

West Lancashire Local Plan Review

Issues & Options Consultation



**Economic
Policy Options Paper
February 2017**



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Future policies within the Local Plan need to address the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability. This topic paper is primarily concerned with economic matters and is one of a series of documents that together comprise the West Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options consultation. As such, it is linked to, but sits under a Strategic Development Options Paper which identifies a series of options for the amount and broad location of future new housing and employment development. It sits alongside Social Policy Options and Environmental Policy Options Papers and seeks to address important current and future issues for economic policy in West Lancashire that have been identified by the final document in the series, the Spatial Portrait Paper. In considering these key issues the Economy Policy Options Paper proposes alternative ways for dealing with them (called policy options).
- 1.2 The paper is divided into two sections which are Stimulating Economic Growth and Reinvigorating Town and Village Centres. The former primarily considers the future role of and appropriate uses at existing business and industrial areas and the provision of new sites for employment development whilst the latter looks to support the network of town and village centres in the Borough, support their future health through permitting suitable uses and planning for appropriate future development opportunities to meet needs.



2. Stimulating Economic Growth

2.1 Key issues arising from the Spatial Portrait Paper can be summarised as:

- The West Lancashire economy continues to grow which requires land to be allocated in the right location to meet a range of business needs (both large and small, established and new).
- Complementary policy support needs to be provided to attract businesses which includes ensuring the presence of a skilled local workforce and suitable housing to attract and retain employees.
- There are development pressures upon existing employment areas for alternative uses including housing and other commercial uses such as retail leading to the loss of employment land.
- Rural businesses are an important part of the Borough's economic base and need to be supported.

2.2 In addition, in seeking to deliver sustainable development the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) contains three headings of direct relevance to policies to support economic growth which are: building a strong, competitive economy; supporting a prosperous rural economy; and ensuring the vitality of town centres. The latter will be dealt with under the following section "Reinvigorating Town and Village Centres". In terms of stimulating economic growth the NPPF requires local authorities to:

- Set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area.
- Meet future anticipated economic needs by allocating enough land for development and, if necessary, identifying strategic sites.
- Identify and planning for new or emerging business sectors.
- Identify priority areas for economic regeneration.

2.3 Three broad policy issues have subsequently been identified below along with alternative approaches for dealing with them.



Economic Policy Issue 1: Providing the right scale, mix and distribution of employment land

- 2.4 We need to contribute towards sustainable national economic growth. The West Lancashire Economic Strategy 2015-25 includes 8 strategic themes including providing the right scale and mix of employment sites, a better connected West Lancashire, supporting the rural and visitor economy and advantage through knowledge and skills. It focuses particularly upon Skelmersdale. This economic strategy needs to be built upon for the Local Plan by considering how much future development should take place and where, what type of development, which specific areas need to be regenerated, how businesses can be supported and how local communities can benefit.
- 2.5 West Lancashire has experienced a prolonged and steady increase in jobs and this is forecast to continue into the future through the expansion of existing businesses and development of new ones. Land will be required to meet these business development needs. The principal existing locations of economic activity are Skelmersdale, Ormskirk and Burscough. Skelmersdale possesses several purpose built industrial estates, is well connected to the highway network and is a focus for manufacturing and distribution. Ormskirk has a smaller but more diverse jobs base which includes Edge Hill University, West Lancashire Borough Council, Ormskirk and District General Hospital and town centre shops and services. Burscough town centre has a moderate commercial core, however there are several employment areas in the town including the sizable Burscough Industrial Estate.
- 2.6 Land allocated for the purposes of business (use class B1), general industry (B2) and warehousing (B8) uses is known as employment land. The current Local Plan sets a 75 ha requirement for development of employment land for the 15 year period 2012–2027. The majority is located in Skelmersdale (52ha), followed by Burscough (13ha) and the remainder in northern and eastern rural parishes. It comprises new greenfield allocations and the regeneration of some vacant and / or under used premises in existing industrial areas but needs to be reviewed because:
- a) Employment land uptake has slowed in recent years. This raises issues in terms of its suitability to meet business needs in terms of size, quality and location.
 - b) The Local Plan time period will be extended from 2027 to either 2037 or 2050.
 - c) More recent evidence has been produced in relation to employment land needs.
 - d) Anticipated regeneration sites proved impractical as vacant premises were re-occupied as the UK came out of recession.
- 2.7 The strategic development options in the Strategic Development Options Paper consider the issues of how much employment land is required and, broadly, where it should be allocated, but there is more to employment land than simple amount and broad location. We also need to consider what type of employment land is required (what type of end-user will occupy the land) and whether the provision of certain employment uses is appropriate in certain

locations. The following options (which are not mutually exclusive) consider these issues.

- 1) **Allocate sites specifically for strategic distribution and warehousing needs.** Larger sites would be allocated specifically for strategic distribution and warehousing uses, most likely in the M58 corridor at Skelmersdale. It would boost the local economy and benefit from the likely increased demand for logistics as a result of the opening of the Liverpool2 deep water terminal. It would locate jobs in the area of greatest need and would be most compatible with development scenarios 2 (Key Service Centres focus) and 4 (Skelmersdale focus).
- 2) **Allocate sites to encourage geographical clusters of specialist employment uses.** New sites would be provided for specific employment uses where similar activities could concentrate. For example, a site or sites could be provided for forecast growth in emerging business sectors such as professional and scientific services or for start-up businesses which may be compatible with development scenario 2 (Key Service Centres focus) given the presence of Edge Hill University. Alternatively, a dedicated storage, processing and distribution site could be provided in a rural location to service the agricultural sector which may be compatible with scenario 3 (Rural areas focus). Such an approach may require a more flexible range of uses being permitted than just business class use. It could also require a site specific policy rather than a single policy that deals with the employment land portfolio collectively.
- 3) **Allocate all new sites for the range of B classes uses (business, general industry and warehousing).** This option would allocate all employment sites for the range of business use without identifying

any sites for specialist employment uses as above. It would be compatible with any development scenario 1-4.

- 4) **Option 4: Increase town centre office sites.** Land would be allocated in and around existing town centres specifically for additional office uses. It would contribute towards the regeneration and re-use of brownfield sites. However, the Borough is not a significant office location, evidence predicts that the demand for new office floorspace in West Lancashire is likely to be limited and other than Skelmersdale there are few town centre development opportunities. A risk would therefore be that allocated town centre sites would remain undeveloped.

Summary

Economic Policy Issue 1 considers where future employment should be located, if you think this is an important issue, please answer the question below in our [Issues & Options Survey](#).

Which policy option or options above for how we should allocate land for employment sites do you think is the most appropriate for West Lancashire? Why? Is there an alternative option that you think is appropriate that has not been considered? If so, what is it?

Economy Policy Issue 2: Existing Employment Areas

- 2.8 Alongside potential land allocations there are at least 30 existing employment areas in West Lancashire which provide a range of existing commercial premises; 19 of these are designated (and protected) in the adopted Local Plan. Existing policy identifies three types of employment areas with some variation of uses permitted within them (see policy option 1 below). There is a need to ensure that existing employment areas and premises continue to meet a diverse range of business needs and consider if it would be appropriate for them to allow alternative commercial needs beyond the traditional employment uses of business, general industry and warehousing. Meanwhile the loss of employment areas to residential uses is a threat due to the national drive to deliver more housing and the generally greater financial returns from residential development. In addition, since the current Local Plan was adopted in 2013, changes in permitted development rights have relaxed planning rules for change of use from offices and warehousing to residential use under certain circumstances as a result of reform of the General Permitted Development Order. The following options consider alternative policy approaches for addressing the issues facing existing employment areas.

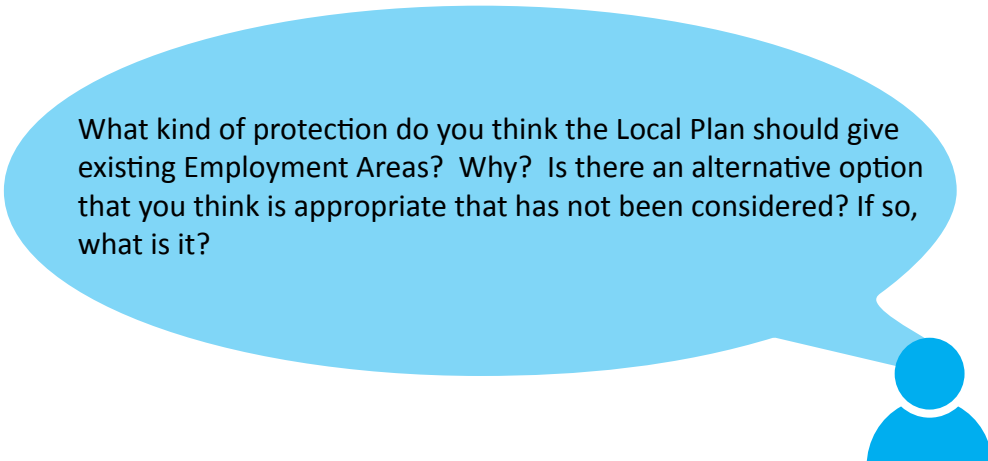


- 1) **Continue with the existing Local Plan policy approach.** This includes three types of existing sites comprising: Strategic Employment Sites, Other Significant Employment Sites and Other Existing Employment Sites. B1, B2 and B8 uses as well as A1 retail warehouses on a like for like basis are allowed at Strategic Employment sites with more specialist uses (offices, hotels, D1) supported at selected sites. B1, B2 and B8 uses are permitted at Other Significant Employment Sites. B1, B2 and B8 uses are permitted at Other Existing Employment Sites whilst allowing their redevelopment under certain circumstances. All existing employment areas would be re-assessed to confirm whether they would still meet criteria for their designation. The approach would assume that that the previously described relaxation in planning rules will not adversely affect the purpose and function of existing employment areas.
- 2) **Protect all existing employment areas for business class employment uses.** The adopted Local Plan's flexibility of use on existing employment areas would be removed so that only business, general industry, distribution and warehousing uses are permitted, without exception. This would likely require the introduction of Article 4 directions to remove nationally permitted change of use rights from offices and warehousing to residential, which would be very difficult to justify.

- 3) **Designate selected employment areas either wholly or in part for non-business class uses.** *A more flexible approach than the adopted Local Plan would be introduced by allowing additional commercial uses other than business, general industry and warehousing within selected existing employment areas, requiring either part of or an entire existing employment area to be designated to do so. It would recognise that a demand exists for uses such as (but not limited to) fitness centres, gyms or indoor children’s activity centres and that such uses may not be able to viably locate in town centres.*
- 4) **Do not protect employment areas for B1, B2 and B8 uses.** *This would allow market forces to dictate the appropriate mix of uses within existing employment areas. The advantage would be that it would increase the range of sites available for these other commercial uses but the disadvantage would be that it would be likely to accelerate the loss of existing employment areas to more financially attractive non-employment generating residential uses and make conflicts of use more likely between housing and industry. In reality this approach is only likely to be appropriate in particular circumstances where an existing employment area is no longer considered fit for purpose.*

Summary

Economic Policy Issue 2 discusses the future of the Borough’s existing employment areas. If you think this is important answer the question below in our **Issues & Options Survey**.



What kind of protection do you think the Local Plan should give existing Employment Areas? Why? Is there an alternative option that you think is appropriate that has not been considered? If so, what is it?

Economic Policy Issue 3: Spreading economic opportunities by supporting the rural economy

- 2.9 Given that over 90% of West Lancashire is rural there is a significant rural employment base comprising over half of the Borough's companies and 40% of jobs. This includes an important food production sector based upon horticulture with associated distribution but also a growing visitor destination with attractions including Martin Mere Wildlife Reserve and Rufford Old Hall.
- 2.10 Nevertheless, West Lancashire's rural areas face several recent challenges and opportunities and therefore potential change as a result of global and more localised influences. These include, but are not confined to, the future competitiveness of agriculture and food production, the continued development of an energy sector including renewable and non-renewable sources, rural isolation, enhancements in communications technology improving remote working capabilities and the future UK move out of the European Union and therefore loss of EU agriculture grant funding. Planning challenges also exist including the need to reconcile business needs to develop and expand with environmental sensitivities, including an extensive Green Belt designation, best quality agricultural land and lower traffic capacities on rural roads.
- 2.11 In order to support the rural economy, the NPPF requires local authorities to:
- Support the sustainable growth and expansion of business in rural areas.
 - Promote development and diversification of agriculture.
 - Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments.
- Facilitate flexible working practices including the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit.
- 2.12 Providing rural economic opportunities therefore raises multiple and potentially complex issues and therefore there are a variety of policy options below which may either form a single future policy or a number of future policies.
- 1) ***Continue with existing Local Plan policy.*** *This seeks to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land, protect existing rural employment sites and re-use existing buildings where they would be left vacant. It also allows rural business growth in certain circumstances, promotes tourism of an appropriate scale, supports high speed broadband and encourages renewable energy projects. Two adopted Local Plan policies (EC2 and EC3) combine to allocate sites for rural employment and more mixed use rural development opportunities.*
 - 2) ***Increased development in rural areas.*** *This more permissive approach would support development scenario 3 (Rural areas focus). It would entail the allocation of a greater quantity of land in rural areas for employment purposes. This may provide new opportunities for agricultural produce packing and distribution facilities and/ or for rural technology hubs. It would also support visitor attractions and the potential for larger scale commercial uses, for example larger farm shops. As with existing Local Plan policy, a broader range of uses than business, general industry and warehousing would be allowed as may mixed uses in order to facilitate viable employment development.*

- 3) **A tourism and visitor economy policy.** This could consider site specific criteria for the expansion of larger scale tourism sites such as Martin Mere or new facilities. In order to grow the rural economy this approach could also identify circumstances whereby the development and / or expansion of caravan parks or holiday lodges may be suitable. Careful consideration would need to be given to compatibility with Green Belt policy.

Summary

Economic Policy Issue 3 discusses options for supporting the rural economy. What do you think about this? Answer the question below in our **Issues and Options Survey**.

What do you think about the policy options above for Supporting the Rural Economy? Is there an alternative option that you think is appropriate that has not been considered? If so, what is it?



3. Reinvigorating Town and Village Centres

3.1 Our town and village centres are the traditional destinations to buy goods and obtain services. The Borough's network of town centres comprise Ormskirk, Skelmersdale and Burscough. Ormskirk is a traditional town centre, being primarily focussed upon pedestrianised east-west (Moor Street and Church Street) and north-south (Burscough Street and Aughton Street) axes, also extending to Derby Street to the north and Morrisons to the south. There is a range of independent and national multiple shops, a twice weekly market and an established evening economy which benefits from the presence of Edge Hill University. Skelmersdale town centre contains the purpose built Concourse Shopping Centre, extending northwards to include Asda and to the east to office buildings (Delf House and Whelmer House). It has a narrow range of retailers, a limited night time economy and a higher proportion of vacant units. Burscough is the smallest of the town centres, being focussed on Liverpool Road North. There are also a number of smaller local centres within suburban areas of Skelmersdale and Ormskirk as well as within rural villages. Out of centre retail facilities include Ringtail Retail Park in Burscough and the Hattersley Retail and Trade Centre in Ormskirk.



3.2 The collective retail and service offer of West Lancashire's town and village centres is relatively modest and competition exists in the form of much larger shopping and leisure attractions situated beyond the Borough's boundary including Southport, Wigan, Liverpool and Preston town and city centres as well as large retail warehouse parks at Southport, Aintree and Wigan. As a result the Borough's residents spend significant proportions of their total non-food shopping expenditure outside West Lancashire and, to a lesser extent food shopping and leisure expenditure. As well as

challenges in terms of competition from other town centres and out of centre attractions there is also competition resulting from the growth in online sales and wider economic change. Increasingly, customers expect a leisure experience when visiting town centres, for example having a meal or visiting an entertainment destination to complement a shopping trip. Therefore centres need to evolve and reinvent themselves with those that provide a range of attractions, better physical environments and increase visitor dwell times. Centres that do so will be more resilient and it is notable that whilst Ormskirk has broadly maintained its position in the national ranking of centres over recent years Skelmersdale's position has declined.

3.3 National planning policy promotes competitive town centres that provide customer choice, a diverse retail offer and reflect individuality. In seeking to ensure the vitality of town centres, the NPPF requires local authorities to:

- Define a network and hierarchy of centres;

Economic Policy Issue 4: Network and Hierarchy of Centres

- Define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a definition of primary and secondary frontages and set out what uses will be permitted in these locations.
 - Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres.
 - Where town centre sites are not available, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites for town centre uses and set policies for the consideration of proposals outside town centres.
 - Plan positively for town centres in decline; and
 - Set local floorspace thresholds to allow the consideration of proposals for retail, leisure and office developments that are outside town centres and not in accordance with an up to date Local Plan.
- 3.4 These matters form prospective components of Local Plan policy to address local issues and are considered below including alternative options for dealing with them. The adopted Local Plan acknowledged a general reliance upon national policy in relation to the promotion and protection of town centres so it is important to consider whether such an overall approach remains best.
- 3.5 The centre hierarchy sets a framework for the management, planned growth at an appropriate scale and protection of centres during the timescale of the Local Plan. Policy IF1 of the adopted Local Plan contains a centre hierarchy so it is appropriate to consider if there have been any changes since the Plan's adoption that would justify altering it. Such changes may include the recent growth or decline of centres, future planned growth or the need for any new centres to provide facilities in connection with recent or planned new development.
- 3.6 The adopted Local Plan establishes the following hierarchy of centres for the Borough:
- Town centres - Skelmersdale, Ormskirk and Burscough
- Large village centres – Tarleton, Hesketh Bank, Up Holland, Banks and Parbold
- Local Centres - Ashurst; Digmoor; Sandy Lane, Old Skelmersdale; County Road, Ormskirk; Moss Delph Lane, Aughton; Town Green Lane, Aughton.
- Maps can be found in Appendix 1-14*

Economic Policy Issue 5: Ensuring Healthy Town, Village and Local Centres - Appropriate Uses

- 1) **Review the Local Plan centre hierarchy.** *The policy option would use evidence to review the above hierarchy to consider if any centres should be moved within the hierarchy or whether any should be deleted or added, including any new centres linked with planned new development. There would also be an opportunity to consider whether a three level hierarchy is the most suitable approach in West Lancashire. One potential outcome from the review may be that there should be no change to the existing hierarchy.*

There are no other reasonable policy options in relation to this issue.

Summary

Economic Policy Issue 4 considers the hierarchy of centres within West Lancashire. If you don't agree with the hierarchy then answer the question below in our **Issues & Options Survey**.

Do you have any comments in relation to the Network and Hierarchy of Centres in the Local Plan?



- 3.7 National planning policy promotes competitive town centre environments. It encourages local authorities to recognise them as the heart of their communities and set out policies to support their health. As indicated in the introduction to this section, national planning policy needs us to define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas and set out what uses will be permitted in these locations. This helps to concentrate main town centre uses in town centres in order to reinforce their roles as drivers of the local economy, assist in locating attractions in accessible locations and gives opportunities for linked trips. Main town centre uses include retail, leisure, entertainment facilities, offices, arts, culture and tourism. Village and local centres have an important role in meeting the day to day needs of the local community, particularly in rural areas. They provide retail and service uses close to home, particularly for the less mobile, reduce the need to travel and contribute towards providing mixed and inclusive neighbourhoods.
- 3.8 The adopted Local Plan Policies Map defines the extent of town centre boundaries for Skelmersdale, Ormskirk, and Burscough as well as identifying primary shopping areas for the latter two, where retail uses are concentrated. The location and extent of village and local centres are also identified. Adopted Local Plan Policy IF1: Maintaining Vibrant Town and Local Centres seeks to retain at least 70% of shop uses (use class A1) at ground floor level in primary shopping areas of Ormskirk and Burscough town centres and within Skelmersdale town centre, village and local centres as a whole. However, since the adoption of the Local Plan there have been relaxations to the General Permitted Development Order which permits change of use without requiring planning permission,

including from shops (use class A1) to other uses including restaurants and cafes, leisure and residential uses below certain floorspaces (either 150 or 200sq.m). There has also been a drive to promote healthier lifestyles, including healthier eating and drinking. It is therefore necessary to consider if existing town and primary shopping areas are still appropriate and what uses should be allowed within them through the following options.

- 1) **Review town centre, village and local centre boundaries in the Adopted Local Plan.** Readily available national and local evidence would be used (such as existing uses, changes in uses, pedestrian flows and potential development sites, as well as nationally recognised dataset for the retail and commercial property industry, such as Goad plans) to review the town centre boundaries for Skelmersdale, Ormskirk and Burscough as shown in the adopted Local Plan in order to consider if they are still suitable. Village and local centre boundaries would also be reviewed.
- 2) **Review primary shopping area boundaries in the Adopted Local Plan.** Again, local evidence would be used to review primary shopping area boundaries for Ormskirk and Burscough, consider if they are still necessary or require amendment and decide if it is appropriate to also define a primary shopping area for Skelmersdale.
- 3) **Review policy approach to determining appropriate uses in town centres.** This would explore the removal or retention of a minimum percentage requirement for shop (use class A1) uses at ground floor level within the primary shopping areas of Ormskirk and Burscough or the wider Skelmersdale town centre. Alongside this, criteria could be used to determine the suitability of uses. These could include, but

would not be confined to the retention of active frontages in terms of the retention of a pedestrian level shop front and traditional day time operating hours.

Alternatively, policy could set limits upon the percentage of uses allowed in town centres where planning controls for change of use still remain, including drinking establishments (use class A4) and hot food take aways (use class A5) to encourage healthier lifestyles. This could also be applied to local and village centres where appropriate. Either the policy criteria or percentage of uses approach could be expanded to an individual policy for a town centre seeking to concentrate the same or similar uses in particular locations (for example, cafes, restaurants and drinking establishments) and identify re-development opportunities.

Summary

Economic Policy Issue 5 considers how the Local Plan might ensure healthy towns and villages are maintained. Do you think this is an important issue, please answer the question below in the **Issues & options Survey**.

Do any of the above options for Ensuring Healthy Town, Village and Local Centres get your support? If so, why? Is there an alternative option that you think is appropriate that has not been considered? If so, what is it?



Economic Policy Issue 6: Sites for Town Centre Uses

3.9 We need to ensure that there are enough sites available in our town and village centres to be able to accommodate any identified needs for main town centre uses. This will allow centres to improve and grow in a sustainable way, meet residents' needs and retain spending within the Borough. The West Lancashire Retail and Leisure Study (2011) identified future retail and other town centre development needs. This Study covers the time period between 2012 and 2027 so will require updating during the Local Plan Review to correspond with the proposed extension of the plan period to at least 2037. Nevertheless, the 2011 Study provides useful information to context broad policy options. It identifies future additional convenience (essentially food) and comparison (essentially non-food) retail floorspace requirements of 3,300 sq.m net and 11,000sq.m net respectively at 2027. The additional convenience floorspace would be equivalent to a new food superstore and as a benchmark the largest superstore in the Borough is currently Asda, Skelmersdale which is 2,866 sq.m net convenience floorspace. The additional comparison floorspace assumes increased retention of residents' expenditure to claw back some of that spent outside the Borough.



3.10 The Retail Study also identifies the Borough wide need for leisure facilities comprising scope for an additional 9-13 food and drink outlets, an independent cinema or 4 screen multiplex (as West Lancashire does not presently contain a cinema), one neighbourhood bingo hall and a family entertainment facility (such as an ice skating rink or bowling alley). The Retail Study concluded that new floorspace should be directed to town centre locations and that any substantial improvement in the retail and leisure offer of the Borough should prioritise Skelmersdale. Planning permissions exist to expand the offer of Skelmersdale town centre but have not presently been implemented. Alternative options are as follows.

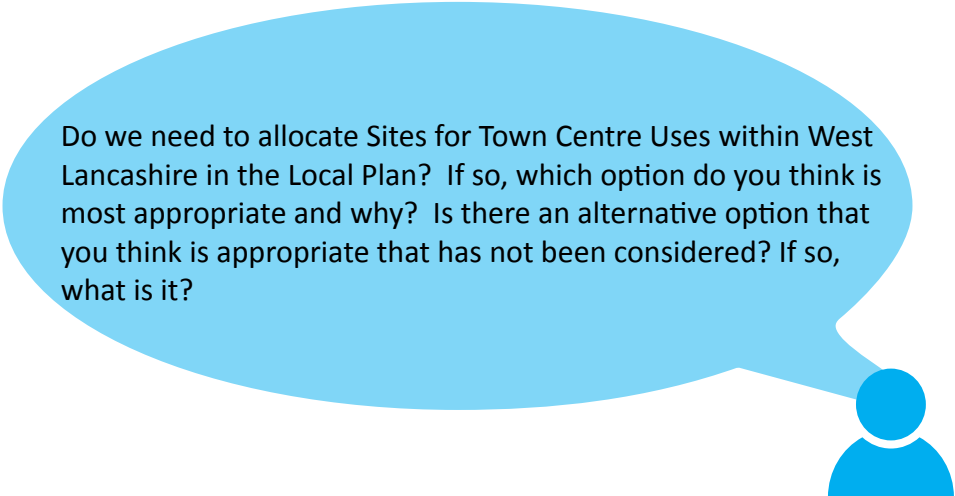
- 1) **Adopted Local Plan Approach – Skelmersdale concentration.** *The adopted Local Plan identifies Skelmersdale town centre as a strategic development site, establishing a mix of suitable uses and principles for regeneration and enhancement. This approach plans positively for a town centre in decline and would assume that focussing the development of new town centre uses would continue to be the most suitable approach, contributing towards the wider regeneration of Skelmersdale and prioritising an area of most need. It would be appropriate to review the adopted Local Plan policy's principles and proposed uses in light of any changes since its adoption in 2013. It would be most compatible with development scenario 4 (Skelmersdale focus) in the Strategic Development Options paper.*
- 2) **Allocate site(s) for town centre uses at Ormskirk.** *This approach would be in addition to site allocation at Skelmersdale town centre and would vary from recommendations in the West Lancashire Retail Study. Ormskirk town centre is currently performing relatively well but physical constraints exist to finding development sites as a result*

of the historic core and one way system; however, it needs to evolve and reinforce the commercial offer in order to remain competitive with other shopping and leisure destinations. The redevelopment potential of existing or likely future underused areas within the town centre would be investigated. It could also justify the development of an area based policy / strategy specific to the town centre.

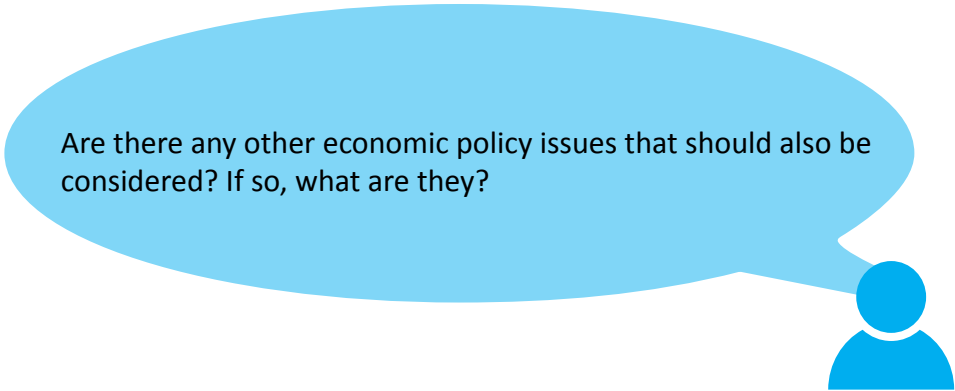
- 3) **Allocate a non-town centre site for a retail warehouse park.** *This would be a radical approach, again varying from recommendations in the West Lancashire Retail Study and would seek to address the lack of a quality retail warehouse park in the Borough. It would look to reduce the loss of residents' non-food spending from the Borough by allocating an accessible site for a non-food retail warehouse park outside existing town centres, therefore acknowledging that town centre sites were unavailable and / or unsuitable. The most likely location would be either Ormskirk or Skelmersdale. However, this approach would not be without risk in terms of developing a potentially competing attraction with existing town centres.*
- 4) **Allocate a site to meet retail needs in the north of the Borough.** *The village centres contain some relatively small scale convenience retail provision, with the largest being the Booths store at Hesketh Bank. This approach would acknowledge that large amounts of retail expenditure are therefore lost from the northern parishes of the Borough and that significantly improved retention of food expenditure would be realistic by developing a new larger store. This would be most compatible with development scenario 3 (Rural areas focus) in the Strategic Development Options Paper.*

Summary

Economic Policy Option 6 discusses allocating sites for retail uses within the Borough. Is this important to consider? Answer the question below in the **Issues & Options Survey**.



Do we need to allocate Sites for Town Centre Uses within West Lancashire in the Local Plan? If so, which option do you think is most appropriate and why? Is there an alternative option that you think is appropriate that has not been considered? If so, what is it?



Are there any other economic policy issues that should also be considered? If so, what are they?

4. What Happens Next?

Responding to the Issues & Options Consultation

4.1 Having read this Paper, the Council would like you to respond by commenting on what you've read through the Local Plan Review: Issues & Options consultation. The easiest way to do this is online at **www.westlancs.gov.uk/localplan**, where you will find instructions on how to respond.

4.2 The best way to respond is by completing a short survey online available at the above web link. The survey is related to the questions you'll have seen scattered throughout this Paper and the other Issues & Options consultation papers. You can also email or write in with your comments to:

Email: **localplan@westlancs.gov.uk**
Postal Address: **Local Plan Consultation
Planning
West Lancashire Borough Council
52 Derby Street
Ormskirk
L39 2DF**

4.3 All the Issues & Options consultation papers, as well as survey forms and details of how to engage with the consultation, are also available at:

- **all Libraries in West Lancashire,**
- **at the Council Offices, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, L39 2DF; and**
- **at the Customer Service Point, Unit 142, first floor of the Concourse, Skelmersdale, WN8 6LN.**

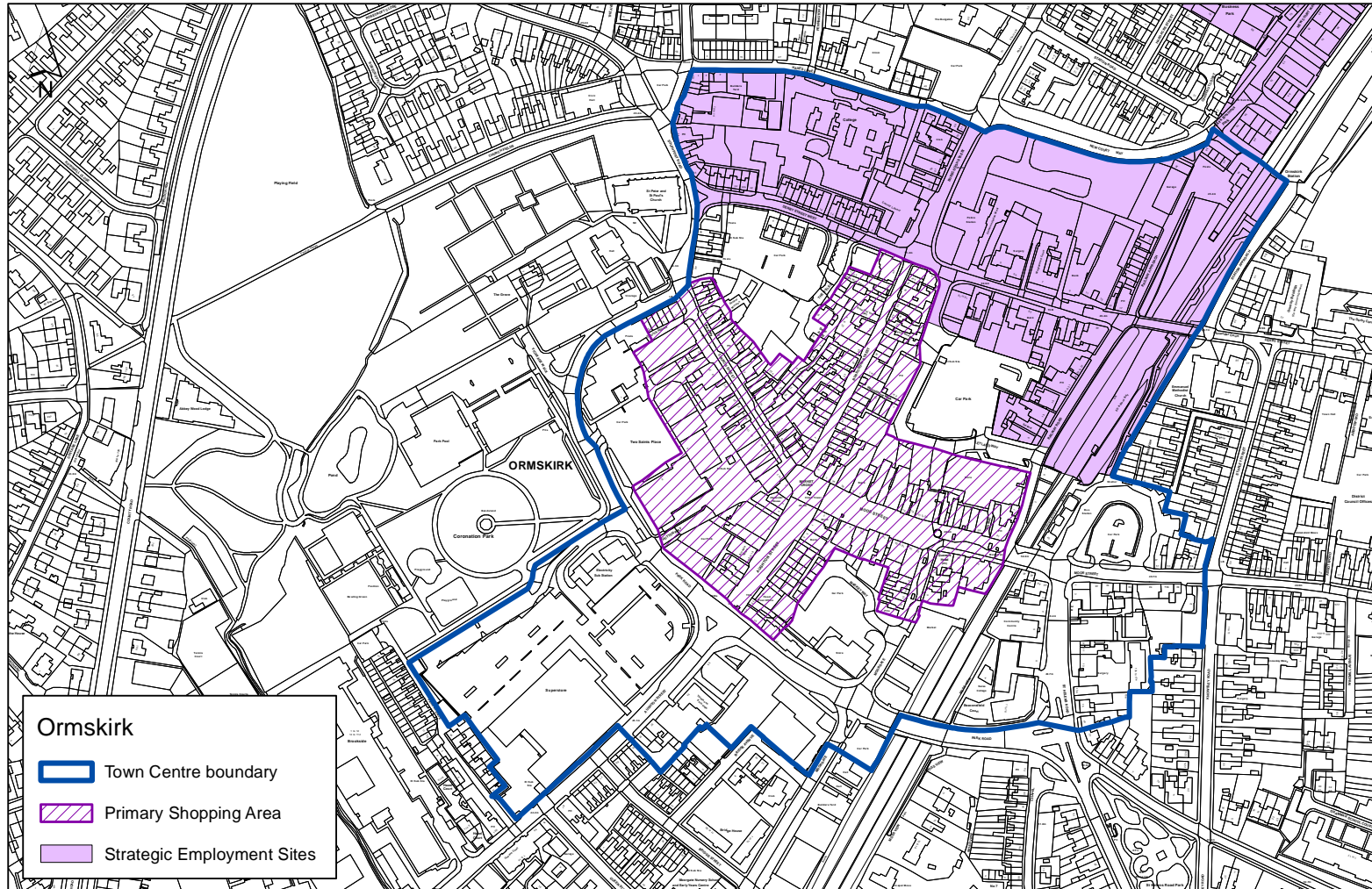
4.4 You can also phone the Council if you have any queries about the Local Plan Review Issues & Options Consultation to speak to a Council Officer on **01695 585194**.



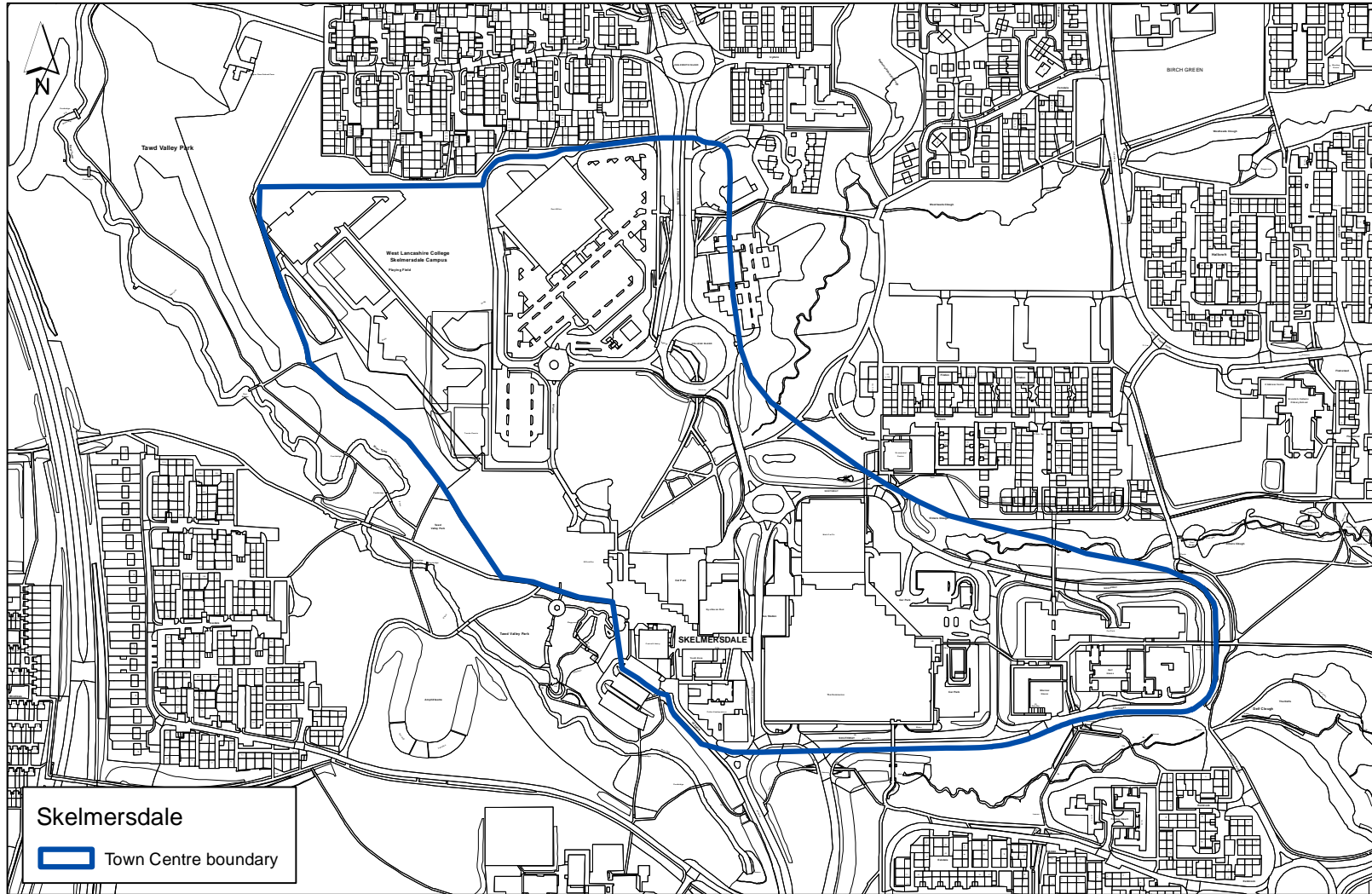
Next Steps

- 4.5 With regard to the wider process for preparing a new Local Plan, following this Issues & Options Consultation, the Council will consider the feedback received from the public consultation and use it in preparing what is effectively a draft Local Plan, known as the Preferred Options Paper. The Preferred Options Paper narrows down on, and selects, the Council's preferred policy option for each topic (i.e. how policy will address each key issue) as well as the preferred strategic option for how much new housing and employment development should take place and where. At that point, site allocations are proposed to meet the development needs identified.
- 4.6 The Preferred Options Paper will be publicly consulted upon and the feedback from that consultation will be considered and the Council will make the necessary refinements and amendments to the proposed policies and site allocations to prepare what is essentially a "final draft" Local Plan, known as the Publication version, which represents the Local Plan that the Council want to take forward and adopt.
- 4.7 Once again, the Publication version will be made available for public scrutiny and formal representations (comments) on the document will be invited. However, this time, the comments will not be considered by the Council, but submitted with the Local Plan to a Planning Inspector to consider as part of the Examination of the Local Plan. This Examination will involve public hearings where those invited to speak by the Planning Inspector can put forward their views to help the Inspector to arrive at a decision on whether the Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with all relevant legislation and whether it is a "sound" document.
- 4.8 More detail will be provided by the Council on how to engage with the Preferred Options Paper, the Publication version and the Examination in Public as we reach each stage, but the above gives a brief overview of the process.
- 4.9 Alongside the preparation of the Preferred Options Paper, the Council will continue to prepare and commission new studies to provide the evidence needed to guide the Council's decision-making on which policy options, strategic option and site allocations are most appropriate for inclusion in the new Local Plan.

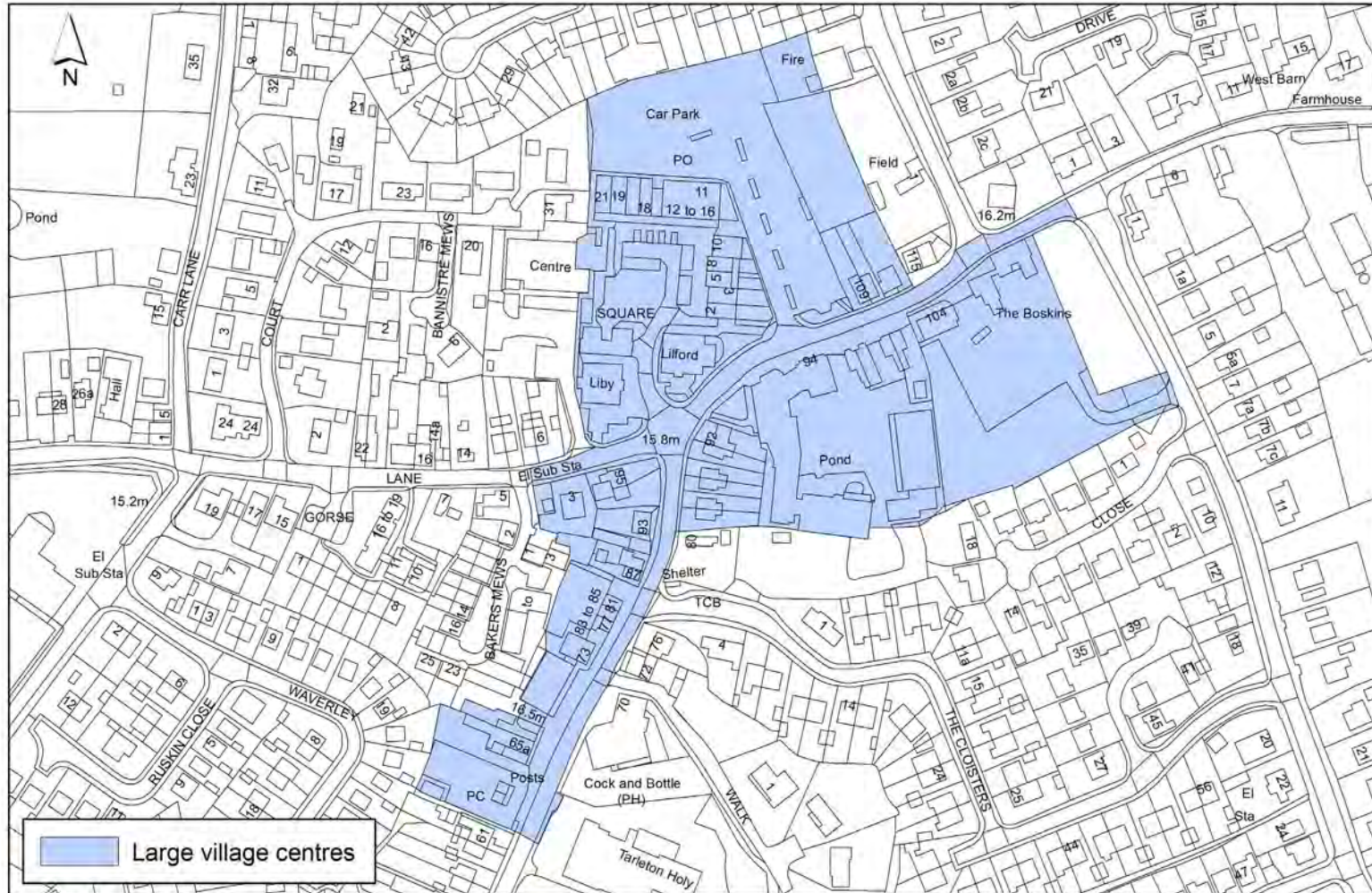
Appendix 1 - Ormskirk



Appendix 2 - Skelmersdale



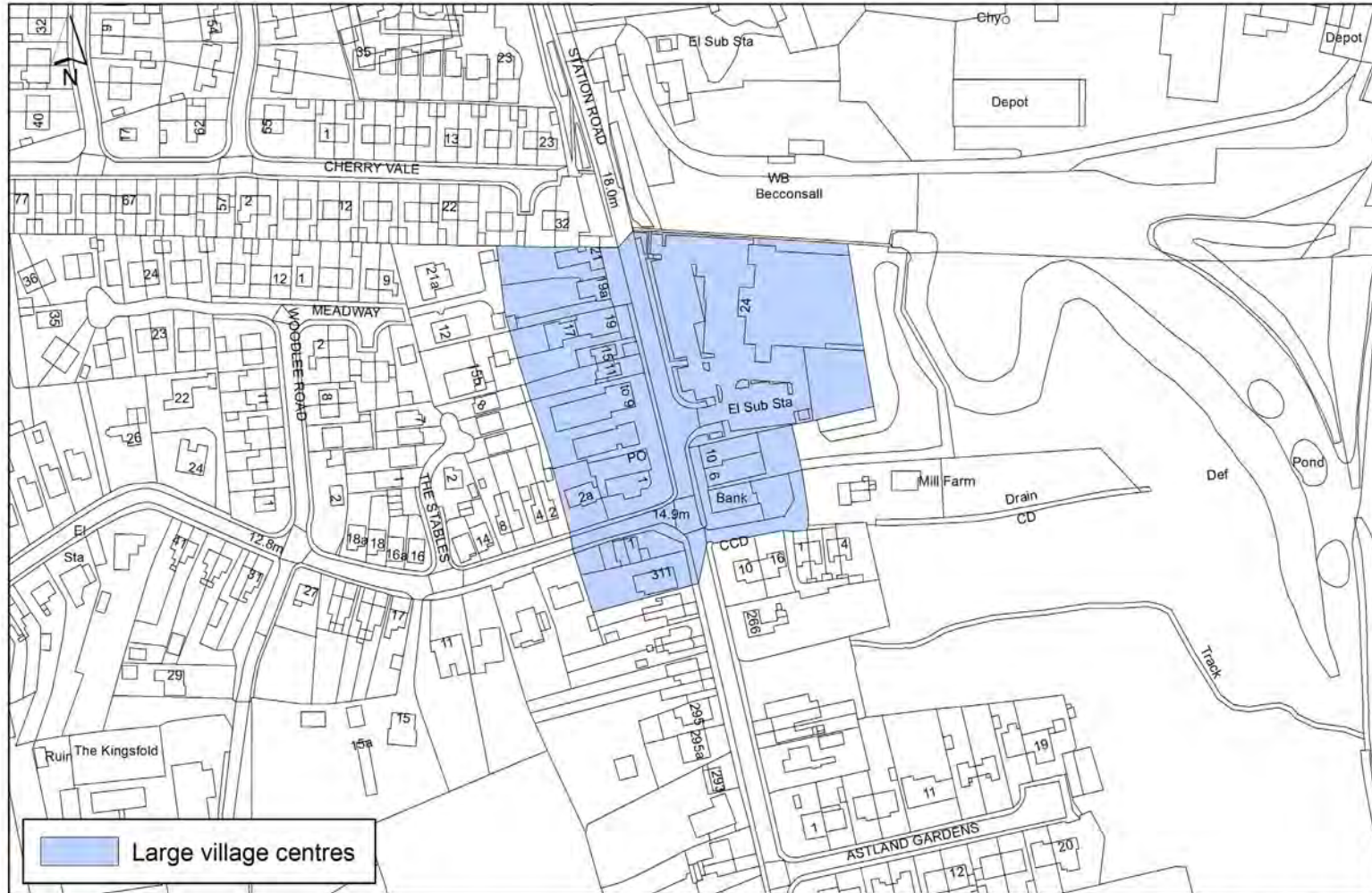
Appendix 4 - Tarleton



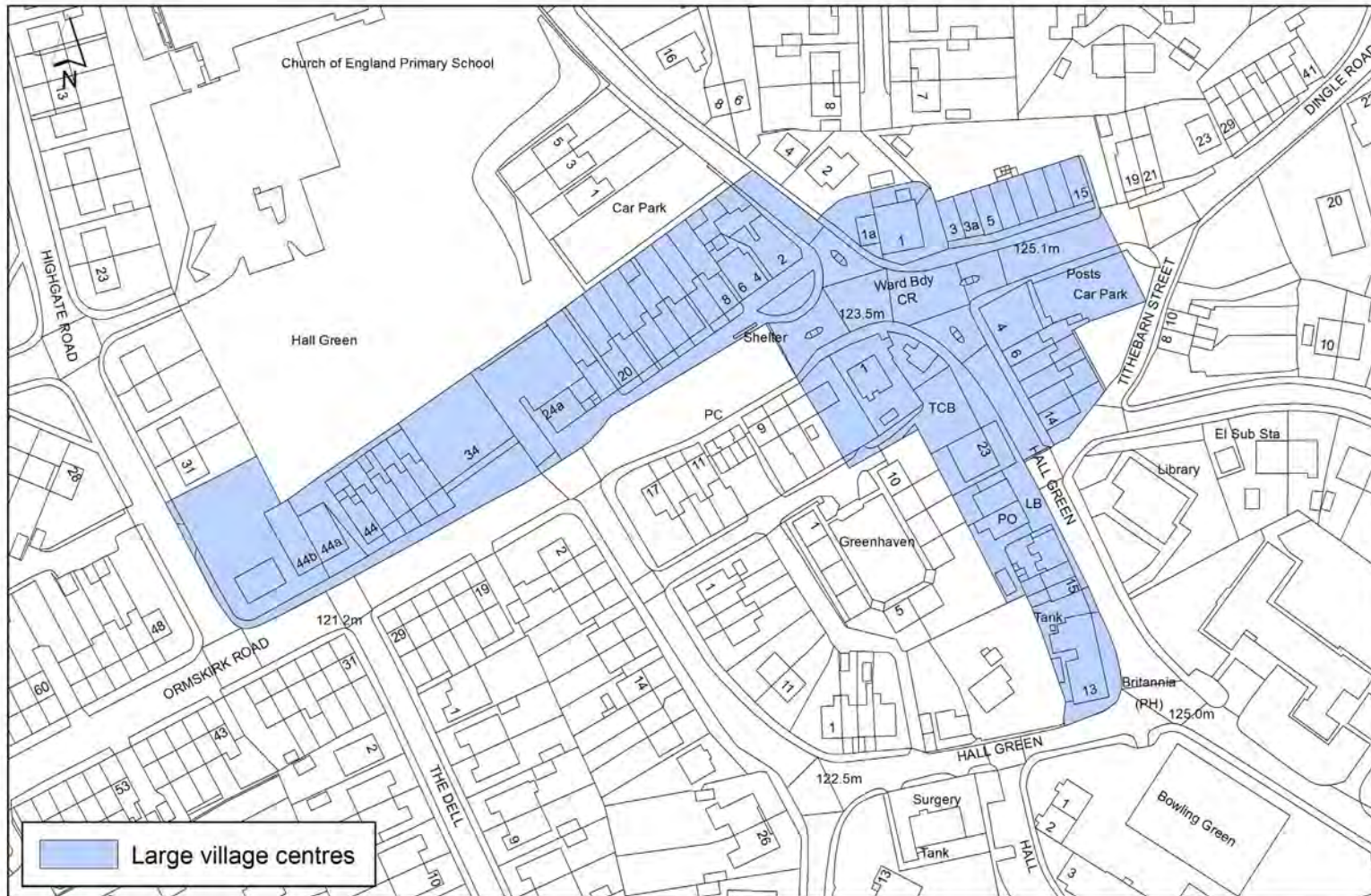
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Appendix 5 - Hesketh Bank



Appendix 6 - Up Holland



Appendix 7 - Banks



Appendix 8 - Parbold



Appendix 9 - Ashurst



Appendix 10 - Digmaor



Appendix 11 - Sandy Lane



Appendix 12 - County Road



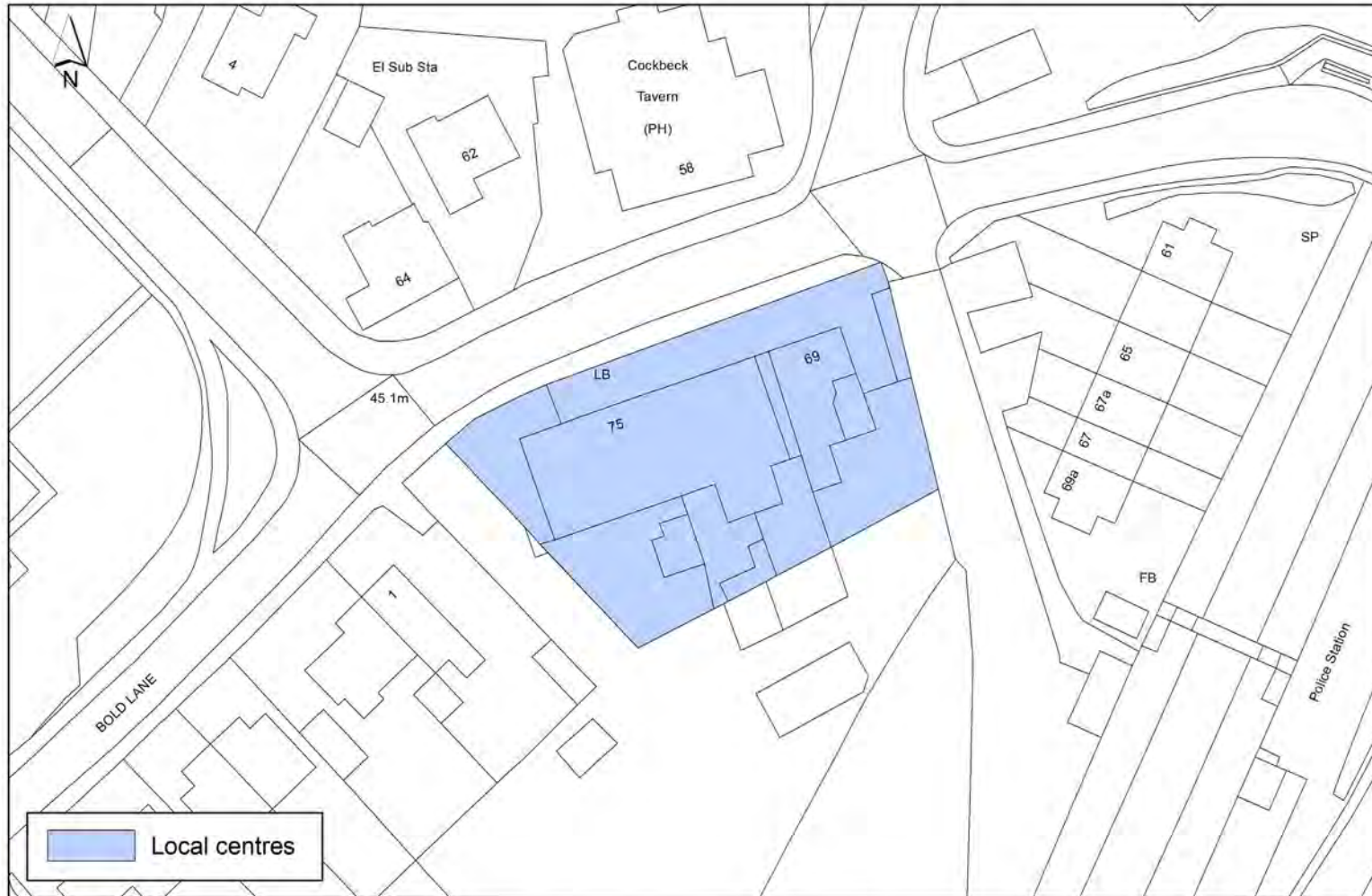
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Appendix 13 - Moss Delph Lane



Appendix 14 - Town Green Lane



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