

West Lancashire Borough Council

Yew Tree Farm Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document Options Report

February 2014

WEST LANCASHIRE



LOCAL PLAN

Contents

Introduction	1
How to get involved	2
What are the options and how can you influence them?	3
Community Engagement	4
Vision & Objectives	6
Approach	8
Opportunities & Constraints	9
Design Concepts	25
Next Steps	33

Introduction

Introduction

West Lancashire Borough Council adopted the Local Plan 2012-2027 on 16th October 2013. The Local Plan sets out a vision and policies to help shape the development of the Borough and to form the basis on which planning decisions are made.

Local Plan Policy SP3 identifies land to the west of Burscough, known as Yew Tree Farm, to meet some of the Borough's housing and employment needs over the period to 2027. The policy also requires a masterplan to be produced to help shape the delivery of this site and to ensure the development is sustainable and well thought out.

This document is the first stage in the development of this masterplan and is known as the "Options" stage. It has been published for consultation in order to seek the views of the community, stakeholders and other interested parties. The Council welcomes comments on all aspects of the document and in particular the options, main issues and the responses to these issues.

Following consultation, all views will be considered and a "Preferred Option" selected for inclusion in the final masterplan before a further round of consultation before adoption later in 2014. Figure 1 sets out the process and timescales for the development of the Yew Tree Farm Masterplan.

The final document will be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which means that it will form part of the planning decision making framework when applications for development are submitted to the Council in respect of this site.

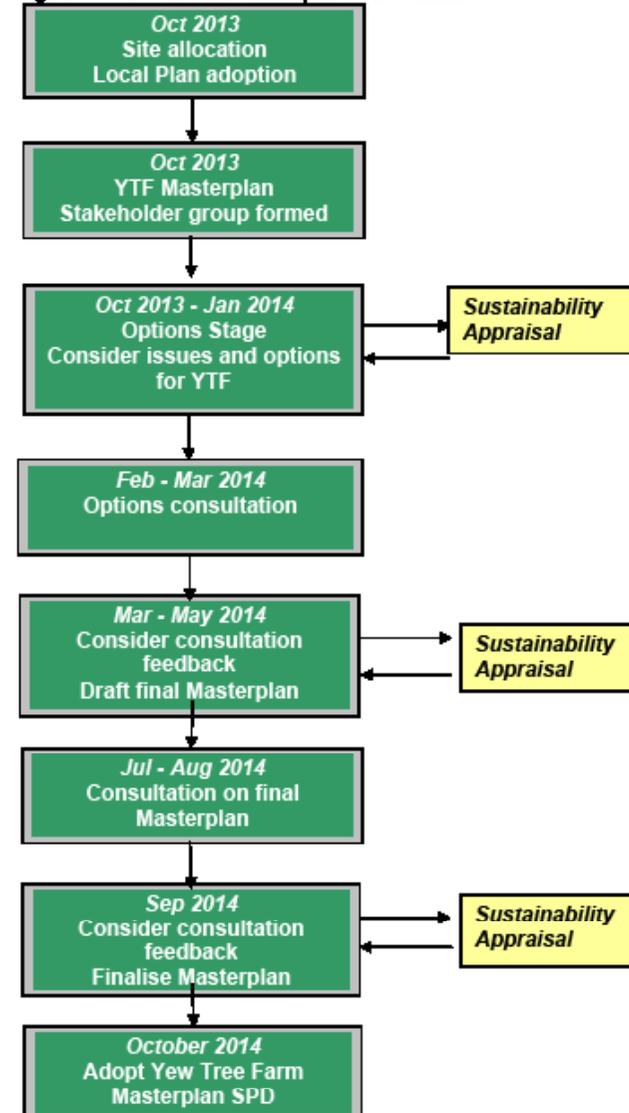
How To Get Involved

How to get involved

The Yew Tree Farm Options Document will be out for consultation from 6th February to 21st March 2014. During this time the Council will be engaging with the public face to face through exhibitions and providing publicity material to help to raise awareness of the consultation. In addition, officers will also be available during office hours to answer questions and queries. We would encourage anyone with an interest to come along to the exhibitions to have a chat with the Council Officers about what the options mean for Burscough and how your views can help shape the site.

Comments made throughout the options consultation will help to inform and shape the final masterplan, which will be subject to further public consultation and refinement as necessary before adoption in October 2014.

Figure 1: Yew Tree Farm Masterplan SPD Process



What are the 'options' and how can you influence them?

The Council is seeking views on the proposed 'options' set out within this document. When we refer to 'options' this means two things.

Firstly, we have identified all of the delivery requirements and constraints associated with the site such as how much housing is required and what this might include e.g. elderly accommodation, affordable housing. These are opportunities for the site to deliver well planned and needed local development. We have also considered issues such as highway access and impact of traffic on the network. These are considered to be constraints to the development which must be managed through the masterplan and subsequent planning applications. In considering how each of the opportunities and constraints could be managed through this development, in many circumstances a number of 'options' are presented as a response. Each option then includes an analysis of the possible advantages and disadvantages to this response.

Secondly, it is also important that the development, when completed, has a true sense of place, integrates well with Burscough and is a place that people will want to live and work. Therefore, the Council welcomes views on the 4 different design concepts for the site set out as plans in Section 8 of this document. Each design concept sets out why it may be an appropriate approach to the Yew Tree Farm site and includes a plan to show how the site may look.

Influencing the Final Masterplan

The Council is seeking views on all of the individual aspects of the options in addition to the individual design concepts themselves. It may be that the "Preferred Option" for the site is a hybrid of more than one concept. Therefore, it is important that views are expressed regarding individual matters just as much as each option as a whole.

A number of questions are included to help guide and focus your response but feedback is welcome on all points of interest.

It should be noted that some matters, such as highways and transport, will need to be balanced with technical information from the Highways Authority when moving forward towards the final masterplan. Also, some of the issues such as drainage will also be largely driven by technical assessments. Therefore, proposed questions relating to these topics are fairly limited. However, where issues such as open space can be delivered fairly flexibly, consultation views are particularly valuable as this will help the Council to understand what may be of most benefit to the community.

Community Engagement

Although the Council is responsible for producing the Yew Tree Farm Masterplan, it must be a document that addresses the requirements of the site and the wider settlement area and meets the needs of the site users and the Burscough community. Therefore, central to the production of this document is the involvement of those who have a stake in the site and the Burscough community.

Stakeholder Group

To assist this process a Stakeholder Group has been established and is made up of infrastructure providers, landowners, residents, local businesses, ward and local councillors, the parish council, third sector voluntary groups and other agencies such as the Environment Agency. Whilst the group is not a decision making body they will be engaged in each step of the development of the masterplan and their feedback as helped to shape the consultation process and the options identified.

Public Consultation

Wider public consultation to inform the preparation of the masterplan is required alongside the preparation of the document. The Council has programmed this in as follows:

Stage	Function	Date	Duration
Options	Non-statutory	6 February – 21 March 2014	6 weeks
Draft Masterplan	Statutory	July – August 2014	8 weeks
Final Masterplan	Statutory	November 2014	Notice only

Through the consultation, the following groups will be engaged:

- All Burscough residents
- All Burscough businesses / commercial properties
- Wider West Lancashire residents / businesses
- Councillors
- Parish Councils
- Community groups
- Burscough Schools
- Stakeholders, landowners, developers
- Infrastructure providers
- Statutory consultees Third Sector and hard to reach groups

The Council's Statement of Community Involvement stipulates the methods that should be used at each stage of preparation of an SPD and these will be borne in mind through the preparation and consultation of the masterplan. In addition, engagement with the Yew Tree Farm Stakeholder Group will also help to shape the specific approach to consultation on the masterplan. This will include the following methods:

Publicity	Engagement	Feedback
Leaflets	Burscough Schools	Following each consultation exercise, the comments received will be considered and fed into the production of the next stage. A feedback report will be produced after each consultation to summarise the comments received and state how the comments have informed development of the Masterplan. These feedback reports will be published on line, and made available at public libraries and council offices.
Press – advert/ release/ briefing	Exhibition / drop in sessions	
Website – Friendly URL Westlancs.gov.uk/YTF	Written representations / questionnaire	
Posters	Surveys / questionnaire	
Mail out	Engagement with the third sector and hard to reach groups	
Newsletter		

Vision & Objectives

The Local Plan Policy SP3 identifies a number of objectives required to be delivered through the development of the Yew Tree Farm site. This masterplan will reflect National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Guidance on extending settlements in order to deliver housing land supply and will seek to address these issues through development principles and requirements of any subsequent planning applications.

Vision

The Local Plan establishes a 'Vision' for Burscough:

Burscough in 2027 will have retained its role as an attractive Key Service Centre, providing a range of facilities for local people. 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.

The Council has considered the vision for Burscough along with the existing information that is available about the site and the wider settlement in producing a vision for the Yew Tree Farm site. In addition, work with the Stakeholder Group has enabled the Council to build up a picture of how the Yew Tree Farm site might develop and what is important to local people and those with a stake in the site and Burscough as a whole.

The Stakeholder Group were asked to share views about where Burscough may be going as a result of this development to help identify both the positive benefits and the threats of this development. The responses included the following:

- Threat of more congestion – need for development to assist in alleviating any increased pressures on the highway network.
- The need to strengthen what is already here to continue to make Burscough a good place to live for existing and new people.
- Fragile village centre needs protecting.
- Parking issues and access to services in the town centre – need to provide more parking and / or need to get people out of cars e.g. through cycleways, footpaths and public transport.

The proposed 'Vision' for Yew Tree Farm:

Yew Tree Farm will be delivered over the plan period having regard to the natural environment and the relationship between the mixed uses, the existing settlement and the site as a whole, even where land is safeguarded for future development needs.

The site in 2027 will have been developed to meet local needs, providing a good range of high quality housing and employment opportunities for all whilst ensuring any traffic issues and increases in traffic flows have been successfully managed through consistent Travel Planning and ongoing monitoring.

New local services on the site will complement Burscough's existing town centre which will continue to thrive. Access routes from Yew Tree Farm will be clear and defined, encouraging cycling and walking and increasing connectivity between the site, the centre and all transport links.

Objectives

In order to deliver the site to its maximum potential, the following objectives were outlined within policy SP3 of the Local Plan:

- Residential development for at least 500 new dwellings and safeguard land for up to 500 more dwellings in the future (post 2027);
- 10 ha of new employment land as an extension to the existing employment area and safeguard land for up to 10 ha more in the future (post 2027);

- Deliver a new town park for Burscough, with a Management Trust to co-ordinate and fund the maintenance of the park, alongside other Green Infrastructure improvements;
- A linear park/cycle route across the site to link with a wider Ormskirk to Burscough Linear Park/cycle route;
- A new Primary School and other local community facilities that cannot be appropriately accommodated elsewhere in the town;
- A decentralised energy network facility, including district heat and energy infrastructure, which will provide heat and electricity for the entire site and possibly beyond the site boundary;
- Appropriate highway access for the site on Liverpool road South and tollgate road together with a suitable internal road network;
- Traffic mitigation measures to improve traffic flow on Liverpool Road South and protect other local roads;
- A robust and implementable Travel plan for the entire site to address the provision of, and accessibility to, frequent public transport services and to improve pedestrian and cycling links with Burscough Town Centre, rail stations and Ormskirk;
- Measures to address the surface water drainage issues of the Yew Tree Farm site and in Burscough generally to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency, united Utilities and the Lead Local Flood Authority. For the development of Yew Tree Farm no surface water should be discharged into the public sewerage system;
- Financial contributions to improve health care facilities and other existing community facilities in the town; and
- Financial contributions to improve public transport services/facilities and to improve cycling and walking facilities.

The Yew Tree Farm Masterplan Options have been prepared through early engagement with key stakeholders and will be subject to wider consultation with the community. Details can be found on: www.westlincs.gov.uk/YTF

Approach

Although this site lies between the existing settlement area and employment area, its openness and location on the periphery of the urban settlement area suggests that a sensible approach to the site would be to consider the existing landscape and landscape features such as drainage features, trees and ponds and open aspects to the north through Higgins Lane, and use these as a starting point to development of the site. This will assist in creating a synergy between the existing town scape and the countryside and landscape beyond. Consideration should also be given to the characteristics of Burscough and the local urban fabric in order to create a development with a sense of place.

Furthermore, although only part of the site will be required to meet development needs in this plan period, it is important that the entire site is considered through the masterplanning process. This will ensure that, as each phase comes forward, regard is had to the entire site in order to avoid piece meal development or insufficient infrastructure provision in future years. Therefore the entire site must be masterplanned before the land to be safeguarded is identified.

Finally, it is vital that the sustainability impacts of this masterplan are fully considered and therefore a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) will be carried out for the 'options' stage and 'final' stage of the masterplan. The document will also be subject to Habitat Regulations Assessment given the proximity of the site to Martin Mere and the populations of feeding birds in the locality.

Opportunities & Constraints

Development requirements

The allocation of the Yew Tree Farm site to meet development needs within the current Local Plan period to 2027 and beyond presents an opportunity to create a high quality and sustainable development that sits well within the existing settlement area of Burscough. The development requirements include land for 500 dwellings, 10ha of employment, with the remainder of the site to be safeguarded for future housing and employment needs.

Employment

The site is required, through planning policy SP3, to deliver 10ha of employment land as an extension of the existing employment area. This gives an indication where the most appropriate location for employment uses would be and this was supported by the views of the Stakeholder Group who generally agreed that the most logical location for employment would be towards the north-west corner of the site.

In terms of employment types, policy SP3 does not stipulate a particular type of employment use that would be appropriate. However, there may be potential for some of the land to be designated for live / work units to encourage flexible working practices. This means the development that would be delivered in these areas of the site could include dual use residential and commercial buildings and could potentially be delivered within a buffer zone which acts as an interface between the employment and residential uses.

The live / work approach is in line with the requirements of the NPPF, paragraph 21 which requires that councils should 'facilitate flexible working practices, such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit'.

The Council considers that it should remain flexible towards the type of employment uses on the site to ensure delivery of this land takes place. However, there is scope for the masterplan to encourage certain types of uses if it is considered that these could boost the employment mix and act as a catalyst to development.

Where on the site could the employment uses be delivered and why is this the best location for this use?

Could the masterplan identify land to be delivered for live / work units and if so, where could this be located?

Are there any particular types of business that the masterplan should encourage on the site?

Residential Mix

The housing aspect of the development will need to include a good mix of housing types to meet all local needs, including 35% affordable and up to 20% to meet the needs of older persons. Cross over between the two types of provision may be acceptable subject to the needs at the time of development i.e. some of the affordable housing element may also count toward meeting the provision for the elderly. These requirements are in accordance with policies SP3, RS1 and RS2 of the Local Plan.

The precise make up of how the affordable housing element will be delivered is likely to be determined at the time of a planning application due to the changing nature of affordable housing and the fluctuations in local need. However, it is envisaged that the masterplan will give a clear direction about where the elderly accommodation could be delivered on the site so that it is located in the most convenient position within the site. This is likely to be close to the A59 to ensure that access to the main facilities and key transport links are well within reach.

Feedback from the Stakeholder Group regarding location and type of housing mix included some of the following views:

- Housing for older people should as far as possible be provided through Lifetime Homes, i.e. housing capable of being adapted to meet needs of older people rather than housing for specific levels of care needs
- Housing for older people should be within one area of the site and in different formats such as bungalows or apartments and an extra care facility so that as older persons needs change they do not need to move away from an area to have these needs met.
- Some affordable housing should be provided in early phases of the development to meet existing need

- The tenure mix should avoid both segregation of tenures and pepper-potting. An innovative mix between these extremes should be found

Other uses

The site is also required to deliver, potentially a new primary school and any other community facilities such as a local retail store, library or health centre that cannot be delivered in the existing town centre. Other infrastructure required includes highways network improvements, sustainable transport and access improvements, open space and Linear Park and a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS).

How should elderly and affordable housing provision be delivered within the site and why is this the best approach?

Topography

The sites topography is broadly flat with the land slightly falling away to the north where the land naturally drains to. The sites topography is typical of the West Lancashire landscape which is characterised by flat, low-lying areas intercepted by a network of drains which ensure the land can be farmed. There are no areas of the site where the existing topography will preclude development.

Existing Land Uses and Buildings

The site is predominantly open land, the majority of which is or has been in agricultural use. The main built development on the site is a collection of redundant and derelict buildings to the north east of the site, just set back from the Liverpool Road frontage.

The public right of way which runs from the south east to the north west of the site, connecting Liverpool Road with Higgins Lane, has encouraged public use of parts of the site for access and recreation.

Context and Character

Yew Tree Farm is located to the west of Burscough, one of West Lancashire's Key Service Centres. The site lies between the Burscough Industrial Estate and the residential settlement area and is currently characterised by open fields, mainly used for agricultural purposes, with the only built development being the derelict buildings on the site.

Burscough itself is historically an agricultural area which is visible from the vast areas of agricultural land that surround the settlement and the collections of farmsteads which appear as small clusters across the landscape. Burscough began as agricultural village and then developed as an industrial centre as a result of the construction of the Leeds to Liverpool Canal, and the two rail lines during the mid 19th Century, all of which pass through the settlement.

The residential development, which was primarily clustered around the centre, has radiated out and travelled mainly south in a linear pattern along Liverpool Road due to the presence of the Southport – Manchester rail line. This characteristic ribbon residential development bounds the site to the east and south and fronts onto Liverpool Road. Burscough is also characterised by clusters of development which have been built at varying times over the course of Burscough's history

When asked what makes Burscough distinctive, the response from local stakeholders cited the following:

- Transport links, although lack of investment in infrastructure has led to capacity issues
- Post-war housing opportunities and population increase
- Industrial estate – employment opportunity
- Military heritage – former airfield to the west of the Yew Tree Farm Site
- Semi-rural character
- Village centre feel – friendly neighbourhoods
- Leisure opportunities - Canal, Martin Mere, rail, cycle
- Drainage infrastructure issues
- Incremental development without strategic overview or masterplan
- Railway and canal act as physical constraints to development

New development provides an opportunity to support the existing town centre and to contribute to creating a built environment that reflects the Burscough context.

Highway Network

Current Position

Burscough is located on the A59 which connects Liverpool through to Preston and beyond. The road generally serves local traffic movements between the Borough's settlements but does accommodate some strategic traffic movement. However, the majority of the strategic traffic flows on the motorway network which frames the Borough and includes the M58 to the south and the M6 to the east. The A59 is, in parts, dual and single carriageway and suffers from congestion as it passes through the Borough's main settlements (Ormskirk and Burscough).

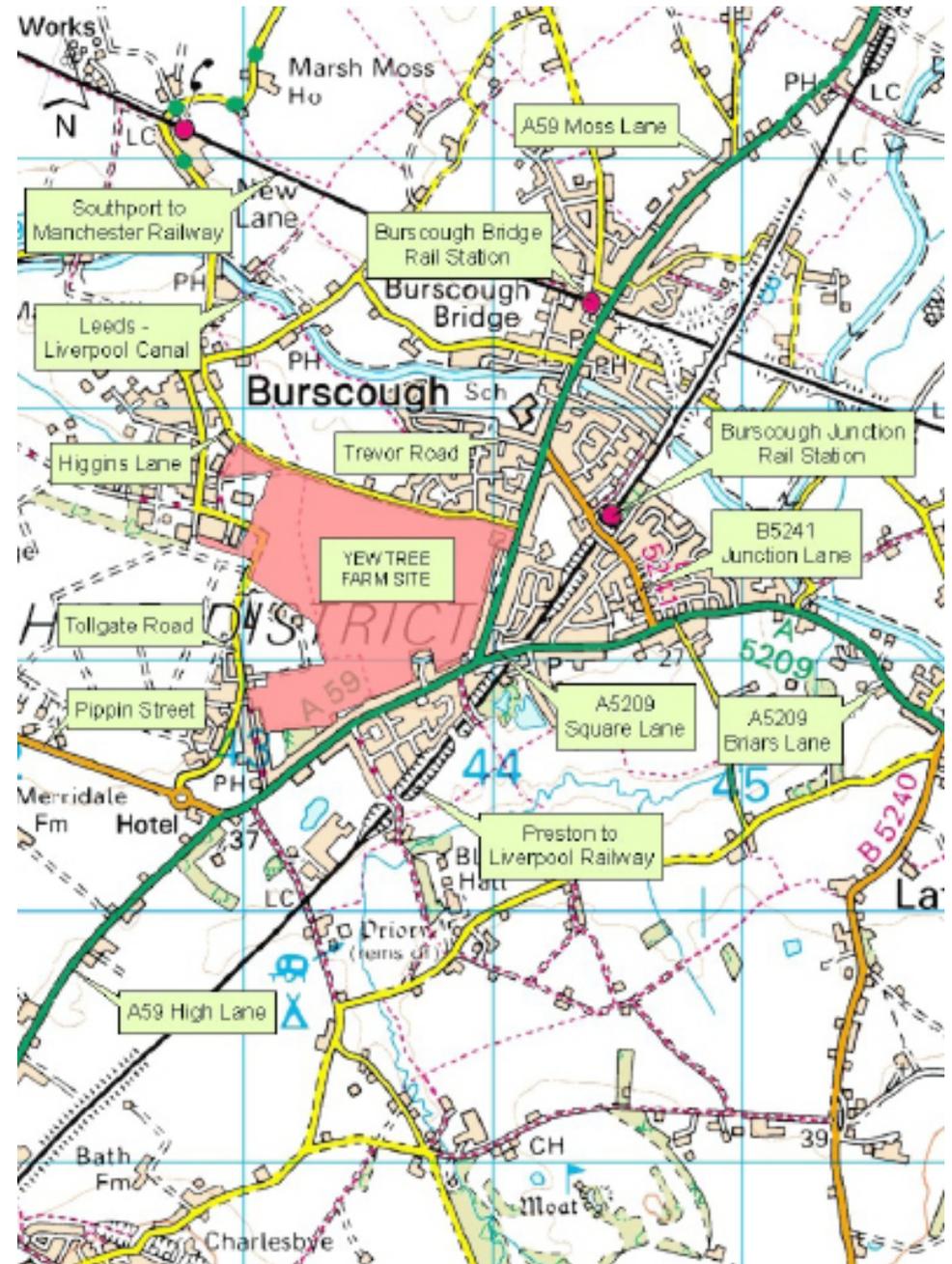


Figure 2: Burscough Road Network. Extract from CBO Ltd Transport Report Jan 2013

Other key roads connecting Burscough are the A5209, which links the settlement to the east and junction 27 of the M6 and the B5242 which connects Burscough with Southport to the west. Both roads are single carriageway routes with lower capacity than the A59.

Within the settlement, Junction Lane provides a link between the A59 and the A5209. This link is narrow with one way traffic operation over the rail line (Liverpool – Preston). To the north of the Yew Tree Farm site is Higgins Lane, a single carriageway which is heavily traffic calmed in order to restrict HGVs accessing Burscough Industrial Estate from this route. Tollgate Road is the final route bounding the site (along with the A59 and Higgins Lane) and primarily serves the Industrial Estate. Tollgate Road is linked to the A59 via Pippin Street (B5242) and a 3 arm roundabout.

Traffic in Burscough suffers, like many small towns, from congestion at peak times and where pinch points occur on the network. Peak time congestion results in queuing along the A59 at the junctions with Junction Lane (B5241), Square Lane (A5209) and Pippin Street (B5242). Most pinch points are due to badly functioning junctions resulting in unnecessary delay or blockages caused by parked vehicles. However, the existing evidence supporting the Yew Tree Farm site allocation confirms that the flow of traffic along the A59 is acceptable and that the afore mentioned pinch points should be the focus of improvement to ensure that the development at Yew Tree Farm does not worsen and, where possible, alleviates the highway conditions. In particular, the following junctions should be considered:

- Pippin Street and the A59 – Priority controlled T-Junction (soon to be upgraded to a roundabout).
- The A59 and Square Lane – Priority controlled T-junction
- The A59 and Higgins Lane – Priority controlled T-junction
- The A59, Junction Lane, Trevor Road – Signalled junction
- Burscough Town Centre – Two mini roundabouts

In addition to possible improvements to the above junctions, other pinch points include parked vehicles along the A59. These can include cars during the school drop off at Lordsgate Lane Primary School, buses or service vehicles.

The Stakeholder Group discussed a number of concerns associated with the Yew Tree Farm site development and the impacts on highways and raised the following points that should be addressed through the masterplanning:

- Some considered that no new traffic access to the A59 should be allowed, given existing problems of congestion. However, others suggested this was not possible but that accesses onto the A59 could be limited.
- Improvements would need to be made to the pinch point junctions along the A59.
- It was considered important by some to keep the employment and residential development separate so that the traffic for each may be kept separate.
- A through road would need to be carefully designed to avoid ‘rat running’.

What will the masterplan include?

Whilst the masterplan is unlikely to establish all of the finer detail relating to the highways improvements such as specific drawings of junction layouts, it will indicate the following principles:

- The number of primary access points to the site and locations
- The strategic road layout but not the detailed road network within the site
- Which junctions and other points must be addressed and improved through the planning application stage
- Any other specific travel planning requirements that must be borne in mind from the outset of the development

Traffic congestion can occur on the A59, for a number of reasons. What measures could help to keep the flow of traffic going?

Access – Vehicular

The site is bounded by an existing road network which suggests it can be accessed from a number of points. This is beneficial to the site and allows permeability and through routes to be easily incorporated into the site. The below table sets out the main routes around the site where access could be taken from and key point.

Road and features	Options	Possible advantages	Possible disadvantages
Liverpool Road (A59). Key route through the Borough, runs along the east and south of the site. Provides main links to other settlements, surrounding regional towns and cities and the motorway network.	1. Access point to be taken from Liverpool Road at the north east point of the site near to Higgins Lane (where existing Yew Tree Farm buildings are)	Allows traffic to and from the site to quickly join the main highway network.	Increases the amount of traffic on the A59 which already suffers congestion at pinch points
		Provides a focal access point to the development on the main route assisting with the integration of Bur-scough.	

	2. Main access into the site to be taken through Meadowbrook by the removal of the property at Number 1 Meadowbrook.	Provides for additional accesses to the site as a whole. Increases the sites permeability. Reduces the reliance on a single primary access to the site which may cause queuing at peak times.	Junction size may not be capable of supporting traffic flows from entire site i.e. 500+ units
		Allows for more than one parcel of land to be developed in the first instance due to access.	Traffic will need to pass through the remainder of Meadowbrook to access the site and this is currently a quiet cul-de-sac. Increased traffic movements may lead to noise and other nuisance.
	3. Access into the site to be taken through Meadowbrook (as above) but only to allow vehicular access to a portion of the site i.e. the level of development that could be accommodated at a junction of this size.	Reduces reliance on one key access to the site for some of the development. Allows for more than one parcel of land to be developed in the first instance due to access.	Significant traffic will still need to pass through the currently quiet cul-de-sac.

Higgins Lane bounds the north of the site and connects Liverpool Road (A59) with New Lane and Southport and the Northern Parishes. Former country lane which has been heavily traffic calmed to prevent use by HGV traffic accessing the employment area.	1. Create one or more accesses into the site along the lane to serve small parcels of development.	Allows for frontage onto Higgins Lane so the development does not become entirely inward looking.	Increased cul-de-sac development does not lend itself to a particularly well planned overall development with good permeability and legibility.
	2. Block through access for vehicular traffic to Higgins Lane from Liverpool Road and divert traffic through the site.	Encourages HGV and other through traffic away from Higgins Lane and returns it to its more rural country lane status.	May cause delay for existing Higgins Lane residents, dependent upon the location of the new access points
	3. No vehicular access to Higgins Lane and existing access remains as is.	Limited impact on residents of Higgins Lane as the position remains the same.	No connectivity between the new development and Higgins Lane and permeability to the north becomes limited.
	4. Vehicular access to the site from Higgins Lane but no closure of Higgins Lane for through traffic	Maximises permeability of the site for vehicular traffic from the north	Could result in rat running via Higgins Lane.

Tollgate Road is a single carriageway access route to the industrial estate. It connects with Pippin Street to the south and bounds the west of the site.	1. One access to the site taken furthest north on Tollgate Road and north of Tollgate Crescent.	Provides a good through route from A59 and HGV access to the northern portion of the industrial area.	HGV traffic through the site could be an issue for the new development in terms of route management and negative impacts.
	2. One access to the site south of Tollgate Crescent and just north of Lordsgate Lane.	Could potentially encourage traffic to travel through the site rather than south on the A59 where vehicles are heading towards Southport. Thus reducing traffic on the A59.	As above.
	3. Two accesses to the site as set out above.	Provides the greatest permeability to the site for traffic moving through the employment area.	Costly to deliver and may not be required.
	4. No through access to the site, only access to localised uses e.g. further employment development on this side of the site.	Keeps employment and residential traffic separate.	Creates a large cul-de-sac feel to development types and uses on the east of the site. Is not permeable.

Accessibility – Walking and Cycling

The Yew Tree Farm site is located adjacent to one of the Borough's Key Service Centres and the topography of the site and surrounding area is broadly flat. These characteristics are conducive to encouraging walking and cycling.

One of the main requirements for the development is to deliver the Linear Park which will link Ormskirk (via Grove Farm) to the south and the Burscough Town Centre to the north. There are also a number of opportunities for cycling and walking links within the site to connect to broader leisure opportunities such as existing and planned cycle links to the canal and Martin Mere.

The site has one existing public right of way which enters the development area from the A59 to the south east, passes through the site before travelling north across Higgins Lane and to the land beyond.

Through discussion with the Stakeholder Group the Council considers it important to support improvements to the existing public realm which links the site to the centre of Burscough. This would encourage greater usage of cycling and walking over the car, in order to access the local facilities. This is essential to ensure the development is sustainable and to overcome the current issues associated with the existing parking provision in the town centre.

Equally there is support from the Council and the Stakeholder Group to deliver a Linear Park link with Ormskirk to the south of the site and Burscough and that the Yew tree farm development would be instrumental in carrying this link through to Burscough's Town Centre.

It is proposed that both the requirement and broad route of the Linear Park should be established within the masterplan and that the improvement of the public realm links from the north east of the site along Liverpool Road to the centre of Burscough, should be secured as a key principle within the masterplan.

A number of options for the Linear Park route have been presented in the various options in Section 8.

Is there a favourable route for the Linear Park and cycleways to travel through the site and beyond to ensure the best connectivity with the centre of Burscough, transport links, Ormskirk and leisure opportunities?

How can we improve walking and cycling facilities in the rest of Burscough, to help encourage people to walk and cycle?

Accessibility - Public Transport

Rail

The Yew Tree Farm site is within walking distance (approximately 15-20 minutes dependent on part of the site) of two train stations linking the settlement with Ormskirk (Liverpool), Preston, Southport and Manchester. Frequency of service on the Southport – Manchester line is generally every 30 minutes. However, the frequency of the service to Ormskirk and Preston is less than hourly.

The Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and Merseytravel are working together to investigate the potential to extend the electrification of the Ormskirk line to Burscough, thus increasing the frequency of services that connect to Burscough. Whilst it is unlikely that this development will directly deliver this improvement, the site allocation and increased population supports the business case for such a proposal.

However, through the Stakeholder Group, the issue with the capacity of the parking facilities at both Burscough Bridge and Bruscoug Junction stations was raised. Therefore, links for walking and cycling to both stations from the site must be maximised and made as short and safe as possible.

Bus

A number of bus routes, approximately 5 in total excluding school bus services, run from Burscough to other areas of the Borough and outlying areas such as Preston. The frequency of the services run from every 30 minutes on the 2a to only market day services operating on a Thursday and Saturday. There are four bus stops located along Liverpool Road South as it bounds the site and two on Higgins Lane to the north of the site.

Currently no bus routes service the industrial estate which would be beneficial in terms of sustainable transport links to employment.

Feedback from Lancashire County Council through the Stakeholder Group was that it would be likely that there would not be enough demand to take public transport through the residential area and to the employment area beyond. Therefore, in the first instance, whilst the site is developed and populated, it would be necessary to make walking links to the bus stops on the periphery of the site as short and attractive as possible. This includes making them safe and well lit. This will ensure the sustainability of existing bus services and may lead to demand for increased provision at some point in the future.

Drainage

The drainage network in Burscough suffers capacity issues as does the Waste Water Treatment Works at New Lane which treats the waste water for Burscough, most of Ormskirk and some of the outlying areas.

United Utilities have confirmed that they are in the process of presenting a business case to make improvements to the waste water treatment works in order to secure funding for this. However, until this is confirmed, both United Utilities and the key land promoter of Yew Tree Farm have confirmed that the development of the Yew Tree Farm site can include measures to manage additional waste water flows to the treatment works by offsetting them through removal of surface water from the system which currently causes issues during periods of heavy rainfall. A solution for this has been proposed and includes removing the surface water from the system which serves the dwellings on Lordgate Lane (37 properties) and treating this onsite through SuDS. In addition, the site must also manage and deal with its own surface water through the onsite SuDS.

This is likely to consist of a network of drains and culverts, including some of those in existence and new ones to connect to the newly developed parcels of land within the site. Attenuation ponds and swales would be used to move water through the network, holding it back where required, ensuring that the surface water runoff from the site when developed, is equivalent to the site before development has taken place.

The Stakeholder Group have expressed a number of concerns regarding drainage, most notably, the impact the site may have on the local culverts and drains downstream which are already at capacity, particularly where pinch points occur under the rail line

Lancashire County Council (LCC) is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and as such is responsible for managing flood risk in the County. From April 2014 they will need to approve all drainage systems and then adopt them. Therefore, they will need to ensure schemes meet their standards and are effective and efficient. As the LLFA they are currently working on some baseline evidence which will help to inform the amount of land take required within the site in order to provide enough storage capacity for the sites surface water drainage needs and to meet the needs of the solution required to take existing surface water out of the system.

This evidence will be fed into the final masterplan but broadly indicates that the existing network should be improved and maintained as recent site visits have shown that there are a number of unmanaged and blocked drains on site. The evidence also concluded that it would be sensible to make use of the existing topography of the site and concentrate the key drainages features in the north west corner of the site where the land naturally drains too.

The masterplan is likely to require that a SuDS scheme is designed for the entire site along side the initial phase of development and that each subsequent phase must link into this scheme to ensure the impact of the site as a whole is planned for. It is likely that this will be the most efficient and economic solution.

Energy and Carbon Reduction

Policy SP3 encourages a decentralised energy network on the site due to the carbon reduction and future cost and energy security benefits this could potentially offer.

At this stage of the masterplanning process there remains no clear mechanism regarding delivery of such a network. However, as this technology and practices gathers momentum it is hoped that, ahead of any planning application, further support is available from the Department of Climate Change to assist in securing the delivery of a decentralised energy network.

Policy EN1 of the Local Plan requires development to be designed with carbon reduction in mind. In order to provide a measurable target for the reduction required, the Code for Sustainable Homes is used as the national described standard for residential dwellings and BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is referenced in relation to the standards required for commercial development. These standards will be incorporated into the final masterplan as a requirement for the development on the Yew Tree Farm site.

Landscape and Trees

The most prominent landscape features within the site boundary are the drainage network, the hedgerows, a couple of small pond / drainage features and some limited patches of trees. It would be beneficial to work with the existing features and to incorporate these, where possible, into the new site layout to ensure there is a strong synergy between the existing natural landscape and the new development.

Given the topography of the site is fairly flat and low lying and the site is surrounded by residential and industrial development to the south east and west, the main area which offers views into the site is the northern boundary along Higgins Lane. Therefore, this should be factored into the development of the masterplan and treatment of this aspect should be given careful thought.

The existing built development at Yew Tree Farm in the north east corner of the site offers an opportunity as a gateway to the site given it is the only portion of the site exposed at Liverpool Road. The treatment of this aspect of the site should be factored into the final masterplan.

Although the site is likely to come forward in phases within this plan period and beyond (after 2027), it would be helpful if a masterplan could be delivered to ensure the approach to landscaping is holistic and inclusive and includes a strategic approach to planting to ensure it is sustainable.

Ecology

Martin Mere at Burscough is one of the largest and most important of the biodiversity sites in West Lancashire and is a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Special Protection Area (SPA), and a Ramsar site. Other small sites of local importance can also be found in and around Burscough including, Abbey Lane Brick Pits and Platts Lane Pits.

The RSPB identifies a large area to the north and west within 1km of the proposed site as sensitive habitat for pink-footed geese and whooper swans. The site currently supports arable farmland which appears to meet the basic habitat requirements of wintering pink-footed geese and whooper swans. The existing industrial area does not meet the basic habitat requirements for qualifying bird species. However, redevelopment of the existing site could result in noise and/ or visual disturbance to wintering birds using the adjacent sensitive area.

Whilst Yew Tree Farm is not currently identified as supporting habitat for the SPA/ Ramsar sites, this will need to be monitored to ensure that appropriate mitigation can be put in place in the event the site does become supporting habitat.

There is also a single pond within the site which was identified as having average potential for Great Crested Newts and the remnant farm buildings may offer some minor potential for bats, albeit that their presence has so far not been identified through existing survey work.

Given the dynamic nature of ecology and ecological issues, the masterplan is unable to identify exact and current ecological matters and specific mitigation measures. This would be inappropriate given the likely timeframe for the delivery of this development.

A Habitats Regulation Assessment is being carried out alongside the masterplan, the findings of which will be included within the masterplan and will establish the principles that all planning applications must adhere to as development comes forward.

Heritage

The impact of development on the setting of the two Grade II Listed Buildings, located on the boundary of the site, must be considered through the masterplanning process. Both are 2 storey former farmhouses which have now been converted into residential dwellings. Mill Dam Lane End Farmhouse is an early to mid eighteenth century, brown brick construction with a slate roof. Yew Tree House was constructed circa 1800's of a brown brick Flemish bond again under a slate roof.

Creating a Sustainable Community

Feedback through the Stakeholder Group and the vision for the Yew Tree Farm site indicates a requirement for this development to support and encourage the existing town centre to ensure it remains a viable place for shopping, leisure and services. This could be achieved through ensuring that links and routes for pedestrians and cyclists are clearly defined and that public transport links to the centre are available for those who require transport.

However, where there is a need for some onsite facilities it is important that they are required to meet that local need and do not undermine the existing facilities already located in Burscough. Through consultation with the Stakeholder Group and in considering the existing site evidence, the following uses must be considered for both on and off site delivery as a result of this development:

- Education

- Community facilities such as library and information services, possible youth services
- Health facilities
- Local convenience retail

Education

LCC as the Education Authority have provided a high level analysis of the impacts of the site on both primary and secondary education provision. The analysis is clear that the assessment is a snapshot in time and may not be accurate as time progresses given the fairly lengthy life span of the delivery of the site (2015-2027). Therefore, whilst the comments and assumptions have been made at this stage to give an indication, this may change in future.

Primary Provision

The assessment focussed on the area of Burscough and included the following schools:

Burscough Lordsgate Township C of E Primary School

St John's Catholic Primary School

Burscough Village Primary School

Burscough Bridge St John's C of E Primary School

Burscough Bridge Methodist Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ormskirk Lathom Park C of E Primary School

The findings showed the following headlines:

Projections to 2018 – 45 surplus places

Projections to 2023 – 19 surplus places

Projections to 2028 – shortfall of 37 places.

Given the trigger for a primary provision shortfall is relatively minor and unlikely to occur until later in the plan period, LCC have indicated that it would be preferable to meet this demand to improvement of existing provision through a developer contribution to the sum of approximately £440,000.

Beyond 2027 the projections must be treated with extreme caution. However, they indicate that there may be a requirement at this stage for approximately 190 school places. If this was to occur then it is likely that LCC would seek a school site for a 210 place 1 form entry primary school in addition to the financial contributions detailed in the LCC Education Contribution Methodology.

Therefore, the latest available evidence suggests that a new primary school will not be needed within the site and that if it is needed to support future growth, this land could be set aside within the part of the development that is to be safeguarded for future use.

Secondary Provision

There is only one secondary school in Burscough (Burscough Priory Science College) and the findings of the education projections showed the following headlines:

Projections to 2018 – shortfall of 5 places

Projections to 2023 – shortfall of 57 places

Projections to 2028 – shortfall of 6 places

Therefore, this shortfall must be met through improved facilities at the existing school and developer contributions would need to support this to the amount of approximately £770,000.

Given the uncertainty and the potential for these requirements to change through birth and migration rate fluctuations, this will need to be assessed at the time of planning applications and then secured through planning obligations.

Community Facilities

Through the infrastructure planning work that supported the Local Plan and further discussion with the Stakeholder Group, it remains apparent that the main need for new community facilities is an improved library and potentially additional youth services.

The existing library on Mill Lane is considered inadequate due to its size. However, it would be preferable for such a facility to remain within the town centre rather than relocating to the Yew Tree Farm site. Therefore, at this time, whilst this is an identified need that could be improved through the delivery of development and planning contributions such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or Section 106 Obligations, there is no identified solution in terms of a vacant building or location. This will require further investigation as the masterplan progresses to the “Preferred Option” stage.

A new and improved library could be supported through new development. Where and how should this be delivered?

In terms of youth facilities, the Grove Centre located next to the train station in the town centre provides a number of services and activities for children aged 8-13 years. Given the distance from the Yew Tree Farm site to the centre and the size of the site, there could be a genuine demand for some onsite facilities to meet the needs of youth engagement. This could be located in a multifunctional building that may be used for other activities during various times, for example a building that could be used by the older population within the site and locality.

Is there demand locally for additional youth community facilities?

Health

The main health provision for Burscough is located in the town centre at the Burscough Health Centre and Lathom House Surgery and are currently at capacity in terms of patient lists. The impact of the development at Yew Tree Farm and subsequent population increase is likely to lead to the requirement of 1 additional GP to serve the settlement area.

There are currently 2 options presented as possible solutions to meet this need:

Option 1 – Expansion of existing practice / health centre.

In order to accommodate the additional GP, both the premises must be capable of expansion and the practice itself must be willing to expand. There is no scope for expansion physically at Lathom House Surgery although there may be potential at the Burscough Health Centre. This is currently being investigated by the health authorities.

Option 2 – Operation of a branch surgery on the site or existing building in Burscough.

This would involve an existing GP, either in Burscough or elsewhere in the Borough, expanding their practice and operating a surgery out of either an existing premises in Burscough or a new building located on the Yew Tree Farm site. The main benefits of this option are that the branch surgery could be built up gradually alongside the increase in population. In addition there is potential for this option to make use of a multifunctional building that may be developed within the site to serve other community uses.

Other Uses

Whilst there are no explicit guidelines relating to other uses required on the site, either through Policy SP3 or evidence base work to support the Local Plan, it is likely that a local convenience retail store would be needed to serve a site of this size, particularly

Open space

Emerging guidance on open space and the most up to date evidence suggests that approximately 7ha of open space would be required on a site the size of Yew Tree Farm. Current best practice and support from the Stakeholder Holder group suggests that the open space provision should be as multi functional as possible. This means that any semi natural open space could have a multi use for SuDS, Linear Park or possible play facilities.

The site is required to deliver open space to meet local needs which were identified in the last Open Space Study (2008). At this time, a short fall in formal parks, sports and play provision was identified. In addition, the Yew Tree Farm site must ensure the link with Ormskirk and on to Burscough Town Centre is secured through the delivery of a Linear Park.

The Council wishes to ensure that the site delivers open space that is genuinely required for the area and welcomes views and feedback on this matter as the options stage of the masterplan.

Should the site deliver new sports facilities or should the development contribute financially to the improvement of existing offsite sports facilities within Burscough?

What type of open space provision should be delivered onsite?

Design Layout and Principles

The design concepts set out in Section 8 of this options document are effectively a starting point for the principle of the site. The masterplan is unlikely to set out specific design requirements which could potentially prove to be un-flexible given the long period of time the site will be delivered over.

However, it will be important for the masterplan to refer to established design guides such as Building for Life 12 which could provide a useful framework to ensure the overall design and finish of the site is to a high quality and standard.

In addition, the final masterplan could include a Design Code that all development, regardless of phase, must have regard to. This will assist in providing continuity on the site and ensuring that matters such as safety and security, public realm and the creation of strong neighbourhoods is central to the development

Residential Density

The density of the residential development will need to be at least 30 dwellings per hectare, in accordance with Policy RS1 of the Local Plan and in order to ensure that the development makes the most sustainable use of the land.

Residential Amenity

The Yew Tree Farm site is surrounded on the south and east (Liverpool Road) and partially to the north (Higgins Lane) by existing residential development. The masterplan will need to consider the residential amenity of both existing and new residents through the impacts of noise, vibration (mainly through construction), air quality and missed uses.

How should the residential amenity of the existing Burscough residents and those in the new development be protected? E.g. noise concerns during construction, buffer zones between conflicting uses.

Phasing and Safeguarding

The Local Plan requires that enough land be brought forward within this Local Plan period (2012-2027) to deliver 500 homes and 10ha of employment land, plus associated infrastructure. The delivery of this land is likely to be over phased periods with established milestones. These milestones are could link to the requirement of key infrastructure delivery such as the onsite SuDS or strategic road layout. Such milestones will need to be identified within the next draft of the masterplan once the “Preferred Option” has been identified.

In addition, the remaining safeguarded portion of the site i.e. the land which will be set aside for future development needs, will need to be established once the “Preferred Option” has been identified and the broad strategic layout of the site becomes clearer.

A number of views regarding the safeguarding of land on the site have been expressed through the Stakeholder Group, including the need to consider the ongoing use of land which is safeguarded for agricultural purposes.

How should the site be phased and in which part of the site should development start?

The entire site is not required within this plan period. Which part of the site should be safeguarded for future use?

Design Concepts

The following four options have been based on the requirements and objectives of Policy SP3 and reflect a number of design concepts that have been used to model the site. They also reflect the evidence about the Yew Tree Farm site and the feedback from the Stakeholder Group about how the site might develop to resolve issues and make the most of the site's opportunities.

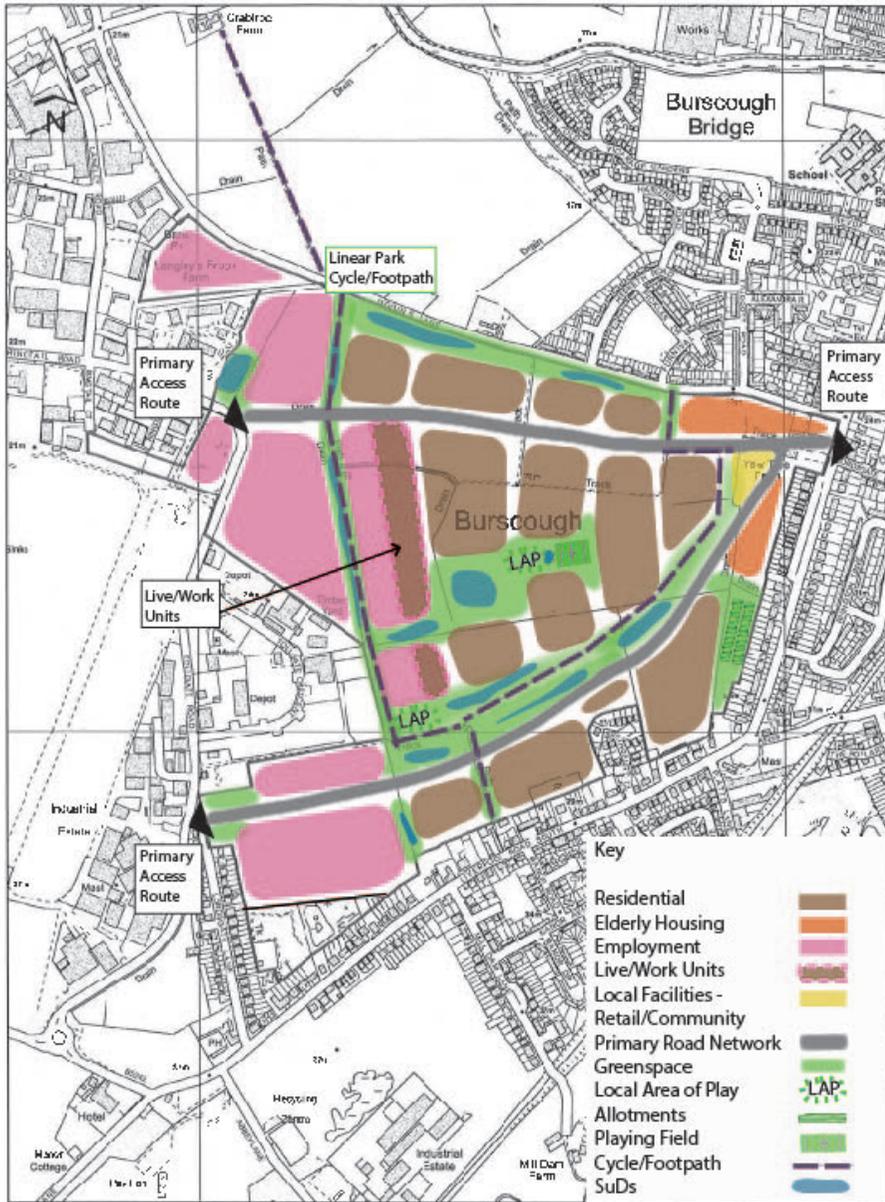
Option 1 - Radial

This allows for the site to be developed in a radial pattern, starting with the focus in the north east corner of the site closest to the town centre and radiating out towards the western side of the site.

The following features are included in this option:

- Development density is highest in the north east corner to reflect the existing urban residential development along Liverpool Road and the Truscott Estate, picking up on the immediate existing local character.
- The development gradually radiates out towards the centre of the site, reducing in density as it draws closer to the urban edge and the countryside buffer between the employment and housing uses.
- Elderly housing needs would be met closest to the existing settlement where some facilities can support independent living and access to the town centre and transport links is most convenient.
- Sustainable drainage features are most prominent in the north-west corner of the site where the site naturally drains to.

- The road network and layout includes 3 primary access points from Liverpool Road in the north east corner of the site and out to Tollgate road north and south on the western perimeter of the site.
- No access through to Higgins Lane from the site is incorporated in this concept and the primary internal road layout curves through the site to help define the radial design.
- The provision of open space includes a buffer zone with pedestrian and cycle access, a large semi natural Linear Park which sweeps through the site along the curve of the spine road, local play area and sports pitches in the centre of the site and allotments provision.
- The existing footpath is retained through the site.
- Live / Work units are encouraged as a buffer zone between the employment and housing areas to limit any impacts between the two.
- Local facilities including retail and potential community uses are concentrated in the north east corner of the site where development density is highest.



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Potential Pros	Potential Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows phasing of development to occur naturally through the site, east to west Good accessibility for public transport for the highest concentration of development Reflects the local context and maintains urban development on the east with lower density development towards the buffer and beyond the employment area, the countryside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertainty for residents about later phases Make take longer to deliver some key objectives (eg through road, Linear Park) Initial additional traffic congestion from employment land may not be taken account of is through road not delivered Potentially could delay linkages to the south west of the site

Option 2 – Central Focus

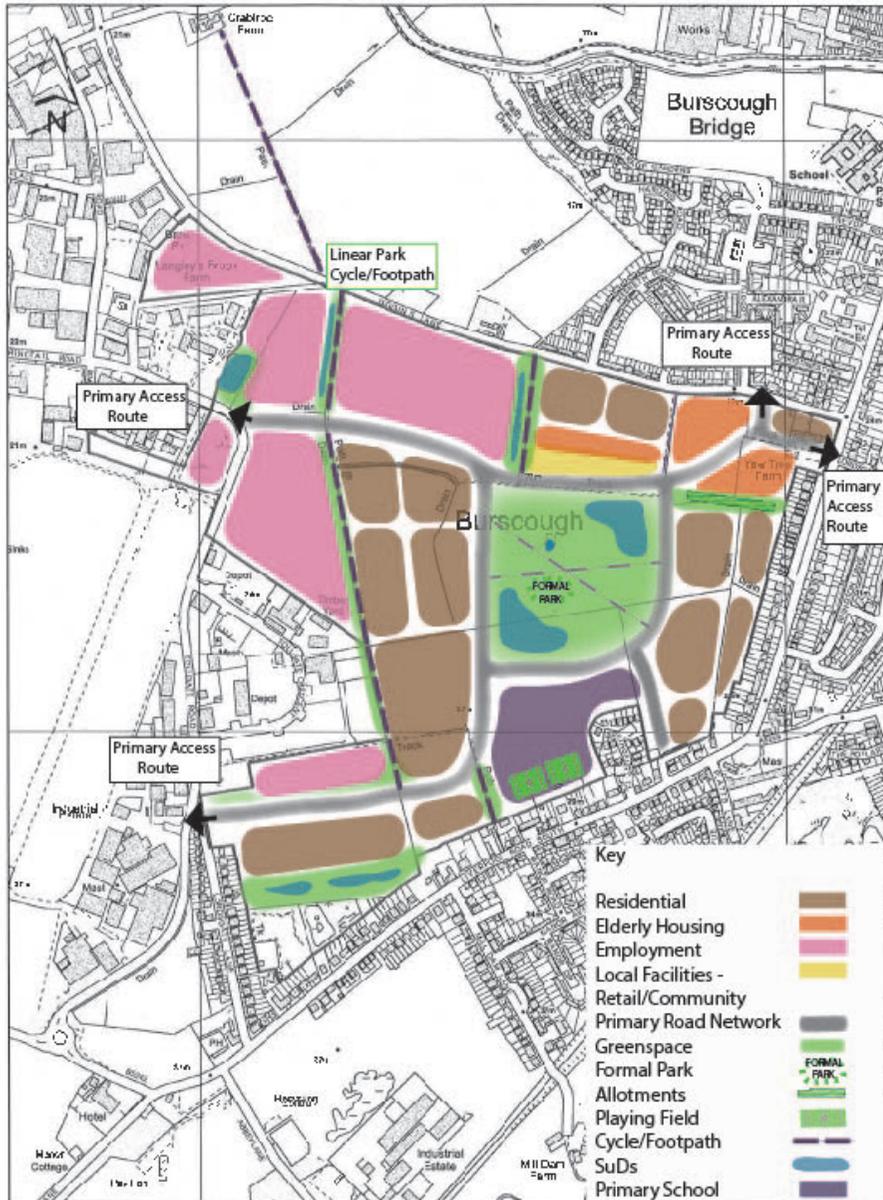
Identifies a central focus within the site so that the development creates a true sense of place within itself and the primary road infrastructure is drawn towards a central feature which can include open space such as a formal park or village green or local facilities.

The following features are including in this option:

- Central focus consisting of a large open space with public access, local play facilities and sustainable drainage features such as attenuation ponds.
- Reflects the central focus developed around Burscough's transport links and draws on how Burscough has evolved as a settlement itself.
- Local facilities including retail and potential community uses are concentrated around the central focal point providing a further draw to this area for occupiers of the site.
- Higher density development is typically encouraged around the central feature so 3 or 4 storey buildings would be most appropriate here than anywhere else on site.
- From the central focal point, development would decrease in density to the sites edges, particularly on the northern perimeter where the site meets Higgins Lane and the open countryside beyond and where the green buffer zone separates the employment and housing uses to the west of the site.
- The position of the Linear Park allows for a connection north/south. Connectivity is encouraged to pass through the central focal point whilst maintaining connections to the existing and potential future proposed cycle paths
- The existing footpath is retained through the site.
- The development of a Primary school could be accommodated in land to be released in the future.
- The provision of open space includes a buffer zone with pedestrian and cycle access, a large formal park in the centre of the development, local play area, sports pitches and allotments.

- Elderly housing needs would be met closest to the existing settlement and near to the focal point of development where some facilities can support independent living
- Sustainable drainage features are most prominent in the central focus area and the northwest corner of the site where the site naturally drains to.
- The road network and layout includes 3 primary access points from Liverpool Road in the north east corner of the site and out to Tollgate road north and south. There are 2 secondary access points onto Higgins Lane and Liverpool road through Meadowbrook. All routes pass through the central focus.

The overleaf pros and cons relate to the proposed design concept as the pros and cons for the responses to each opportunity or constraint are discussed in detail above.



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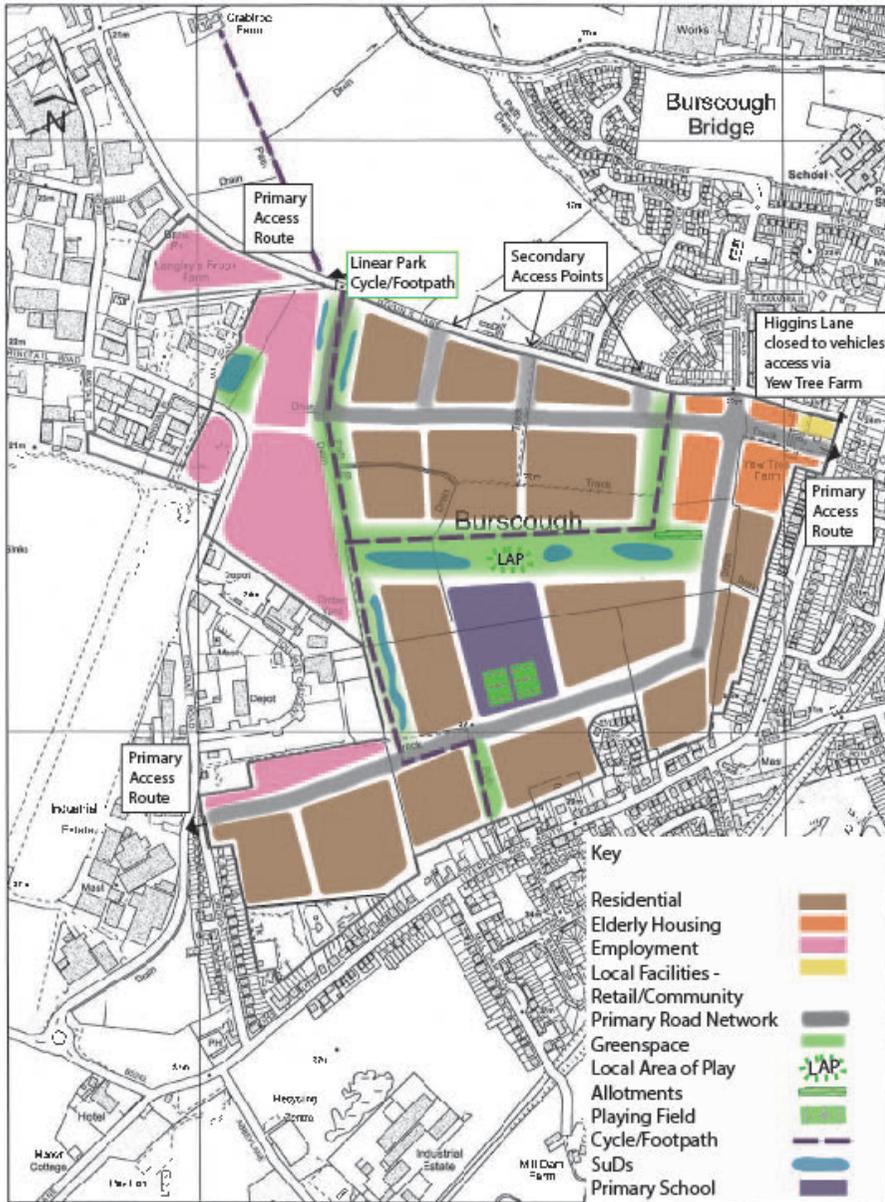
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Potential Pros	Potential Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central focal point for the site provides good legibility and makes it easy for people to navigate around the site • Still allows for the separation of housing and employment uses • Encourages community focus in the centre • May encourage less car use as services more accessible to entire site. • Strong public transport links could be key to linking the site with existing settlement which could otherwise suffer from segregation • Design would enable discrete clusters of use and design to come forward at various points around the central focus and so supports phased development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inward looking draw of this design concept will create separation from the Burscough Town Centre and reduce the potential for integration of the new development with existing • A community within a community would be developed • Phasing of development – how could it be funded and delivered when the central focus is likely to be required early on in order to assist with the site design

Option 3 - Linear

The main feature in this design concept are the avenues which run through the site creating strong links through the site to the employment area and acting as linear focal points.

- Development density is highest along the main avenues due to the width of the road way which lends itself to 3 or 4 storey development
 - Linear transport infrastructure is a key characteristic of Burscough including the rail lines, the A59 and the Canal. This design concept seeks to reflect this important local distinction.
 - Local facilities including retail and potential community uses are concentrated in the north east corner closest to the existing settlement and elderly accommodation.
 - The broad avenues provide excellent transport links through the site and encourage HGVs away from the surrounding road network.
 - The position of the Linear Park allows for a connection north/south and also east to west through the site.
 - The existing footpath is retained through the site.
 - The development of a Primary school could be accommodated in land to be released in the future.
 - The provision of open space includes a buffer zone with pedestrian and cycle access, a semi natural Linear Park through the centre of the development, local play area, sports pitches (potentially linked with the future Primary School) and allotments.
 - Elderly housing needs would be met closest to the existing settlement where some facilities can support independent living and access to Burscough Town Centre and transport links are greatest
 - Sustainable drainage features are most prominent through the Linear Park and in the northwest corner of the site where the site naturally drains to.
 - Swales (drainage features) could be easily accommodated along the avenue features.
- The road network and layout includes 3 primary access points from Liverpool Road in the north east corner of the site and out to Tollgate road north and south. There are 2 secondary access points onto Higgins Lane and Liverpool road through Meadowbrook. All routes pass through the central focus.
 - A clear hierarchy of roads feed of the main avenues into a grid pattern producing defined blocks for development which can be used for the phasing of the site.
 - These defined blocks for development also allow for street frontages to be created.
 - The road network includes 3 primary access points onto Liverpool Road and Tollgate Road north and south. It also includes secondary access points onto Higgins Lane for residential traffic and in order to increase the permeability of the site.



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Potential Pros	Potential Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful and functional design for managing volumes of traffic Links through to Higgins lane with road frontage development creates and outward looking design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to create a sense of place, large wide road, no character, no frontage from buildings on main avenues Open space along the avenue would be unusable due to traffic Reference to Skelmersdale and the difficulties faced by pedestrians due to the large road network layout The roads will be of significant cost and this will impact on phasing i.e. more development needed up front to deliver the roads

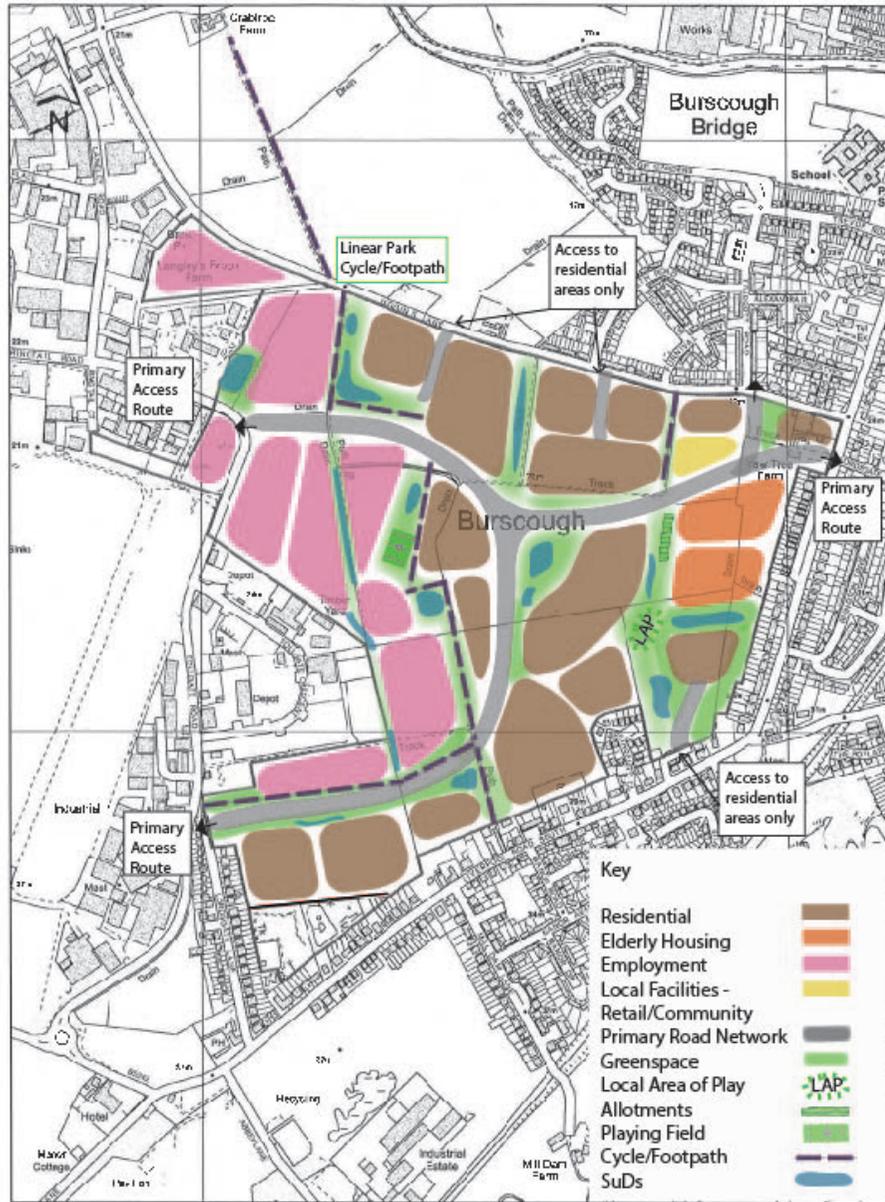
Option 4 – Clusters

This approach delivers clusters or pockets of development throughout the site interspersed with areas of greenspace. Each cluster of development has the potential to be phased appropriately and to be developed with its own character.

The following features are including in this option:

- Development density is spread fairly evenly across the site.
- High amount of open space between each cluster leading to an overall perception of a green and pleasant development.
- Burscough and the surrounding area were predominantly agricultural open fields with clusters of farmsteads across the landscape. This approach attempts to reflect this historical context and local characteristic.
- Elderly housing needs could be met closest to the existing settlement where some facilities can support independent living and access to the Burscough Town Centre and transport links is most convenient.
- Sustainable drainage features are most prominent in the north-west corner of the site where the site naturally drains to. However, increased amount of open space lends itself well to accommodating surface water drainage features.
- The road network and layout includes 3 primary access points from Liverpool Road in the north east corner of the site and out to Tollgate road north and south on the western perimeter of the site.
- The road network is more organic and curved to help connect each cluster and the clusters themselves would include shared surface streets.
- Secondary access points are available along Higgins Lane and through Meadowbrook off Liverpool Road, although these are access points to only parts of the site and do not connect to the main internal highways network.

- The provision of open space includes a multifunctional Linear Park with pedestrian and cycle access and sports facilities which also acts as a buffer zone between the housing and employment areas. Local play area and allotments provision is also included.
- The existing footpath is retained through the site.
- Local facilities including retail and potential community uses are concentrated in the north east corner of the site.



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Potential Pros	Potential Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for more open space/ Linear Parks, footpaths • Allows clear separation of employment from housing • Consistent with how Burscough has already formed i.e. clusters of development over time • Separation of footpaths and cycleway / green space from roads and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road network difficult for HGV traffic to traverse • Separation of elderly / those who need public transport from links and other uses

Next Steps

Views are sought on all aspects of these options and the issues identified and opportunities and constraints. Once the consultation period is over, the views and comments collected will be considered by the Council and the Stakeholder Group before a “Preferred Option” is drafted for inclusion in the final masterplan SPD.

The next consultation is expected in the summer of 2014 when the feedback from this consultation and the “Preferred Option” will be published. Following this final stage of consultation, it is anticipated that the final masterplan will be adopted by the Council in October 2014.