be found. It will be for the Site Allocations DPD to actually allocate the sites. The outcome of the Partial Review of the RSS will have major implications for the future allocation of sites through the LDF process.

What You Said

7.24 The Skelmersdale and Eastern Parishes Spatial Forum workshop groups suggested that a site should be provided either at White Moss Road, Skelmersdale or along the M58 corridor through liaison with Gypsy & Traveller Groups. The rural parishes groups to the east of the Borough did not consider their areas appropriate, although it was felt that Green Belt locations could be considered. There was some support from the discussion groups at the Ormskirk Spatial Forum for locating a Gypsy site in the Green Belt. At the Northern Parishes Forum there was no support for a Gypsy site in that area.

7.25 The Issues Questionnaire asked people where formal sites for Gypsies & Travellers should be located in the Borough, with respondents being given the choice of several broad locations. The most popular choice was the 'M58 corridor', and this probably reflects the fact that this is where most unauthorised encampments occur at present. As part of the questionnaire, people were further asked their preferred location for Gypsy & Traveller sites - within a settlement; an edge-of-settlement Green Belt location; or a remote Green Belt location. There was little difference between the numbers of people choosing each of the above options.

Future Considerations

7.26 The Core Strategy therefore needs to consider where best to accommodate whatever pitch requirement it will have to meet through the RSS Partial Review.

7.27 There are currently two unauthorised encampments in the Borough, both of which lie in the Green Belt: one at White Moss Road, Skelmersdale and the other at Pool Hey Lane, Scarisbrick. If these were to be made permanent then this could provide the number of permanent pitches required, should the Council's views on pitch requirements be accepted through the RSS process. This would probably be the most acceptable course of action to the families involved. However, Government Inspectors have ruled that these sites have a detrimental impact upon the Green Belt, and their allocation will result in a more permanent impact upon the Green Belt. The current draft RSS does refer to the possibility of identifying Green Belt sites, but only if there is a need in that area and if no suitable sites outside the Green Belt boundary exist. Sites could then be 'inset' from the Green Belt (ie removed from the Green Belt) if those exceptional circumstances exist.

Question 16

If new permanent sites are being sought for Gypsies & Travellers, should they be located within the settlement area of Skelmersdale; within the Green Belt in the 'M58 Corridor'; or are there other more suitable locations in the Borough? Should the Council consider making the existing Gypsy & Traveller sites, which are in the Green Belt, permanent?

Where is the best location for a transit site?

Chapter 7 Key Spatial Issues

Travelling Showpeople

7.28 It is likely that the Borough Council will have to find a plot of land to accommodate five pitches for Travelling Showpeople. It has been indicated in discussions with the Showmen's Guild that a site in an industrial area would be acceptable, with the general location not being of great importance. The Spatial Forums and Issues Questionnaire did not deal with the issue of Travelling Showpeople. Further discussions will need to take place with the Travelling Showpeople community to understand what sort of site is required in West Lancashire and where it is best located.

Older People

7.29 Approximately one-quarter of West Lancashire's residents are currently of retirement age (60 or over). By 2031 it is projected that this will have risen to around one-third of all residents in the Borough. The impact of this increase presents a variety of pressures for the public sector in providing the necessary facilities and infrastructure to cater for older people. Spatial planning through the LDF process can give us the opportunity to make specific provision for older people in terms of both housing and infrastructure but an understanding must be gained of the specific requirements and how best to meet identified needs.

7.30 Emerging guidance is suggesting that whilst life expectancy is increasing, people will live longer in ill-health (CLG 2008). As people age, they are more susceptible to strokes, coronary heart disease, osteoarthritis, and dementia. The role of spatial planning in supporting and promoting healthier communities is increasingly recognised and must be fundamental in the production of the Core Strategy.

7.31 In 2008 almost 18% of the population over 65 were estimated to be living alone with a limiting long term illness. This is set to rise by 2025. There are a variety of ways to meet the housing needs of older people, including residential care homes, retirement homes, adaptation of existing homes or development of new homes to meet the needs of people as they age. The Lifetime Homes Strategy⁽¹⁰⁾ aims to plan for homes and communities where people can live out their lives, adapting homes to changing needs and ensuring that any necessary support is available.

7.32 A lack of accessible transport, as well as living alone, can contribute to social isolation. Inevitably this is of a particular concern for rural areas of West Lancashire which are less well served by public transport and where key services such as shops and health services are more difficult to reach. Spatial planning will help us bear key issues, such as accessibility, in mind when considering the development of specialist housing for older people.

What You Said

7.33 At all the Spatial Forums, people raised concerns over the adequacy of provision of older people's accommodation. Particular shortages were noted in Hesketh Bank, Burscough, the Eastern Parishes and around the Ormskirk /Aughton area. It was suggested that housing, available to the ageing market, should be offered through perpetuity agreements.

10 Lifetime homes, lifetime communities: A national strategy for housing in an ageing society; CLG

7.34 The Issues Questionnaire asked respondents to consider whether allocating sites specifically for accommodation for the elderly /retired would help to meet such needs. The most popular response chosen was the allocation of sites for accommodation for older people. People reported that there were few opportunities for older people to downsize their accommodation within the local area.

Future Considerations

7.35 The concept of retirement villages should be examined as part of the planning process, as well as the location, types and numbers of units of elderly accommodation that should be provided. Whilst housing is a key issue for consideration, access to services and transport to mitigate social isolation and opportunities for employment also need to be considered.

Question 17

What types of housing should be provided for older people and should a target be set to require a percentage of older person accommodation within new housing development?

Infrastructure

7.36 Infrastructure planning is required in order to give us a clear understanding of our capacity and deficits for all of the individual components which we class as infrastructure. The traditional concept of infrastructure usually refers to the basic services and utilities we come across in our day to day life. However, the concept is broadening and now encapsulates a wider range of issues which are listed in Table 7.3 below.

Table 7.3 Types of Infrastructure

Transport	Utilities and Waste	Social Infrastructure	Green Infrastructure	Culture and Leisure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Transport • Bus /Rail Station • Highways • Cycle Ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas • Water • Renewable Energy • Waste • Telecomms • Broadband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Education • Emergency Services • Community Centres • Post Offices • Public Houses • Social Services • Voluntary services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Prevention • Biodiversity • Valued Natural areas • Open Space • Footpaths • Waterways • Allotments • Cemeteries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Facilities • Libraries • Cultural Facilities • Playing Pitches • Open/Amenity Space • Heritage /Historic value

Chapter 7 Key Spatial Issues

7.37 In gaining an understanding of our infrastructure capacity we are then more equipped to direct development to areas where we can make the best use of existing assets and, where a shortfall in provision is identified, we may achieve the necessary investment required through the development planning process. It is important that we are satisfied that all options for future development through the LDF process are deliverable in terms of infrastructure requirements and existing provision.

Infrastructure Capacity and Issues in West Lancashire

7.38 It is recognised that West Lancashire has both assets and issues in relation to its infrastructure capacity. The Borough is well located in terms of transport infrastructure, and has a generally good public transport service. However, it is affected by traffic congestion in places, the absence of a rail service in Skelmersdale and poor public transport provision in some rural areas.

7.39 Utilities infrastructure is poor in Burscough, parts of Ormskirk/Aughton and the Northern Parishes, and without appropriate levels of funding through new development could constrain future expansion. The Borough Council are already in dialogue with utilities providers to assess the extent of the problems faced and the level of mitigation that will be required to resolve these issues. This dialogue will be ongoing throughout consideration of the Options set out in this document and the process of drawing up the Preferred Option

7.40 A full list of the assets and issues affecting infrastructure are detailed in Appendix C. The information is the result of meetings with stakeholders, the Spatial Forums held in 2008, and building on our own knowledge of existing issues.

What You Said

7.41 At the Skelmersdale and Eastern Parishes Forum, concern was raised regarding local services which appear to be sub-standard in certain villages of the Eastern Parishes. This issue was also highlighted for Northern Parishes villages at the Tarleton Forum.

7.42 Many comments were put forward regarding public transport, especially in rural areas and Skelmersdale off-peak. It appears there is a shortfall in the provision and frequency of services which leads to a sense of isolation and limited access to employment opportunities for those in the rural areas. Additionally, traffic congestion was a concern for many, especially within Ormskirk Town Centre and on the rural lanes as a result of agricultural traffic. The issue of flooding in the Burscough area and Northern Parishes was raised, an issue also highlighted by United Utilities in our recent stakeholder meetings with them.

Future Considerations

7.43 As part of the infrastructure planning process, and in order to better inform the Core Strategy, we are currently meeting with stakeholders to establish their views on existing infrastructure provision, pressure points and shortfalls. In addition, comments expressed at the Spatial Forums and within the Issues Questionnaire give us a good indication of the provision issues across the Borough.

7.44 The process is ongoing and will eventually culminate in a document identifying the strengths and weakness in each area, existing programmes or plans for improvement or expenditure, the source of the investment and those responsible for delivery. It is hoped that

this will give us a robust framework when planning for development and provide the evidence to justify policies which require developers to fund infrastructure delivery through the planning process.

Question 18

How can we ensure delivery of the necessary infrastructure to support the future development needs of West Lancashire? Should this be achieved through the existing Section 106 process or by implementing the emerging Community Infrastructure Levy?

Climate Change

7.45 The way in which we meet our development and regeneration needs, whilst ensuring the effects of climate change are mitigated, is fundamental to achieving a sustainable West Lancashire. This must include action to be taken to adapt our way of life so that we can prepare for unavoidable consequences of climate change (adaptation), as well as reducing our future greenhouse gas emissions and stabilising climate change (mitigation). Our action will be influenced by national and regional planning guidance and sub-regional and local plans and strategies.

7.46 The impacts of climate change will vary greatly, but will be caused by rising temperatures, increased sea levels resulting in increased coastal flood risk and erosion, increased occurrences of extreme weather events such as heat waves and heavy rain, and long-term changes in seasonal weather patterns, resulting in increased probability of drought in summer and flood in winter.

Adaptation

7.47 Adaption of our surroundings and how we build future development is essential and may be tackled in the following ways:

- **Flood risk** - This is a particular concern in the Northern Parishes of the Borough and some localised areas around settlements elsewhere. Appropriate defences and innovative design solutions will aid in reducing the risks. We must also consider how it will impact on the agricultural and horticultural industries of West Lancashire and how it should influence the location of new development.
- **Built environment** – Orientation of buildings and materials used can assist with climate control within them and help to adapt to rising temperatures. Building sustainable drainage into schemes and using materials which will withstand the changing climate are amongst some of the ways we can adapt the built environment.
- **Biodiversity** - Habitat creation opportunities can be taken to allow species to move and adapt. Specifically, managing flood risk by creating water storage areas can also provide valuable habitats for wildlife as can the use of landscaping in new developments and settlement areas.

Chapter 7 Key Spatial Issues

Mitigation

7.48 Ensuring appropriate mitigation measures are incorporated through future developments should be an important part of the Core Strategy and help facilitate sustainable development. Increasing the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources and reducing energy consumption will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and work towards mitigating climate change. Mitigation can include use of renewable energy, promoting energy efficiency, designing sustainable buildings and creating and maintaining natural habitats.

What You Said

7.49 The main comments made at the Spatial Forums were a concern for the increase of flood risk in settlement areas and the impact of climate change upon agricultural, horticultural and equestrian related activities. A number of attendees also recommended that renewable energy should be encouraged as a positive step to address climate change, and to consider tidal and wind power.

7.50 From the Issues Questionnaire, high support was shown for requiring new buildings to be energy efficient or to meet stringent sustainability targets, whilst there was reasonable support shown for requiring a percentage of energy used by development to come from a renewable/ low-carbon source. However, allocating sites for renewable or low-carbon energy generation was not favoured. In terms of promoting specific renewable energy technologies, the three most popular were rainwater harvesting/ greywater recycling systems, solar energy and sustainable drainage systems (SUDS). Less support was shown for wind farms/ turbines, combined heat and power (CHP) and ground source heat pumps. The least favoured technology was identified as biomass heating.

Future Considerations

7.51 In order to establish the potential of the Borough in meeting climate change targets and in particular energy production, we are currently in partnership with Liverpool City Region local authorities to produce a joint working study into renewable energy. The RSS sets the framework for this through policies and targets. This includes increasing the amount of energy generated by renewable sources to at least 20% by 2020, and securing at least 10% of predicted energy needs in future developments from decentralised and renewable, or low-carbon sources. The study is due for completion late September 2009 and will inform the preparation of the Preferred Option for the Core Strategy.

Question 19

Should we allocate particular sites or general locations within the Borough for the production of renewable energy?

Question 20

Should we require developers to meet a percentage of predicted energy requirements in new developments from renewable sources (the 'Merton Rule')?

How the Council will deal with Comments

8.1 Following the statutory six week consultation period, the Council will consider all comments received on the document (and the accompanying literature) and produce a consultation statement, which will set out a summary of all representations received, and the Council's response.

Next Steps in the Core Strategy Process

Stage 4: Preferred Option

8.2 Following an analysis of the responses received during consultation on the Options Paper, we will start to prepare the most suitable Preferred Option which will achieve the Vision for West Lancashire 2027. The Preferred Option will set out the most sustainable locations for new homes, jobs and shops required by communities, and will deliver the necessary infrastructure, facilities and other development to make this possible.

8.3 It is likely that the Preferred Option will comprise the most sustainable and deliverable elements of more than one option contained within the Options Paper. The document will explain why all other options were not preferred and why they were not taken forward for further consideration. At this stage the Preferred Option will have been fully informed by the findings of the evidence base and discussions with key stakeholders and infrastructure providers. The Preferred Option will then be published for further consultation so that people may give us their views, comment on rejected options, or put forward other options for consideration.

Stage 5: Submission and Examination

8.4 Following the consideration of comments received on the Preferred Option, a Draft Plan will be published for consultation so that people may have their final say on the Core Strategy. Once the consultation is concluded, the Core Strategy will be submitted to the Secretary of State. A Public Examination will then be held which will give a Planning Inspector the opportunity to test the soundness of the document, in terms of the Core Strategy's justification, effectiveness and consistency with national policy.

Stage 6: Adoption

8.5 If the Core Strategy is found "sound" by a Planning Inspector, then the Core Strategy will be adopted by the Council as the development plan for West Lancashire.

Preparation of Site Allocations

8.6 The Core Strategy provides a generic background on how development will be directed and the issues that will be addressed. However it will not deal with, unless in exceptional circumstances, site specific areas and will not seek to allocate land for future development purposes. This will be done through the preparation of a separate document, known as the Site Allocations DPD. It is envisaged that the Council will start to prepare this document in 2010 and this will be publicised and consulted upon in a similar way to the Core Strategy.

Chapter 8 What Happens Next?

Glossary

4NW: A partnership working to promote the economic, environmental and social well-being of the North West of England. It is an inclusive organisation, with representation from Local Government, business organisations, public sector agencies, education and training bodies, trade unions and co-operatives together with the voluntary and community sector.

Affordable Housing: Low-cost market housing and subsidised housing, irrespective of tenure, ownership or financial arrangements, available to people who cannot afford to occupy houses generally available on the open market.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR): Annual publication that forms part of the LDF and assesses progress with the LDS and the success of the planning policies in achieving their aims.

Biodiversity: The whole variety of life, including genetic, species and eco-system variations.

Brownfield Land: See 'Previously Developed land'.

Climate Change: This is a change in the average weather experienced over a long period of time, including temperature, wind and rainfall patterns. There is strong scientific consensus that human activity is changing the world's climate and that man-made emissions are its main cause. In the UK, we are likely to see more extreme weather events, including hotter and drier summers, flooding and rising sea-levels increasing the risk of coastal erosion.

Community Involvement: When preparing the LDF, the local authority needs to involve the local community, businesses, landowners, and anyone else with an interest in the area. Ideally these "key stakeholders" should be involved from the start, and right through the LDF preparation process.

Core Strategy: The main Development Plan Document that sets out the long-term spatial vision for the Borough, the spatial objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision, having regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy.

CLG (formerly DCLG): Department of Communities and Local Government sets national policy on local government, housing, urban regeneration, planning and fire and rescue. They have responsibility for all race and equality and community cohesion related issues in England and for building regulations, fire safety and some housing issues in England and Wales.

Derelict Land and Buildings: Land so damaged by previous industrial or other development that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment. This includes abandoned and unoccupied buildings (including former single residential dwellings) in an advanced state of disrepair, land damaged by development, but which has been or is being restored.

Development Plan Document (DPD): Local planning documents that have "development plan" status. The DPDs that local planning authorities must prepare include: the Core Strategy, Site Allocations, and where needed, Area Action Plans. All DPDs must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspectors binding report. Once adopted, development control decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Glossary

ELPS: Employment Land and Premises Study which examines the availability of land in the Borough for employment use and forms part of the LDF Evidence Base. It will be used to inform the Core Strategy and Site Allocation documents.

Environment Agency (EA): Government agency set up with the aim of protecting or enhancing the environment, taken as whole in order to play its part in attaining the objective of sustainable development.

Evidence Base: Qualitative and quantitative information gathered by the planning authority, or other organisations, to support preparation of LDF documents.

Government Office North West (GONW): Regional government office responsible for implementing national policy in the region and ensuring consistency of LPA policies and plans with national policies.

Green Belt: Areas of land where development is tightly controlled for the purposes of: restricting sprawl of large built-up areas; preventing neighbouring towns from merging; safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; and preserving character and aiding urban regeneration by encouraging recycling or derelict and other urban land.

Greenfield Land: Land which has not been previously developed.

Green Infrastructure: Network of natural environmental components and green and blue spaces, including: hedges, outdoor sports facilities, coastal habitat, grassland and heathland, cemeteries, churchyards and burial grounds, agricultural land, allotments, community gardens and urban farms, moorland, village greens, open spaces, degraded land, private gardens, ponds, wildlife habitats, parks, lakes, fields, open countryside, woodlands, street trees and waterways.

Housing Needs Assessment: A survey that estimates the number of households within an area that are in need of affordable housing and/or housing that meets their specific requirements.

Infrastructure: Roads, water supply, sewage disposal, schools and other community facilities needed to support housing, industrial and commercial uses.

Local Area Agreement (LAA): A three-year agreement that sets the priorities for a local area, agreed between local and central government. The agreement sets challenging targets for the local areas and how these will be delivered in partnership. The aim is to improve the quality of life for local people.

Local Development Framework (LDF): A term used to describe a folder of planning documents prepared by a Local Planning Authority, including:

- Development Plan Documents (DPDs) - such as the Core Strategy and Site Allocations;
- Supplementary Plan Documents (SPDs);
- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI);

- Local Development Scheme (LDS);
- Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

Local Development Scheme (LDS): A project plan timetable detailing the production of DPDs and SPDs.

Local Planning Authority (LPA): Normally the Borough Council, metropolitan district or unitary authority, but occasionally the County Council with the responsibility of planning for that area.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP): A group of public, private, voluntary and community organisations and individuals that are responsible for preparing the Sustainable Community Strategy. Such partners include: the Borough Council, the County Council, the Police, the Fire Service and the NHS.

Multiple Deprivation: The Government collects information to pinpoint pockets of deprivation, or to highlight variations within a wider geographical area. Information is collected on a range of topics to illustrate how deprived an area is, including: income; employment; health and disability; education, skills and training; barriers to housing and services; crime; and living environment.

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (PCPA) 2004: Introduced the concept of Local Development Frameworks, built upon the principles of: sustainable development, addressing climate change, spatial planning, high quality design, good accessibility and community involvement.

Planning Policy Statements/Guidance (PPS/PPG): Documents produced by CLG that set out national policies relating to different areas of Planning.

Previously Developed Land (PDL) and Buildings: As defined in annex C of PPS3, "previously developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings) and associated fixed surface infrastructure.

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS): Following the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, RSS replaced RPG13 with statutory status. Produced by 4NW, the RSS supports and is supported by, other regional strategies particularly the Regional Economic Strategy and the Regional Housing Strategy. Adopted on 30th September 2008, the North West RSS forms part of the statutory development plan for West Lancashire and has a role in determining planning applications at a local level, as well as influencing the development of the LDF being prepared by the Borough Council.

Renewable Energy: The generation of heat and power from sources that occurs naturally and repeatedly in the environment.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA): carried out in consultation with the Environment Agency (EA) to examine the risk of flooding in the Borough from sea and rivers. It includes information on flood risk areas, flood infrastructure, history of flooding in the Borough and expected future development pressures and their potential impact.

Glossary

Site Allocations: The designation of land for a particular use within the development plan.

SMART Objectives: The Government requires that objectives must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound).

Spatial Planning: Under the former planning system, we were almost exclusively concerned with land use. Spatial planning is a wider concept that does not just take into account land use, but also considers other matters that could indirectly affect land use, or be affected by it, e.g. health and education, deprivation, crime and social inequality, climate change, flooding and the natural environment, transport and infrastructure, the rural economy and agriculture, cultural heritage and urban design. Put another way, spatial planning looks at places and how they function. The LDF system represents a new way of planning, or "place-shaping".

Specialist Needs Housing: Providing suitable accommodation for specific sections of the community, including: seasonal agricultural workers; the elderly or retired; and students.

SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest): Sites with statutory protection of national and international importance.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): A document that sets out how the Council will involve the community and other stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and review of all DPDs, SPDs and on planning applications.

SHLAA: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment which examines the availability of land in the Borough for residential use and forms part of the LDF Evidence Base. It will be used to inform the Core Strategy and Site Allocation documents.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Supplementary planning documents may cover a range of issues, both topic and site specific, which may expand policy or provide further detail to policies in a Development Plan Document or the RSS.

Sustainability Appraisal: Development Plan Documents are subject to a "Sustainability Appraisal", examining how the policies and proposals in LDF documents would be likely to impact upon the economy, the environment, transport and communities. This will ensure that decisions are made that accord with sustainable development.

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS): Document prepared by the West Lancashire Local Strategic Partnership, the Sustainable Community Strategy outlines the needs and priorities of the community, and which also shapes the activities of the organisations within the partnership to fulfil those needs and priorities.

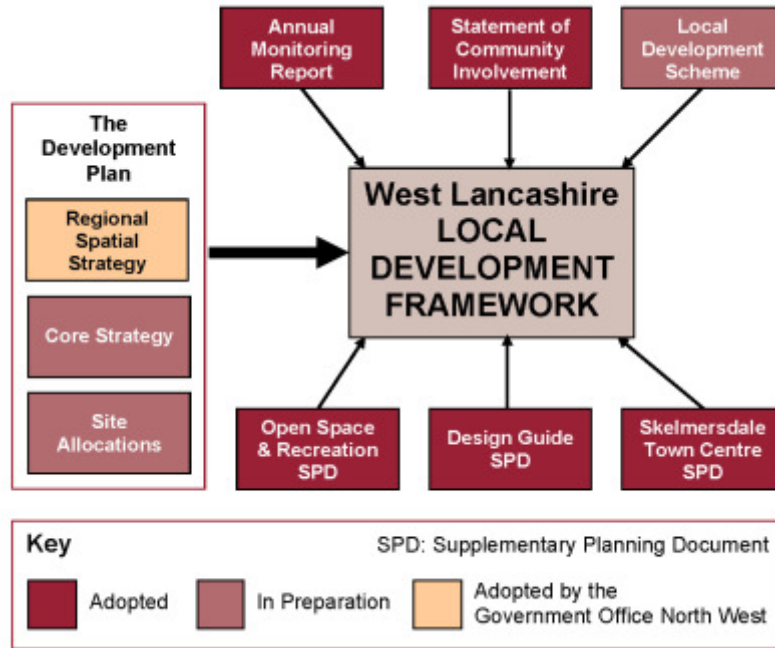
Sustainable Development: Development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

WLRLP: West Lancashire Replacement Local Plan, the currently adopted development plan for West Lancashire under the previous planning system. This will be replaced once the Core Strategy is adopted.

Local Development Framework Structure

As explained in Chapter 1, the West Lancashire Local Development Framework (LDF) is a collection of spatial planning documents which guide the development of the Borough. This is illustrated by Figure A.1 below.

Figure A.1 West Lancashire Local Development Framework Structure



The most important part of the West Lancashire LDF is the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD). The Core Strategy, together with the North West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), form the statutory development plan for West Lancashire. The Core Strategy is the first DPD to be produced by the Council and will contain a Vision and Strategy which set out how West Lancashire will develop over the period to 2027. It will not only make sure that new homes, jobs and shops required by communities are located in the most sustainable locations, it will also deliver the necessary infrastructure, facilities and other development to make this possible.

The Site Allocations DPD will also become part of the Development Plan, by allocating sites for specific uses within the Borough, such as housing or employment. Preparation on this document will commence once the Core Strategy is at an advanced stage. A Proposals Map will illustrate all the spatial policies of the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs on a base map of the Borough.

The Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs will also be supported by any other documents that the Council feels appropriate to expand upon the policies contained within these documents or the RSS. Currently, these include the Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) of: Skelmersdale Town Centre Masterplan; Design Guide; and Open Space and Recreation Provision in New Residential Developments.

Other documents within the LDF include:

Appendix A LDF Preparation

- the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), which monitors the success of the policies within the LDF, the progress against relevant targets and indicators and the progress of preparation of LDF documents;
- the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which sets out how the public will be involved in the preparation of LDF documents; and
- the Local Development Scheme (LDS), which sets out a project plan timetable for the preparation of LDF documents.

Results of Consultation

The Council has sought to involve the local community from the earliest stage of LDF preparation, including key stakeholders, groups and individuals, in order to assist in defining the key issues facing West Lancashire and to consider how they can be addressed through the Core Strategy. The Council has involved the community directly in the preparation of the Core Strategy to meet the requirements of Regulation 25 (public participation in the preparation of a Development Plan Document) through the Local Strategic Partnership Annual Conference, the Spatial Forums and the Issues Questionnaire. Full results from these three exercises can be viewed in Feedback Reports on the Council's [website](#), whilst a summary of the key issues is outlined in Table A.1.

Local Strategic Partnership Annual Conference (June 2008)

In June 2008, the Council held workshops for members of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) at their Annual Conference at the West Lancashire Investment Centre, Skelmersdale, which was themed around the topic of "Regenerating the Community through Partnership Working". The LSP is a voluntary partnership and is represented by over 80 members in public, private and voluntary organisations. The aim of the event was to ensure that the LDF takes careful consideration of the themes, objectives, priorities and projects within the LSP's Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-17 and also to ensure that the LDF can be delivered by key partners.

At the conference, a short presentation was given to explain the LDF and its importance to the LSP and the local community. LSP members were then allocated to one of six workshop groups to discuss issues specifically relating to that area, including three Borough-wide groups and individual groups for Skelmersdale, the Market Towns (Ormskirk and Burscough) and the remaining rural area of West Lancashire. During the workshops, the following four activities were conducted:

- SWOT analysis: to establish the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the area;
- Identification of key issues: to identify the most important issues of the area;
- Vision of the area in 15-20 years: to predict how the area might be like in the future, by building upon the identified strengths and to tackle recognised issues;
- Settlement Hierarchy: to determine how much development settlements within the Borough should potentially receive, based upon the outcomes of earlier activities.

Spatial Forums (July 2008)

In July 2008, the Council held three "Spatial Forum" events held at key locations across the Borough in Tarleton (Northern Parishes), Skelmersdale (Skelmersdale and Eastern Parishes) and Ormskirk (Market Towns and Western Parishes). The events were well attended by around 250 people who represented a diverse mix of local residents, landowners, businesses, voluntary organisations, community action groups, developers and Councillors. The Spatial Forums were set up as an informal consultation exercise to test whether the issues raised at the LSP Annual Conference were broadly correct, and also to look at specific areas of the Borough in more detail. As similar to the LSP Annual Conference, a short presentation explaining the importance of the LDF was given, followed by a second presentation into a SWOT analysis of the area, aided by relevant maps and statistics in order to stimulate discussion. The workshops which followed were designed to gather people's views on:

- What are the most important issues for each area of the Borough;
- A 'Vision' - how we would like the Borough to be in the future; and
- How we might work towards achieving this Vision.

Issues Questionnaire (January-February 2009)

In January-February 2009, the Council conducted an "Issues Questionnaire" forming the first stage of written consultation for the LDF. Although the responses received at the LSP Annual Conference and Spatial Forums were valuable, it was recognised that those who put their views forward merely represented a small number of people with an interest in the future development of West Lancashire. Therefore the Issues Questionnaire was made available to open up consultation and provide a further opportunity for key stakeholders and the wider community to put forward their views. The main method of making comments was through the Council's online consultation portal, although paper copies were made available at deposit points across the Borough and distributed to those who required them.

Around 100 people responded to the questionnaire who were able to comment on the whole Borough or on a specific area of interest to them. The Issues Questionnaire presented similar questions asked at the Spatial Forums, and took them a step further by putting forward early options on spatial topics such as:

- Draft SWOT analyses and Vision statements;
- Future development needs and settlement expansion;
- Providing more land for housing, specialist accommodation and employment;
- Transport and accessibility;
- The environment, climate change, flood risk and recreation and tourism; and
- Rural issues.

Summary of Key Issues Identified through Consultation

Table A.1 Summary of Key Issues Identified through Consultation

Area	LSP Annual Conference	Spatial Forums	Issues Questionnaire
<p>West Lancashire Borough</p>	<p>Links with neighbouring authorities; Skelmersdale's relationship within West Lancashire; Retaining quality of life; Transport links within the Borough; Need to find the Borough's "Unique Selling Point"; Quality of life; Reduction in funding; Enhancing the community; Impact of the wider economic climate.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Lack of suitable housing for the ageing population; Affordable housing required throughout the Borough, not just in areas of deprivation.</p>
<p>Skelmersdale</p>	<p>Public transport; Image of the town; Lack of town centre facilities.</p>	<p>Sufficient land available in the settlement areas to provide more homes; Original New Town plan should be "finished off" by developing the land at Whalleys and in the town centre; Support for the town centre Masterplan;</p>	<p>Failure in the past to deliver schemes to improve the town; Lack of a railway station; Footpaths are difficult to follow, forcing people to walk along roadways;</p>

Appendix A LDF Preparation

Area	LSP Annual Conference	Spatial Forums	Issues Questionnaire
		<p>Town centre proposals would bring in more investment and have the potential to turn around the negative perceptions of the town.</p>	<p>Poor maintenance, landscaping and layout of open green spaces.</p>
Ormskirk (and Aughton)	<p>Transport links and congestion; Affordable Housing; Edge Hill University; Protection of agricultural land; Sewerage and surface water issues.</p>	<p>Mixed feeling over the expansion of the settlement area; Limited land exists within the settlement to meet any significant demands for housing and employment; Mix of views expressed over the future development and expansion of Edge Hill University.</p>	<p>Little interaction between Edge Hill University and the town, and other 'student issues'; Shortage of adequate sites in town centre to attract further retail or other services; Nearest adult accident and emergency Hospital is at Southport; Town cramming and over development of the urban settlement; Threat of Ormskirk Bypass not being built and increasing congestion.</p>
		<p>Brownfield sites cannot accommodate much development and consequently there should be possible consideration of developing edge-of-settlement Green Belt sites; Network Rail's proposed improvements to the local railway should be supported, particularly increased services and the reinstatement of the Burscough Curves; Leeds-Liverpool Canal and Martin Mere are valuable environmental and recreational assets which should be protected and improved.</p>	<p>Burscough has witnessed quite a lot of recent development; Reinstatement Burscough Curves, to provide a connection between the Ormskirk-Preston and Southport-Manchester lines; Maximise the potential of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal heritage.</p>
Burscough			

Appendix A LDF Preparation

Area	LSP Annual Conference	Spatial Forums	Issues Questionnaire
<p>Northern Parishes</p>	<p>Affordable rural housing; Lack of investment in services and infrastructure; Consultation at grass root level.</p>	<p>Limitations of existing infrastructure; Small-scale development for employment and affordable/ local housing could be allowed; Stimulation of new employment opportunities would reduce reliance upon the agricultural and horticultural industries; "Open Land on the Urban Fringe" could be considered for development, if it could bring significant regeneration benefits and would remove a state of dereliction; Expansion into the Green Belt is not appropriate, given the high potential for flood risk in this area; Support for a Ribble Estuary Regional Park and a Tarleton/ Hesketh Bank Linear Park.</p>	<p>Dereliction around settlements from the decline in horticultural industries; Flood risk issues are an important consideration in the location of new development; Traffic congestion in Tarleton and Hesketh Bank at peak times.</p>
	<p>Eastern Parishes</p>	<p>Mix of views over potential expansion into the Green Belt.</p>	<p>Villages are surrounded by Green Belt which offers little scope to expand in order to accommodate its local population and businesses.</p>
<p>Western Parishes</p>		<p>Further development should be concentrated on infill sites, rather than the expansion into the Green Belt.</p>	

Spatial Objectives (Draft Indicators)

The suggested strategic objectives for West Lancashire's Core Strategy explain how the Vision can be achieved. These Strategic Objectives also embrace the objectives set out within the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement (LAA), and some of the objectives link with the targets set out within the LAA. The Government requires that key objectives should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely), and all the key objectives set out below have been developed to meet these measures.

Each of the spatial objectives presented in this report has a clear set of indicators assigned to it. Due to the close relationships between the objectives of the Core Strategy and those of the SCS and the LAA, a number of the indicators are shared which has the advantage of removing the need to collect additional data and providing a consistent data source. The indicators will be used to monitor and manage the success of the Core Strategy in delivering its aims. Policies that are not performing as intended can be flagged up and remedial action taken.

It should be noted that the indicators set out in this Appendix are provisional and targets are liable to change as a result of changing data and revisions to other documents and policies. The draft indicators do currently contain some data gaps, as presented in the tables below. By the finalisation of the Preferred Option for the Core Strategy, the objectives, indicators and targets will be more robust.

How will we monitor these objectives?

Under the current planning system, local planning authorities must submit an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to the Government each December. The AMR is a key component of the LDF and measures the success of policies against a series of national and local indicators. It aims to show whether policies are achieving their objectives and whether sustainable development is being delivered, whether policies have had their intended consequences, whether the assumptions and objectives behind policies are still relevant, and whether the targets in the LDF are being achieved.

To achieve this, the Annual Monitoring Report looks at a range of national (Core Output) and local indicators. Core Output Indicators were designed as part of the monitoring framework to collect data on national planning policies and sustainable development objectives. In addition to this, West Lancashire also collects data for local indicators, specific to the Borough.

It is proposed that the objectives of the Core Strategy will be monitored and reported through the AMR using the indicators presented in this report, following adoption of the final strategy. Some indicators have been assigned provisional targets with which to measure success of the policies, but it should be noted that targets to the end of the Plan period are difficult to determine at such an early stage in the process. Subsequently, targets may need to be revised as the plan period progresses.

Monitoring guidance recognises the need to update national and local indicators where necessary to reflect changes in policy and monitoring requirements. National, regional or local targets may also be reviewed. Subsequently, indicators presented here are liable to amendment in the future.

Appendix B Spatial Objectives

Spatial Objective 1 – Stronger and Safer Communities

To have strong and vibrant communities, in which both young and old people are actively engaged and where people feel safe and secure.

More active voluntary and community sectors, will lead to the development of a high degree of community participation and increased pride in neighbourhoods. Crime levels will reduce further, with an active Community Safety Partnership giving residents a greater sense of security.

Targets:

Target Description	Data Source	Existing Indicator	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08*	2008/09 ***	LCC LAA target 2010/11	WLBC Target by 2027
% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality to increase	WLBC	NI 4	-	-	32%	Pending	32%	LAA target 38% (IG)
Participation in regular volunteering to increase	WLBC	NI 6	-	-	16%	Pending	18%	LAA target 20% (IG)
Serious Acquisitive Crime Rate to reduce	WLBC / Lancs Constabulary	NI 16	-	-	1,135 offences	Pending	1,101 offences	LAA target 950 **
% of people aged 65+ satisfied with home and neighbourhood	WLBC	NI138	-	-	Not provided	Pending	Not provided	LAA target?

* From LAA_Indicators (LCC). Figures derive from 2007 BVPI Survey results.

** LCC predict a deficit of 11 offences per year 2008/09 – 2010/11. Projecting this to 2027 gives a total of 925 offences in 2027.

*** Awaiting 2008/09 NI figures. Young/old issue target ????

Spatial Objective 2 – Education training and the economy

To create more, and better quality, training and job opportunities to get more people into work

A new Skelmersdale College and improved facilities at Edge Hill University will help provide a highly trained workforce; combined with improved results at secondary school level, particularly in Skelmersdale. Improved and new employment land will be found in the main urban areas, with small scale rural employment opportunities also encouraged through a diversified rural economy.

Targets:

Target Description	Data Source	Existing Indicator	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	WLBC Target by 2027
Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ GCSEs at grades A*-C to increase	DCSF	-	(In 1997 figure stood at 42.2%)	-	61.9%	-	70%
Proportion of working age population in employment / unemployed	NOMIS / WLBC AMR	CX07	79.0%	75.5%	77.8%	-	80%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economically active Employed Unemployed 			74.7%	72.7%	75.8%	-	75%
Worklessness	NOMIS	-	2.7%	2.8%	2.5%	4%	Less than 2.5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of JSA claimants (Include Incapacity benefits?) 							
VAT registrations as % of total business stock	NOMIS	-	8.8%	7.2%	9.2%	-	10%
Amount of employment land and floorspace developed annually (inc creation of jobs)	WLBC AMR	EC1-4	3.11 Ha	5.44 Ha	Land = 1.44 Ha F/S = 16,852sqm *	-	To meet RSS/LDF requirements. Rolling average?

* cannot compare like for like 2005-2008 due to removal of thresholds

Appendix B Spatial Objectives

Spatial Objective 3 - Health

To improve the general health of residents and promote social wellbeing through high quality green infrastructure and cultural activities

Residents will be encouraged to live a healthier lifestyle through increased leisure and sports opportunities. Green spaces will be readily accessible and improved. There will be improved access to health facilities. Social and cultural facilities will be provided to a high standard and be accessible to all communities.

Targets:

Target Description	Data Source	Existing Indicator	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	L C C Target 2010/11	L A A Target 2010/11	Target by 2027
Self reported measure of peoples overall health and wellbeing	WLBC	NI119	-	-	73.9%	Pending	76.9%		LAA target (80%?)
% of residents satisfied with sports / leisure facilities	WLBC	BVPI119a	Awaiting	Awaiting	Awaiting	Awaiting	-	-	WL Target (to be set)
Amount of available greenspace lost to development	WLBC AMR	ENV01	-	-	0	0	-	-	0
Number of customers taking part in health improvement activities	WLBC	WL12a	31,216	32,318	42,461	42,575	-	-	WL Target (to be set)

Spatial Objective 4 – Natural Environment

To protect and improve the natural environment, including biodiversity and green infrastructure, in West Lancashire.

A range of sites will continue to be protected and enhanced for their biodiversity and geodiversity interest. The number of important sites will be increased where possible and new developments will contribute to increasing biodiversity. The Ribble Estuary will continue to be developed as a site of national and international importance, as will the facilities at Martin Mere. The landscape and biodiversity will be protected and enhanced through management of important features and through appropriate and well designed new developments.

Targets:

Target Description	Data Source	Existing Indicators	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 figure	2008/09	LCC LAA Target 2010/11	Target for 2027
Improved local biodiversity – active management of local sites	WLBC	NI 197	-	-	5% (at Lancashire level)	Pending (WLBC level)	14% (at Lancashire level)	LAA target
Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including i) priority habits and species (by type) and ii) areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value.	WLBCAMR	ENV08	-	-	99.5% of SSSIs in favourable or recovering condition. No further information has been available.	-	-	To maintain 2007/08 levels till 2027

Appendix B Spatial Objectives

Spatial Objective 5 - Housing

To provide a range of new housing types in appropriate locations to meet the needs of West Lancashire's population, including affordable housing and specialist accommodation.

An average of at least 300 new homes a year should be provided to meet the current requirements of strategic planning policy. These will be concentrated on brownfield sites, where available, in the major urban areas where services and transport facilities are greatest. The needs of all sectors of the community will be catered for through the provision of lifetime homes. New extra care facilities will be developed for the elderly and suitable pitches will be found for Gypsies & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Targets:

Target Description	Data Source	Existing Indicator	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	LCC LAA Target for 2010/11	Target for 2027
RSS target for new homes to be met (Net)	WLBC	NI154	202	344	81	130	-	LAA target 6000 in total (Average 300 per annum)
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	WLBC	NI 155	12	5	11	13	22	LAA target
Proportion of new homes on brownfield land 2012-2027	WLBC AMR	HG06	79.1%	75.2%	69.1%	72%	-	Minimum of 65% to be on brownfield land *
Proportion of new homes complying with the Building for Life standard	WLBC AMR	HG09	-	-	-	-	-	All homes on sites with a capacity greater than 10 dwellings by 2027
Number of gypsy and traveller pitches provided	WLBC	RSS	-	-	0	0	-	14 Permanent + 10 transit gypsy pitches 5 travelling show people pitches. As per RSS requirements by 2027

Spatial Objective 6 – Services and Accessibility

To provide good quality services that are accessible to all, with the promotion of the vitality and viability of town and local centres which are well linked to their rural hinterlands and neighbouring City Regions. All new development should be located in areas that are accessible and which have a range of services.

The Borough's town and village centres should continue to be attractive centres that provide a range of services for local residents. The important function of the market towns of Ormskirk and Burscough as Key Service Centres will be protected and enhanced. Public transport links through both rail and bus should be enhanced to improve the accessibility of key centres and their links to the centres of City Regions – Liverpool, Manchester and Preston. The regeneration of Skelmersdale Town Centre through the provision of new retail, leisure, housing, community and educational facilities will be vital to the development of the town as a whole. Development will be located mainly in the centres which have the greatest numbers of jobs and services available and which are accessible by public transport.

Targets:

Target Description	Data Source	Existing Indicator	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 figure	2008/09	Target by 2027
Vacancy levels in Ormskirk, Burscough & Skelmersdale	WLBC AMR	EC8	-	-	2.7%	-	Reduction in percentage figure by 2027
Vacant floorspace in Burscough					4.6%		
Vacant floorspace in Ormskirk					11.6%		
Vacant floorspace in Skelmersdale							
Amount of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a hospital, a GP, a primary school, a secondary school, areas of employment and a major retail centre	WLBC AMR	SD05	97% (excluding hospital)	95% (excluding hospital)	96% (excluding the hospital)	-	95% (excluding hospital)
Proportion of new developments completed within 400m of a bus stop / 800m of a rail station	WLBC AMR	SD2	92% completions	77% completions	84% completions	-	90% of new development

Spatial Objective 7 – Location of Development and Built Environment

To ensure that development is designed to a high quality and is appropriate for its locality, maximising efficiency in the use of land and resources, avoiding areas of significant constraint and minimising pollution. Heritage assets will be protected and enhanced. The unique character and features of local areas will be protected and reinforced through new development and other initiatives.

Design quality will be greatly enhanced, with all development respecting the local area. The unique heritage of West Lancashire will be protected and enhanced wherever possible. New development will be distributed to appropriate locations across the Borough

Targets:

Target Description	Data Source	Existing Indicators	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	Target for 2027
Proportion of new housing development to meet the CABE Building for Life 'Very Good' standard by 2027	WLBC AMR	HG9	-	-	-	-	All new housing on sites with a capacity greater than 10 dwellings
Number of listed buildings demolished, heritage assets, networks or settings lost	WLBC AMR	ENV2 & 3	0	0	0	0	To be zero

Spatial Objective 8 – Climate Change

To mitigate against and adapt to climate change through a variety of measures including correctly locating and designing new development, reducing energy consumption, having sustainable alternative energy sources, and minimising waste and increasing recycling.

New development will be steered to areas which are not at risk of flooding, in sustainable locations, will use carbon neutral technology and will make the best use of on-site renewable energy sources.

Targets:

Target Description	Data Source	Existing Indicator	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	LCC LAA Target 2010/11	Target for 2027
Number of permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality	WLBC AMR	ENV07	0	0	8	Pending	-	Zero (all problems should be resolved/mitigated)
Renewable energy capacity installed by type (in MW)	WLBC AMR	ENV09	-	-	-	Pending	-	To increase.
Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area	WLBC	NI 186	7.2 tonnes (Lancashire)	-	-	Pending	12.5% reduction on 2005 baseline (Lancashire)	LAA target To reduce from XX baseline level.
Adapting to climate change	WLBC	NI 188	-	-	-	Level 0 (Lancashire)	Level 3 (Lancashire)	LAA target
Tackling fuel poverty	WLBC	NI 187						

Appendix B Spatial Objectives

Spatial Objective 9 – Skelmersdale

To make Skelmersdale an attractive and vibrant place to live and reduce the social inequalities between the town and the rest of the Borough.

A new regenerated Skelmersdale Town Centre will better serve the needs of its residents and the wider Borough. New housing and improvements to the existing older new town estates and the existing green infrastructure will also take place. Health and educational inequalities with the rest of the Borough will also narrow. All these factors will make Skelmersdale a more attractive place to live and will bring in new people to live in the town.

Targets:

Target Description	Target by	Source	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	LCC target 2010/11	LAA target 2010/11	Target for 2027
All age all cause mortality rate	ONS via WLBC	NI120	-	M731 F542 (District)	-	-	M657 F499 (District wide)		Gap to narrow between Borough ward areas. Currently Gap of 10 years between most and least deprived
New retail floorspace in Skelmersdale	WLBC	-	-	-	-	-	-		To be at least 20,000 sqm developed since 2009
Number of new homes delivered in Skelmersdale (including mix)	WLBC	-	-	-	-	-	-		To meet requirements of Regeneration project
Proportion of population with	NOMIS	-	13.1%	17.4%	14.8%	-	-		Gap to narrow between Borough ward areas.
● no qualifications									
● NVQ Levels 1			83.4%	79.8%	78.3%	-	-		Overall proportion with no qualifications to decrease, all others to increase.
● NVQ Levels 2			68.8%	65.8%	59.9%	-	-		
● NVQ Levels 3			47.5%	43.3%	41.6%	-	-		
● NVQ Levels 4			31.7%	22.0%	20.2%	-	-		

List of Evidence Base Documents

The Evidence Base is the name given to the information that the Council use to inform the strategies and policies in its Local Development Framework (in particular the Core Strategy). The choices made within the Development Strategy must be backed up by facts. Evidence is drawn from a variety of sources on a wide range of information. All data must be relevant to the Borough and as up-to-date as is practically possible.

The following studies and reports comprise West Lancashire Borough Councils Evidence Base.

Demographics and Borough background

- Spatial Atlas;
- An ageing population in West Lancashire; and
- Sustainability of Settlements Study.

Housing

- Housing Land Supply reports (annual) (HLS);
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA);
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA);
- Housing Needs Survey 2005; and
- Housing Needs Survey update (2009).

Economy, Employment and Retail

- Employment Land and Premises Study (ELPS);
- Employment Land Monitor (annual) (ELM);
- Retail Study (2007);
- Economic Assessment; and
- Rural Economy Study.

Environment

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA); and
- Open Space, Sports and Recreation Assessment.

Other

- Annual Monitoring Report;
- Interim Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy Options Paper;
- West Lancashire Integrated Transport Review;
- Design Guide SPD;
- Character Appraisals;
- Skelmersdale Town Centre SPD/ Masterplan;
- Local Infrastructure Plan; and
- Renewable Energy Study.

Brief Analysis of each Document

Demographic

The Spatial Atlas

The Spatial Atlas provides an introduction to the current condition of the Borough using economic, social and environmental data sets. It illustrates the population breakdown of West Lancashire and how it is likely to change in the future, with particular growth in the proportion of the population who are aged. The Borough has a high proportion of deprivation in Skelmersdale and there are major health inequalities between Skelmersdale and the rest of the Borough. The Atlas highlights the need for affordable housing, with prices on average seven times the annual household income, as well as a need to improve the range and quality of housing available. It also shows that unemployment and worklessness levels are highest in Skelmersdale and the LDF needs to facilitate improving employment opportunities.

An Ageing Population in West Lancashire

The Ageing Population document presents some of the issues that need to be considered in planning for a shift in the demographic in West Lancashire. The population of West Lancashire who are aged is set to increase dramatically by 2031, increasing at a faster rate than the regional and national comparables. This will have implications on planning for the future of the Borough, including the need to provide appropriate levels of health care, specialised housing, training and employment and ensure good access to transport and services.

Sustainability of Settlements

The Sustainability of Settlements assessment illustrates that there is a hierarchy of settlements within the Borough, with the designated regional town of Skelmersdale and the key and local service centres of Ormskirk and Burscough being the most sustainable settlements in the Borough due to the accessibility of housing, employment, services and transport. The small, rural settlements are the least sustainable. To support Government guidance, the LDF should seek to allocate development in the most sustainable settlements.

Housing

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

The [SHLAA](#) has been carried out by consultants White Young Green on behalf of West Lancashire, Sefton and Knowsley Councils. It seeks to identify the amount and general location of land with potential for housing within the Borough, and when this might be expected to be developable. This in turn will help us work out how much more land might need to be allocated in the LDF to meet the Borough's housing targets.

The draft final SHLAA report (June 2009) demonstrates that West Lancashire has sufficient land to meet RSS housing requirements from 2008-2013, i.e. there is a five year supply of deliverable sites, subject to normal market conditions returning. Between 2013-2018, more

land has been identified than is required to meet the RSS target although the majority of these sites are constrained by policy. Thus appropriate policy amendments through the LDF might be necessary to facilitate the development of these sites.

From 2018, sources of supply are more difficult to predict and the Councils' plan, monitor and manage system will be increasingly important in ensuring that ongoing land requirements are adequately facilitated by the LDF. Safeguarded land allocations have the potential to deliver the majority of housing development required over the next 20 years. The consultants consider that a review of the Green Belt is not necessary at this moment.

The final SHLAA report should be available to fully inform the Preferred Options stage.

Housing Land Supply (HLS)

Each year, the [HLS](#) analyses housing completions and granted planning permissions and provides the residual supply at the 31 March that year. The current HLS (2008) shows that West Lancashire has a five year supply of housing land, in keeping with Government targets. It also illustrates that current policies directing residential development to the main sustainable settlements and onto brownfield land are working successfully.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

Two major studies have been undertaken to identify housing market area boundaries in and around West Lancashire. The first of these was a two-stage study commissioned by the Merseyside Housing Partnership in 2005-06. Stage 1 identified the extent of the Liverpool City Region and the housing market areas within it, and the second involved housing market assessments for each housing market area within the city region. On the basis of analysis of migration and travel-to-work data, West Lancashire was identified as falling within the Liverpool City Region North housing market area, along with the local authorities of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Sefton and Wirral. The detailed analysis of migration and travel to work identified significant linkages between the northern part of West Lancashire and Central Lancashire. Parts of West Lancashire were identified as being outside the city region, but for practical purposes and as a result of data availability constraints the whole district was included in the subsequent housing market assessment.

In addition the Council has commissioned the preparation of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for West Lancashire and a draft, prepared by Nevin Leather Associates will be published for consultation in the near future. This study is based upon existing research applying the model of affordable housing needs currently being used in the preparation of the North West's Single Regional Strategy 2010. It will be refined to take account of recent housing market developments and responses to consultation.

The initial results indicate that affordability is much more of an issue in the rural areas and market towns outside of Skelmersdale. Recognising this, the Council has commissioned further research on housing need, demand and viability of provision which is being carried out by Fordham Research. This will include a detailed analysis of requirements for the towns of Ormskirk and Skelmersdale as well as each rural Parish.

Appendix C Evidence Base

Housing Needs Survey (2005)

The [Housing Needs Survey](#) was designed to examine the housing requirements (needs, aspirations and demands) for the communities and households of the Borough. The findings of the survey highlighted problems with affordability of homes and the need to supply 290 more affordable housing units in the Borough each year. The study also stated the need to adapt housing in response to an ageing population, particularly with the link between ageing and disability, and improving the range and quality of stock available throughout the Borough.

Housing Needs Survey update (2009)

The Housing Needs Survey was last conducted in 2005 and to ensure that the evidence base is as up-to-date as possible, a new survey was conducted in 2009. The results of the 2009 HNS will be available by the Preferred Options stage of the LDF. More information can be found through the Housing Section of the Council's [website](#).

Economy, Employment and Retail

Employment Land and Premises Study (ELPS)

The [ELPS](#) was undertaken by consultants BE Group and carried out in partnership with Sefton, Knowsley and Halton Councils to identify the availability of employment land and premises in the Borough and to determine how much land may be required in future years.

The key tasks for the study were to assess the economy of the Borough to inform the amount, location and type of employment land and premises to facilitate development and growth; To review the current allocations of employment land & premises to ensure that West Lancashire can provide a balanced and sustainable range of employment sites within its LDF; To recommend future allocations of employment land to maintain the areas economic growth into the future.

The draft results of the ELPS stated that there will be a 4.3% increase in employment, creating approximately 2,114 more jobs by 2026. It states that a further 90 hectares of land should be allocated in the Borough for employment use, of which approximately 50ha could be met through the remodelling of existing sites and the regeneration of poor quality buildings. This leaves a requirement for 40ha of land. The consultants also recommend that a number of currently allocated sites should be de-allocated from employment to other uses. It should be emphasised that at the time of writing this Options paper, the report is in draft form and may be liable to change. The final report is expected to be ready in time for the Preferred Options stage.

Economic Assessment

The Economic Assessment was carried out by Consultants GVA Grimley to provide a better understanding of the Boroughs economic baseline position and its key sectors. The study made several recommendations amidst its findings.

The study found that many of the major employment areas and industrial estates in the Borough make ineffective use of the land and are visually unappealing and so recommends that land use is maximised and the image of the area improved.

West Lancashire has the highest proportion of Green Belt in the Country although the land presents a major restriction to economic growth in West Lancashire. The Economic Assessment recommends that the restrictions should be relaxed, particularly in areas where there is demand such as Edge Hill University and the Burscough Industrial Estates.

Additional office sites and accommodation outside of Skelmersdale should be identified to diversify the employment base of the Borough, primarily focusing on Ormskirk due to its strategic location, transport links and sustainability.

The Borough should exploit its rural base to facilitate the growth of rural businesses in the Knowledge Economy, making space available for such businesses on the periphery of the Boroughs key market towns and ensuring broadband access is available. The study recommends that Ormskirk should be promoted as a University town.

Employment Land Monitor (ELM)

Like the HLS, the [ELM](#) is prepared annually to show the availability and uptake of employment land in the Borough, as well as vacant floorspace levels, business enquiries and newly granted permissions. It also provides details of the residual supply of employment land in West Lancashire. The most recent report (2008) shows a consistency in the number of applications for employment use, and that there is a continual demand and take-up of land for development within the Borough.

The 2008 ELM stated that the Borough had 63 hectares of employment land remaining and available for development. Completed developments are predominately in allocated areas or on brownfield sites in accordance with policy.

Rural Economy Study (RES)

The RES was commissioned to identify the major economic challenges of the rural areas in order to address the issues strategically. The report found that the rural areas of the Borough provide over half of the firms and 40% of the jobs in West Lancashire (excluding Skelmersdale, Ormskirk and Burscough). In particular, there is a large cluster of industry based around food horticulture in the northern parishes, as well as important clusters of manufacturing businesses.

Tourism in the Borough is present but is weak, despite the presence of Martin Mere and the Ribble Estuary Regional Park. Whilst there is the potential to maintain and enhance the Boroughs assets, the findings do not suggest a potential to significantly promote tourism in rural West Lancashire as there would not be an impact in doing so.

The study suggests that West Lancashire is over-reliant on external locations to supply its employees and that instead it should seek to better connect with the under-engaged labour market in Skelmersdale to meet employment needs in the rural areas. It is important to ensure that the labour supply has the relevant skills and training, and that transport is available to encourage employees to work. It recommends that the rural areas work closely with the Council's Planning department to maximise all opportunities for development.

Appendix C Evidence Base

It concludes by recommending that the Council uses the Rural Economy Study to inform its LDF in order to develop a more pro-active, rurally responsive approach to planning the future of the Borough. This includes less restrictive Green Belt policies and enabling the development of barns and brownfield sites for residential developments.

Retail Study

The [Retail Study](#) was carried out to examine the health of the Borough's main town centres, current and future expenditure patterns, the impact of proposed new development, and also commercial, leisure and office uses.

Currently, a high proportion of expenditure on convenience and comparison goods are lost to service centres outside of West Lancashire. Demand for retail, particularly for comparison goods is set to increase and future leakage needs to be minimised. In addition, the Borough has a weak night time economy and limited commercial leisure facilities.

The study recommends that future retail and leisure development should be focused on Skelmersdale to help regenerate the town and enable the Borough to obtain a better share of the market and compete with other service centres. The LDF should work towards delivering regeneration of Skelmersdale and improving its retail, leisure and evening economies.

Minor development in Ormskirk and Burscough should be allowed as appropriate to improve vitality and viability and services for local residents. Ormskirk has some floorspace available for expansion, although none as been identified in Burscough and linkages between existing retailers should be maximised.

Town Centre Office Study

The Town Centre Office Study was commissioned by Lancashire County Council and undertaken by the consultants BE Group to provide a baseline of office stock in the County's town centres, including a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the existing office stock.

The results of the study relate to the County level, and as the same consultants have been used by the Council to produce the Employment Land and Premises Study, localised level findings should be reflected in the ELPS report.

Environment

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

The highest risk of coastal flooding is in the north and west of the Borough with Banks the only settlement to have potential for flooding. Any proposals for development in the area must be considered against the risk of flooding and development must satisfy a sequential test and be managed appropriately. Fluvial flooding risks in the Borough derive from the River Alt (high) and the River Douglas (significant).

Development in the main settlements of Skelmersdale, Ormskirk and Burscough is considered to be low/localised risk although development should acknowledge minor threats from fluvial sources and old drainage infrastructures.

A number of flood defences exist, or are in progress, to prevent damage from fluvial or coastal flooding in the future and are constructed and maintained by the Environment Agency.

Open Space, Sports and Recreation Assessment

The [Open Space, Sport & Recreation Assessment](#) has been prepared to assess current levels of open space provision within the Borough, to assess local need for open space to ensure that aspirations of local communities could be appropriately understood and to inform the future management of open spaces and facilitate decision making on the current and future needs for open space, sport and recreation provision.

Local standards have been prepared to highlight areas of open space deficiency within the Borough. Highlighting such deficiencies are useful in targeting resources towards certain locations and certain types of open space provision.

Other

Annual Monitoring Report

The [AMR](#) reports annually on the Council's success in progressing with the LDF against the Local Development Schedule timetable, and also the success of the Councils' policies in achieving their purpose.

The AMR shows that the West Lancashire Replacement Local Plan (WLRLP) policies are working effectively to protect heritage and environmental assets, greenspace, agricultural land and biodiversity. Development in the Borough continues to be targeted on previously developed land to facilitate regeneration and in the main settlements to promote sustainable development. Development is largely confined to those allocations defined in the WLRLP.

There is a pressing need for affordable housing in West Lancashire and the number of affordable homes delivered each year is considerably below the targets established in the Housing Needs Survey 2005. There is still a significant amount of land available in the Borough for business development although little exists in the town centres.

Interim Sustainability Appraisal for the Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper

An Interim Sustainability Appraisal has been prepared for the Core Strategy Options Paper. At this stage the options put forward remain quite vague, there are a number of key variables which, as a consequence, mean that the impacts of each option cannot be accurately assessed.

The draft options were appraised as part of an internal appraisal group consisting of key Council Officers from a variety of sections. Each option was discussed and the potential impacts on social, economic and environment issues assessed. Further information on the document can be found on the [Borough Council Website](#).

Appendix C Evidence Base

West Lancashire Integrated Transport Review

The West Lancashire Integrated Transport Review, published in May 2008, was commissioned jointly by the West Lancashire LSP and Lancashire County Council and covers a strategic review of passenger transport in the Borough by analysing key issues, relevant information and exploring opportunities for improvements to passenger transport.

It identifies that the most frequent passenger transport services are found on the Wigan, Skelmersdale, Ormskirk to Southport bus corridor and on the rail corridor from Ormskirk to Liverpool. However, significantly lower levels of provision are found in the North and Southwest of the Borough, and the rural areas of Bickerstaffe, Crawford, Great Altcar and Holmeswood have the lowest level of accessibility in West Lancashire.

Skelmersdale is identified as a unique case within the Borough, as the New Town's transport networks were originally designed for predominantly car based transport. However, there are particularly low levels of car ownership and a greater dependency on public transport. There are particularly poor public transport links between residential and employment areas presenting a barrier to those seeking employment.

Sub-Regional Transport Framework for Lancashire

The Sub-Regional Transport Framework for Lancashire was commissioned by the Lancashire Economic Partnership and reflects the Department for Transport's (DfT) guidance "Delivering a Sustainable Transport System" to help influence setting the transport priorities of the Lancashire Integrated Strategy and the North West Regional Strategy 2010.

It identifies that there is limited interaction between West Lancashire and other parts of Lancashire, and recommends that transport policy within the Borough should be designed to support the effective functioning of its economic footprint as part of the wider Liverpool City Region. There is also recognition for the connections to the Manchester City Region.

The framework states a number of possible transport priorities. The priority for Skelmersdale is to tackle deprivation, in Ormskirk the priority is to tackle the constraints to the local economy caused by congestion, whilst in the rural areas of the Borough, the priority is to address the challenge of carbon emissions due to high levels of car use.

Skelmersdale Town Centre SPD

The [Skelmersdale Town Centre SPD](#) Masterplan was adopted in 2008, following extensive consultation, and sets out the key development principles for the town centre, providing guidance on the mix and scale of different land uses and how these should fit together to create an integrated, vibrant and successful town centre. The SPD will be used to consider all planning applications in Skelmersdale Town Centre and comprises part of the LDF.

Local Infrastructure Plan

As part of the infrastructure planning process and in order to better inform the Core Strategy we are currently meeting with key stakeholders to establish their views on existing infrastructure provisions, pressure points and shortfalls. This partnership working has so far proved to be extremely useful highlighting major issues such as the likelihood of rail improvement works progressing and capacity issues with regard to water provision.

The process is ongoing and will eventually culminate in a Local Infrastructure Plan identifying the strengths and weakness in each area, existing programmes or plans for improvement or expenditure, the source of the investment and those responsible for delivery. The LIP will give us a robust framework when planning for the location of development and provide the evidence base to justify policies which require developers to fund infrastructure delivery through the planning process.

Design Guide SPD, Conservation Area Character Appraisals

The West Lancashire [Design Guide](#) SPD was adopted by the Council in 2008 and sets out the importance of good design in the Borough. It provides guidance and principles against which planning applications will be assessed. This SPD also comprises part of the LDF.

Renewable Energy Study

The Renewable Energy Study is being conducted jointly with the authorities of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, Wirral and Warrington to consider the status and potential of renewable energy development in their areas. The results of the study will provide evidence for the LDF and inform planning for renewable energy and a low carbon economy. The final report of the Renewable Energy Study is due late September 2009, and so will be available for preparation of the Preferred Option.

Meetings with Key Stakeholders

In preparing the Core Strategy Options Paper, the Council has met with the following key stakeholders and organisations:

- 4NW;
- Central Lancashire Joint LDF (Chorley Borough, South Ribble Borough and Preston City Councils);
- Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust;
- English Heritage;
- Environment Agency;
- Government Office North West;
- Homes and Communities Agency;
- Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council;
- Lancashire County Council (Education – Strategy & Premises);
- Lancashire County Council (Minerals & Waste);
- Lancashire County Council (Strategic Planning);
- Lancashire County (Highways/ Transport);

Appendix C Evidence Base

- Merseytravel;
- Natural England;
- Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council;
- St.Helens Metropolitan Borough Council;
- United Utilities;
- West Lancashire Local Strategic Partnership; and
- Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.

Infrastructure

A number of infrastructure issues are set out below. The information is the result of meetings with stake holders, spatial forums with the residents of the Borough and building on our own knowledge of existing issues.

TRANSPORT	
ASSETS	ISSUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic location in the North West with good links to Liverpool, Manchester and the motorway network (M6/M58). • Ormskirk has great connectivity to Liverpool via A59 and a frequent rail service. • Skelmersdale has a well established road network with capacity to cater for future development growth. • Rufford, Parbold and Upholland are all well connected by both bus and rail, with their own train stations. • Banks is well served by bus routes linking it with Southport, Preston and Chorley. • Burscough is well connected with two train stations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skelmersdales New Town layout creates a sense of disconnectedness. • Shortage of park and ride facilities in Eastern Parishes. • Poor links between the two train stations in Burscough. • Rail links to Southport and Preston require improvement – Potential to reinstate the Burscough curves. • Traffic congestion in Ormskirk Town Centre, Hesketh Bank and on the A59 at Burscough due to industrial estate. • Uncertainty regarding delivery of the Ormskirk Bypass and Green Lane link in the Northern Parishes. • No railway station in Skelmersdale and limited off peak bus services. • Cycle lanes and links in both Skelmersdale and Ormskirk are poor. • Limited public transport to the majority of the rural areas. • Ormskirk bus station is below standard and in need of upgrade. • Parking facilities in Ormskirk are poor. • Industrial and HGV traffic on many of the Boroughs rural lanes can be an issue.

Appendix C Evidence Base

UTILITIES & WASTE	
ASSETS	ISSUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal by United Utilities to clean the Rivington Large diameter trunk mains, thus improving water quality by 2015. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The water treatment works in Burscough have been upgraded but the local system is still operating at over capacity. The resolution to this issue would amount to an investment programme for infrastructure costing £20 million. Funding for this from United Utilities is unlikely. Drinking water capacity in the Ormskirk / Aughton limits further expansion without improvements.. Poor drainage and sewerage issues in the western parishes and capacity issues in the northern parishes lead to flooding.

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE	
ASSETS	ISSUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ormskirk/Aughton have good access to facilities. Good provision for education with capacity in all schools across the Borough. Edge Hill University increases the educational offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of access to facilities in many rural areas Nearest A&E for adults is Southport. Banks does not have a village centre.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	
ASSETS	ISSUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Leeds Liverpool canal corridor. • Extensive farmland – encourages biodiversity and is an excellent habitat particularly for birds. • Large remnant peat areas act as a carbon sink and reduce CO2 emissions. • Important nature sites including Ribble Estuary, Martin Mere and Mere Sands Wood. • Vast Green Belt land surrounding all the settlements helps to ensure rural nature is maintained. • Good network of Footpaths in the Eastern Parishes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmland is under threat of erosion due to unsustainable drainage • Tawd Valley in need of attention.

CULTURAL & LEISURE	
ASSETS	ISSUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic market town nature of Ormskirk • Rufford Old hall. • Good network of Footpaths in the Eastern Parishes. • Extensive Green Belt and access to the countryside. • Leeds Liverpool Canal toe path • Large proportion of open space in Skelmersdale area, approximately 56% • Good facilities in Ormskirk including park, leisure centre, Civic hall, sports clubs and community halls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skelmersdale has vast open space and footpaths, however, the layout and design means they are under used and prone to anti-social behaviour. • Lack of play space and youth and leisure facilities in the Eastern Parishes.

National Planning Policy

Overarching national planning policy is delivered through the original Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes and the subsequent Planning Policy Statements (PPS) which are gradually replacing the PPGs. The objectives of national policy are to deliver sustainable development, having regard to:

- The creation of sustainable communities;
- Managing environmental assets;
- Resource management and utilisation;
- The development of the economy; and
- Tackling climate change.

PPS1 sets out the Governments policy objectives and encompasses how spatial plans should be produced for development in a sustainable manner. Its supplement, sets out the role spatial planning should play in contributing to the reduction of Climate Change. PPS12 also sets out how local planning authorities should place shape and deliver development.

In addition, all PPGs and PPSs are listed below, whilst full details of these can viewed on the Communities and Local Government (CLG) [website](#):

- PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development;
- PPS1 Supplement: Planning and Climate Change;
- PPG2: Green Belts;
- PPS3: Housing;
- PPG4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms;
- PPG5: Simplified Planning Zones;
- PPS6: Planning for Town Centres;
- PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas;
- PPG8: Telecommunications;
- PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation;
- PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management;
- PPS11: Regional Spatial Strategies;
- PPS12: Local Spatial Planning;
- PPG13: Transport;
- PPG14: Development on Unstable Land;
- PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment;
- PPG16: Archaeology and Planning;
- PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport & Recreation;
- PPG18: Enforcing Planning Control;
- PPG19: Outdoor Advertisement Control;
- PPG20: Coastal Planning;
- PPS22: Renewable Energy;
- PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control;
- PPG24: Planning and Noise; and
- PPS25: Development and Flood Risk.

Appendix D Planning Policy Background

Regional Planning Policy

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West of England was adopted in September 2008 and covers period to 2021. The RSS interprets the National Guidance at a Regional level focusing on the specific spatial requirements of the North West. Although the RSS is currently under review, the following key points are most relevant to West Lancashire are as follows:

- Settlement Hierarchy: focusing development within Skelmersdale, then to the remaining “Key Service Centres” and “Local Service Centres”;
- A presumption against any “exceptional substantial strategic change” to the Lancashire Green Belt until at least 2011;
- Delivery of an average of 300 net new dwellings each year in West Lancashire;
- Delivery of plans must accord with the Regional Rural Delivery framework requiring delivery of sustainable farming, access to services and social inclusion, and enhancing the value of rural and environmental assets; and
- The identification of West Lancashire Borough within the Liverpool City Region, demonstrating its links with the authorities in the wider Merseyside area.

Other relevant policies to West Lancashire include, details of which can be found on the [4NW Technical Planning Website](#):

- Policy DP1: Spatial Principles;
- Policy DP2: Promote Sustainable Communities;
- Policy DP3: Promote Sustainable Economic Development;
- Policy DP4: Make the Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure;
- Policy DP5: Manage Travel Demand; Reduce the Need to Travel, and Increase Accessibility;
- Policy DP6: Marry Opportunity and Need;
- Policy DP7: Promote Environmental Quality;
- Policy DP8: Main streaming Rural Issues;
- Policy DP9: Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change;
- Policy LCR3: Outer part of the Liverpool City Region;
- Policy LCR4: The Remaining Rural Parts of Liverpool City Region;
- Policy RDF2: Rural Areas;
- Policy RDF4: Green Belts;
- Policy W3: Supply of Employment Land;
- Policy W4: Release of Allocated Employment Land;
- Policy EM1: Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Region’s Environmental Assets;
- Policy EM3: Green Infrastructure;
- Policy EM5: Integrated Water Management;
- Policy EM10: A Regional Approach to Waste Management;
- Policy EM11: Waste Management Principles;
- Policy EM15: Framework for Sustainable Energy in the North West;
- Policy EM16: Energy Conservation & Efficiency;
- Policy EM17: Renewable Energy; and
- Policy EM18: Decentralised Energy Supply.

Local Plans and Strategies

Sub-Regional Plans and Strategies

Ambition Lancashire Sustainable Community Strategy (2005-2025)

Prepared by the Lancashire Partnership, it influences spending decisions and service planning; encourages partners to work together to meet identified needs and add value to each other's actions; enables partners to lobby and influence together on behalf of Lancashire; and helps shape the Local Area Agreement in Lancashire. Its vision is as follows:

Ambition Lancashire

To position Lancashire by 2025 as an area of outstanding opportunity, combining a world-class economy with a breath-taking environment and exceptional communities.

Lancashire's towns, cities and rural areas maintain their separate identities, but inter-dependence is strengthened through strong economic, social and environmental connections.

Ambition Lancashire is built upon the two principles of:

- Narrowing the gap: between areas and within communities, in terms of: wealth and poverty; educational achievement and underachievement; and high and low ambition; and
- Active and involve citizens and communities: making it easier for them to achieve their ambitions, enriches their lives and helps Lancashire meet their needs more closely.

There are a number of key priorities within Ambition Lancashire to achieve its vision and principles, including:

- Economy;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Education, training and skills;
- Environment; and
- Community safety.

More information on the Ambition Lancashire Sustainable Community Strategy can be found on The Lancashire Partnership's [website](#).

Lancashire Local Area Agreement (2008-2011)

Developed by the Lancashire Partnership, all local authorities and LSPs in Lancashire (excluding the Unitary Authorities) have signed up to the agreement and it was formally signed by the Government in March 2006. The LAA addresses local priorities with a view to improving services and quality of life for all. The priorities relate to the economy, environment, education training and skills, health and wellbeing, and community safety

Appendix D Planning Policy Background

Developed by the Lancashire Partnership, all local authorities and LSPs in Lancashire (excluding the Unitary Authorities) have signed up to the agreement and it was formally signed by the Government in March 2006. The agreement contains a range of targets which are aligned around a number of key themes which include:

- Children and Young People;
- Community Safety;
- Economic Development;
- Environment;
- Health and Wellbeing;
- Older People; and
- People and Communities.

It is important that the West Lancashire Local Development Framework, along with the West Lancashire Community Strategy, assist in the delivery of the Lancashire Local Area Agreement. This will result in the improved wellbeing and increased Government investment in West Lancashire and in the county as a whole. More details on the Local Area Agreements can be found on The Lancashire Partnership's [website](#).

Mid-Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement

There are currently ongoing discussions about the creation of a Mid-Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) which would cover West Lancashire, South Ribble, Chorley, Preston and Lancaster. The Core Strategy will need to both influence and reflect the priorities within the MAA.

Lancashire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (2009-2021)

This sets the broad direction for minerals and waste planning in Lancashire by identifying the amount of new minerals extraction and waste management capacity that will be needed over the plan's period, and by indicating broad locations for such uses.

The responsibility for allocating specific minerals and waste sites has been devolved to the Minerals & Waste Site Allocations DPD, which is currently under preparation by Lancashire County Council. It is likely that this will lead to the allocation or safeguarding of specific sites within West Lancashire. Further details may be found on the Lancashire Minerals and Waste [website](#).

Lancashire Local Transport Plan 2 (2006-2010)

In 2005 Lancashire County Council prepared its second Local Transport Plan, setting out the County Council plans for transport for the years 2006 to 2010. The plan was developed to meet the wider social and economic objectives of the County Council, and in particular the aim to make Lancashire a place where people can travel safely and easily. The Plan seeks to achieve seven key objectives:

- Reduce Road Casualties;
- Improve access to jobs and services;
- Improve air quality;
- Improve the condition of transport infrastructure;

Appendix D Planning Policy Background

- Reduce delays on journeys;
- Increase journeys by bus and rail; and
- Increase active travel.

The Local Transport Plan proposes a number of schemes for West Lancashire which will assist in meeting the LTP's objectives, outlined above. Such schemes include:

- A570 Ormskirk Bypass;
- Quality Bus Route between Wigan - Skelmersdale - Ormskirk - Southport;
- Cycling schemes in Skelmersdale and Ormskirk;
- Ormskirk traffic and car park management system; and
- Community Rail Improvements in West Lancashire.

Further details on the Lancashire Transport Plan can be found at [Lancashire Local Transport Plan](#)

Lancashire Climate Change Strategy (2009-2020)

Prepared by the Lancashire Climate Change Partnership, this strategy sets out a carbon dioxide reduction target of 30% by 2020, from a 1990 baseline. The strategy shows in detail where these savings are predicted to come from and how they can be achieved. Further details can be found on the Lancashire Climate Change Partnership's [website](#).

Local Plans and Strategies

West Lancashire Sustainable Community Strategy

The West Lancashire Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2017 was prepared by the West Lancashire Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) following a review of the Community Strategy 2003-2006. For full details and to view the Sustainable Community Strategy, visit the Council's [website](#). Its vision is as follows:

West Lancashire Local Strategic Partnership - Improving Quality of Life for All

We will do this by working together to be:

- The cleanest, safest, healthiest and greenest place in the country to live, work and enjoy;
- A place where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to contribute; and
- A place with excellent, easily accessible and sustainable jobs and services.

A number of objectives have been developed which include:

- To improve safety and ensure people feel safe;
- To build on the solid foundations of a strong voluntary and community sector and to develop community participation and pride in our neighbourhoods;
- To improve health outcomes, promote social wellbeing for communities and reduce health inequalities for everyone;
- To provide more appropriate and affordable housing to meet the needs of local people;

Appendix D Planning Policy Background

- To provide good quality services that are easily accessible to all;
- To contribute to sustainable development through the wise use of natural resources;
- To provide opportunities for young and older people to thrive;
- To create more and better quality training and job opportunities to get more people into work; and
- To protect and improve West Lancashire's environment including safeguarding our biodiversity.

Through the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Strategic Partnership will concentrate a small number of priority projects that will require partnership working, these include:

- Skelmersdale Vision;
- Market Towns Project;
- Safer Stronger Communities;
- Rural Economy Study;
- Vital Villages / Parish Plans;
- Inspire Project;
- Affordable Housing Strategy;
- Integrated Transport; and
- Energy Management.

